

THE CASTLE PRACTICE is a Self Care Aware practice

What is self care?

Self care is about looking after yourself in a healthy way. It can be anything from brushing your teeth, doing some exercise, managing common conditions (like headaches, colds and flu) or living with a long-term health problem, such as asthma or diabetes.

As a Self Care Aware practice we are here to help you feel able to look after your own health when it is right for you. So, when you come in for a consultation, the doctors, nurses and healthcare assistants in this practice will talk to you about what you can do to help maintain and improve your health.

Find out more about self care

If you need more information on how you can self care at home, click on the links:

- [Self care for healthy living](#)
- [Self care for common conditions](#)
- [Self care for long-term conditions](#)
- [NHS Choices symptom checker](#)

Did you know?

- The NHS belongs to all of us – help us to keep it working smoothly by turning up for appointments
- Every time you see a GP it costs the NHS £43, on average, for a 12-minute consultation
- A visit to Accident and Emergency costs £112

Self care for healthy living

Staying healthy is important for everyone, even if you are living with a long-term condition. This means eating healthily, exercising regularly, quitting smoking and drinking in moderation.

This practice runs weight management courses, smoking cessation clinics and alcohol awareness sessions that can help you live a healthy lifestyle. Speak to the practice team for more information.

If you are not sure what changes you can make to help improve your health, NHS Choices offers a LifeCheck. Just answer a few simple questions and LifeCheck can give you advice on what changes may help you. Click here for a [LifeCheck](#).

Find out more about self care for healthy living

NHS Choices provides lots of useful information on how you can improve your health and wellbeing. Click on the links to find out more.

I want to lose weight

- [Am I a healthy weight?](#)
- [Put my diet to the test](#)
- [5-a-day meal planner](#)

I want to stop smoking

- [How much does smoking cost me?](#)
- [Get motivational tips](#)

I want to get fit

- [Check my fitness](#)
- [Get fitness tips every day](#)

I want to drink less alcohol

- [Check my drinking](#)

Self care for common conditions

Did you know that one in five GP visits are for common conditions, such as backache, headache or cough?

For most people, they are not serious health problem – you just want to know how to relieve it and you want a treatment that acts fast. You also want to know how long you're going to suffer or what you should do if your symptoms change.

The good news is that self care can help you manage most of these problems. It may mean you don't have to spend time waiting to see your GP but can get on and start tackling your symptoms. Self care for common conditions can also help free up some of your GP's time, making it easier to get an appointment when you have a more serious condition.

Find out more about self care for common conditions

The Self Care Forum has produced Factsheets to help you take care of the most common ailments. These provide useful facts about your condition, what you can expect to happen, how to help yourself, when you should see your GP and where to find out more information. Research shows people using these Factsheets felt more able to manage their common condition.

Click on the link for the Factsheet you need:

- [Low back pain](#)
- [Eczema](#)
- [Heartburn/indigestion](#)
- [Children's fever](#)
- [Constipation](#)
- [Headache/migraine](#)
- [Cough \(adults\)](#)
- [Acne](#)
- [Sprains and strains](#)
- [Sore throat](#)

For information on other common conditions, visit the [NHS Choices](#) or [Patient UK](#) websites. If you are not sure about your symptoms, click here for the [NHS Choices symptom checker](#) where you can get advice on what to do next.

If you need more advice or you are unsure what the right thing for you to do is, ask your pharmacist for advice or call the surgery to speak to a doctor or make an appointment to discuss your problem further.

Self care for long-term conditions

Did you know that if you are living with a long-term condition, you will spend, on average, six hours a year with a healthcare professional and the remaining 8,754 hours managing your health for yourself?

Living with a long-term condition brings challenges and it's important to have the confidence, support and information to manage your health. Self care can help you make the most of living with your condition, rather than avoiding or missing out on things because of it. Self care puts you in control.

Research shows that people with long-term conditions who take more control of their health feel more able to cope with their health problem, have better pain management, fewer flare ups and more energy.

We are committed to helping you live your life with a long-term condition. That's why we run services where you can get advice on the following conditions:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Chronic conditions
- Hypertension
- COPD
- Heart Conditions
- Stroke/TIA
- Warfarin Management

We will also work in partnership with you to create the right care plan for your needs. It's important to think about what you want from a care plan – it can help if you know what you want to discuss with your GP. NHS Choices suggests some questions you could ask:

- Where can I find out about [self help courses](#) for people who have long-term conditions?
- I want to find out more about my condition. What are the best places to do this?
- Is there any new equipment that might help me manage day-to-day. If so, how do I get it?
- How do I meet other people who have the same condition as me? Is there a local or national support group?

- Are there any lifestyle changes I should make to help my health, such as giving up smoking, avoiding certain foods, or doing more of a certain type of exercise?
- What are the results of my tests and what do they mean for me?
- What happens next?
- What can I do?
- What can the doctor do?

Tips for living with a long-term condition

NHS Choices has created some practical tips on living with a long-term condition. To download a leaflet that explains these in more detail, [click here](#):

1. Accept you have a persistent health condition...and then begin to move on
2. Get involved – building a support team
3. Pacing – pacing your daily activities
4. Learn to prioritise and plan your days
5. Setting goals/action plans
6. Being patient with yourself
7. Learn relaxation skills
8. Exercise
9. Keep a diary and track your progress
10. Have a plan for set-backs
11. Team work – work with your practice team
12. Keeping it up

Find out more about self care for long-term conditions

There is a range of free courses aimed at helping people who are living with a long-term condition to manage their condition better on a daily basis:

- the Expert Patients Programme – [click here](#) for information
- [DAFNE](#) (Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating) and [DESMOND](#) (Diabetes Education and Self Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed) for people with diabetes
- Breathe Easy for people with asthma – [click here](#) for information

These courses usually run over several sessions and will provide advice and tools to put you in control of your condition. Ask your GP or the receptionist for details of courses in this area or visit NHS Choices. [Click here](#) for more information.

The following websites provide good information that can help you understand more about the common condition or long-term health problem that affects you:

- [NHS Choices](#)
- [Patient UK](#)
- [Map of Medicine on NHS Choices](#)