

What may happen if I visit my doctor when I only have a minor condition?

- Your doctor may not give you a prescription but may instead advise you to buy an appropriate treatment from your local pharmacy.
- Over the Counter products can be bought from pharmacies without an appointment with your doctor, without a prescription and are often cheaper bought this way.
- Patients should not request prescriptions for medicines to treat minor conditions.

What if I don't feel better?

- If at any time you are concerned or if your symptoms are not improving after a few days of treatment with Over the Counter medication, you should contact your pharmacist or doctor for more advice.



Did you know?

- One in every five GP visits are for common conditions, such as backache, headache or cough.
- Many patients visit their GP or Accident and Emergency department with common conditions, which could have been treated with advice from their pharmacist.
- Every time you see a GP it costs the NHS £43 on average and a visit to Accident and Emergency can cost up to £112.
- Last year in Shropshire, the NHS spent over £2 million on Over the Counter products, which could have been obtained from a pharmacy.

You don't need a GP appointment; you can go straight to your local pharmacy.

Where can I find out more?

For advice and information on how to self care and treat a range of common conditions, visit www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk

The Self Care Forum has many useful fact sheets, which provide information to help you manage common conditions. To find out more visit: www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets

NHS Choices website also provides information on common conditions and how to treat them. To find out more visit: www.nhs.uk

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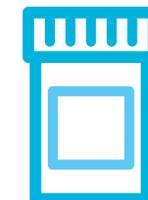
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Self-care with Over the Counter Medication

Think Pharmacist



Ask your pharmacist first for advice about treating minor conditions



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.

Why should I self-care?

- Self-care is important throughout our lives to prevent ill health and treat minor conditions, which can be managed at home by yourself or with support from your community pharmacy.
- Looking after yourself like this helps to free up some of your GP or nurse's time, making it easier to get an appointment when you have a more serious or complex condition.
- Self-care helps to reduce the pressure on your local NHS and the amount spent on medicines, which are available Over the Counter.



Speak to your pharmacist first for advice on what is best for you

Many common conditions can be treated at home, with the support of your local pharmacist if needed. As soon as you become concerned about your condition or symptoms, initially contact your local pharmacist for advice because:

- Pharmacists are qualified health professionals and have the knowledge and skills to help and advise you on the best course of action. You may not need to see a doctor but can get helpful advice or buy a treatment for your condition. Saving you time and helping you feel better quicker.
- Pharmacies are accessible and convenient as many of them are open late nights and weekends. They can be found in local communities, on the high street, in some supermarkets and in shopping centres.
- There is no need for an appointment to speak to the pharmacist; just pop in any time and they will be happy to help you. If you can't get to your local pharmacy yourself, ask someone to go for you or call your local pharmacy. Details of your local pharmacy and their opening times can be found here: www.nhs.uk/chemist

Common conditions that can be treated with self-care

Your pharmacist is an excellent source of advice for many common conditions, such as:

- Acne (mild)
- Cold sores of the lip
- Constipation (infrequent)
- Coughs and colds and nasal congestion
- Cradle cap
- Cystitis (mild)
- Diarrhoea (adult)
- Dry eyes/Sore tired eyes
- Dandruff
- Dry skin (mild)
- Ear wax
- Eczema (mild)
- Eye infection (conjunctivitis)
- Excessive sweating (mild-moderate Hyperhidrosis)
- Fungal skin infections
- Hay fever/Seasonal rhinitis (mild to moderate)
- Haemorrhoids
- Head lice
- Infant colic
- Indigestion and Heartburn
- Insect bites and stings
- Mouth ulcer (minor)
- Migraine (infrequent)
- Minor burns and scalds
- Vitamins and Minerals
- Mild irritant dermatitis
- Nappy rash
- Oral thrush
- Period pain
- Prevention of dental cavities
- Piles
- Ringworm/ Athletes foot
- Scabies
- Skin rash
- Sore throat (acute)
- Sun protection
- Sunburn from excessive sun exposure
- Threadworms
- Teething/Mild toothache
- Toothache
- Travel sickness
- Vaginal thrush
- Warts and Verrucae
- Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
- Probiotics

A consultation with a pharmacist is confidential, an appointment is not necessary and they are often available in the evenings and at weekends.