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Rising toll of chronic disease in the over-50s  
  
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MORE people over 50 than ever have two or more chronic illnesses - increasing pressure on the NHS.

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People over 50 often have two or more chronic illnesses

Researchers found the number with more than one such condition rose about 10 per cent in the last decade, and is still rising.

And the findings show that only one in four over-50s today do not have a health problem - such as Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure or arthritis - compared with one in three just 10 years ago.

The study of more than 15,000 people in England over 10 years showed an increasing trend for people aged over 50 to develop a second or third disease.

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The proportion of people with multiple conditions rose 10 per cent in the last decade

It also found that people who were physically active were healthier.

More **older** **people** now have at least one chronic disease, adding strain on health budgets amid a rise in long-term conditions and people living longer.

The proportion with multiple conditions rose from 32 per cent in 2002/03 to 43 per cent in 2012/13.

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People are healthier when they are physically active

The proportion of over-50s without a **chronic condition** decreased over the same period from 34 to 27 per cent.

Professor Kamlesh Khunti, of Leicester University, said: "The prevalence of people having more than one **chronic condition**, in older adults, is steadily increasing over time.

"The current models of care are based on the management of individual **chronic conditions**. Clinical guidelines need to address the challenges."

The study was published online by The International Journal Of Behavioural Nutrition And Physical Activity.

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