

What can I do at home?

Many conditions get better themselves over time with rest at home and over the counter remedies when needed.

The NHS recommends that everyone keeps a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home, which should contain the following:

- Painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Antihistamine for allergies
- Bandages
- Rub-on anti-inflammatory painkillers
- Oral rehydration salts
- Indigestion remedies
- Laxatives
- Anti-diarrhoea medicine
- Cream or spray to treat insect bites and stings, or cuts and grazes
- Plasters and dressings
- A thermometer

Make sure your medicines are kept in the right conditions (for example out of direct sunlight) and if they are past their use-by date, don't take them. Check them regularly and stock up when you need to, particularly before public holidays when pharmacies may have reduced opening hours.



Where can I get further information?

Advice about common conditions and treatments is available from NHS Southwark CCG's website – www.southwarkccg.nhs.uk – and also from NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk

If you need medical help or advice urgently, but it's not life-threatening, you can call **NHS 111, which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.** Calls are free from landlines and mobiles.

Produced by NHS Southwark CCG

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Are you SELF CARE AWARE?



This leaflet tells you how to manage a range of common symptoms and ailments yourself – without the need for a GP appointment or NHS prescription.

Southwark GPs do not routinely give NHS prescriptions for medicines and treatments which you can get over the counter at pharmacies (chemists), or at supermarkets and other stores.

Instead, they encourage people to manage short term, minor illnesses and conditions like coughs and colds themselves at home ('self-care'), with advice from a pharmacist when needed. This takes pressure off your GP surgery.

Looking after yourself

When you're unwell, home is where you are most likely to want to be. Many everyday health problems can be managed at home. With self-care, you can take control and hopefully start to feel better quicker. Self-care is also about living healthily and making lifestyle choices which help reduce the risk of becoming ill or developing more serious long term conditions.



How can a pharmacist help?

Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals. They can recognise many common complaints, give expert advice and recommend any medicines they think might help you. They can also advise on what you can do at home to look after yourself, for example if you are suffering from constipation, they may tell you to drink more water and eat more fibre-based foods.

Instead of booking and waiting for a GP appointment, you can visit a pharmacist any time during opening hours, without the need for an appointment. Pharmacies are usually open evenings and at weekends. You can have a confidential consultation with a pharmacist in a private area and the pharmacist will be able to tell you if your illness or condition is more serious and needs to be seen and treated by a GP. They can also advise on what medicines you should take if you are on other medication.



What can I get from a pharmacy?

High street pharmacies stock over the counter products for many short term, minor illnesses and conditions. Examples include:

- cough and cold remedies
- painkillers (such as paracetamol)
- anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen
- skin creams and washes
- antifungal treatments
- treatment for bites and stings
- diarrhoea treatments
- hayfever treatments, including tablets and nasal sprays
- indigestion remedies
- laxatives
- sore throat sprays and lozenges

You do not need a prescription from a GP to buy over the counter medicines. You do not need to pay for your medicines if you are eligible for the Pharmacy First scheme.

