



ACCESSING THE RIGHT CARE FROM THE RIGHT PLACE

This time of year puts more pressure on Scotland's health and social care services. We can all help by getting the care we need in the right place.

[NHSinform.scot/right-care](https://nhsinform.scot/right-care)

**Right Care
Right Place**

RIGHT CARE, RIGHT PLACE – A GUIDE TO NHS SCOTLAND SERVICES

Winter is the busiest time for Scotland's NHS and social care services. The demand is even greater this year due to the pandemic, so you may experience some disruption. However, we can all do our bit to reduce the pressure by seeking the right care in the right place for our health and social care needs.

This guide will help explain which NHS service to use for different health concerns, and how to look after your health and the people you care for this winter.

Be prepared

Taking steps to protect yourself and others will help prevent illness and reduce the burden on our NHS services. Here's what you can do:

- Ensure your COVID-19 vaccinations are up to date and come forward for your booster vaccine when invited. If you are pregnant getting the vaccine is strongly recommended.
- Flu is serious so get your free flu vaccination if you are eligible.
- Self-isolate immediately and book a test if you develop any COVID-19 symptoms.

- Wear a face covering where required and maintain a safe distance from others.
- Keep windows or doors open when meeting others inside.
- Take regular lateral flow tests to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Continue to attend any routine health appointments such as screening services.

A little preparation now will also help you cope better if you do become ill:

- Make sure repeat prescriptions are up to date.
- Keep some cold and flu remedies in your home.
- Make sure you are registered with a local General Practice and Dental Practice. Find out how at [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/inform/scot).

For more information on COVID-19 or flu vaccinations and how to get them, visit [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/inform/scot) or call **0800 030 8013** between 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week.

GETTING THE RIGHT CARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE

There are a range of NHS health services. To make sure everyone can access the care they need quickly and safely it is important you choose the right care in the right place.

NHSINFORM.SCOT

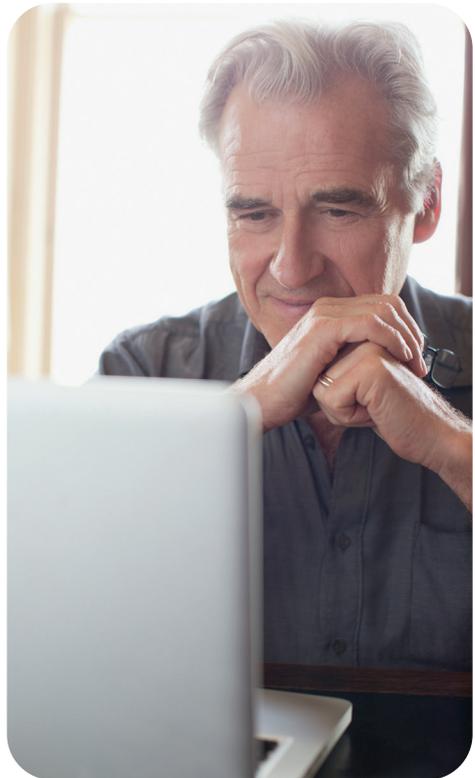


What this service is for

NHSinform.scot is Scotland's national health information website. It provides accurate and reliable information to help you make informed decisions about your health needs. This includes:

- How to help yourself to manage common symptoms such as fever, earache, and vomiting.
- Information and guidance on home treatments and over-the-counter remedies.
- Symptom checkers to let you know where to go if you need further medical care.

At **NHSinform.scot** you will also find details of health and wellbeing services near you, including names, addresses, opening times and service details. This is known as **Scotland's Service Directory**.



COMMUNITY PHARMACY



What this service is for

If you have a minor illness, a local pharmacy should be your first stop. Your local pharmacy can help with:

- Advice and treatment for minor illnesses and common conditions like colds, cold sores, sore throats, diarrhoea, constipation and for women, urinary infections, through NHS Pharmacy First Scotland.
- Your repeat prescriptions.
- Access to free emergency contraception.

Everything you discuss with your pharmacist is confidential and if required, your pharmacist can signpost you to another healthcare professional.



How to access the service

Check [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/inform) to find your nearest local pharmacy and opening times before making the journey.

For repeat prescriptions:

- Please allow plenty of time, at least three working days, when reordering medication.
- Please do not order more medicines than you need.
- In certain circumstances, if you run out of medicines, your pharmacist can provide one cycle of your medication without a prescription from your General Practice.
- If you are unable to go to the pharmacy to collect your medicine, and do not have anyone who can collect it for you, ask your pharmacy if they can help.

GENERAL PRACTICE



What this service is for

General Practices are open and available for your health and wellbeing needs but are continuing to work differently due to COVID-19.

How to access the service

General Practices are very busy, so before deciding to contact your practice, please think whether you can manage your problem yourself, or first get advice from [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre), or from your local pharmacy.

To request an appointment, please call the practice in the first instance or, if available, make an online enquiry. Please only visit if you have an appointment, or if you have no other way of contacting them.

Your General Practitioner may not be the most appropriate person to help you, depending on your health needs. Many different professionals can work in General Practice, such as practice nurses, mental health nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other experts. When you call, staff will ask you for some general information about your needs. This will be treated in the strictest confidence

and will help direct you to the most appropriate expert in the team. You may be offered a face-to-face, telephone or video consultation, as clinically appropriate.

If you have an urgent problem when your General Practice is closed and you feel it can't wait until the practice reopens, you can access **out of hours General Practice services by calling NHS 24 on 111.**

Routine Appointments

If you are invited to a routine appointment such as a screening service, it is important that you attend. Detecting cancer early can improve outcomes so if you have any symptoms of concern, contact your General Practice as soon as possible.

Registering with a General Practice

If you are not yet registered with a local General Practice, it is important that you do so. Visit [www.NHSinform.scot/care-support-and-rights](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre) to find your nearest practice and to download the registration form.

MEDICAL ATTENTION THAT CANNOT WAIT

You can access urgent care services by calling **NHS 24** on **111** - **day or night**. While you should always call 999 or go directly to A&E in emergencies, if you have a non-life threatening condition for which you would previously have visited A&E, you should now first call **NHS 24** on **111**.



NHS 24 ON 111

What this service is for

NHS 24 on 111 can help you get the right care if:

- You think you need A&E, but it's not life threatening.
- Your General Practice or Dental Practice is closed and you cannot wait until they reopen.

How to access the service

Call **NHS 24** on **111**. They will assess and advise you on next steps.

Where a further medical assessment is required, NHS 24 will refer you to the most appropriate health professional. If they think you need A&E, they will either advise you to attend A&E directly, or refer you to

your local NHS Board team for further assessment. This may involve a telephone or video call in the first instance, where clinically appropriate.

If necessary, they may arrange for you to arrive at hospital at a certain time. If they don't think you need to attend A&E they will help you get the care you need as quickly, safely, and as close to home as possible. For example, you might be asked to attend your local Minor Injuries Unit for non-life threatening but painful injuries, like cuts, minor burns, sprains, and strains.

Textphone and BSL users

Textphone and Relay UK

You can call NHS 24 111 on **18001 111** or NHS inform on **18001 0800 224488** or use the Relay UK app [relayuk.bt.com](https://www.relayuk.bt.com).

If you use the **BSL** you can use the **ContactSCOTLAND-BSL** interpreting video relay service available 24/7 at [contactsotland-bsl.org](https://www.contactsotland-bsl.org).



A&E/999

What this service is for

Your local A&E is for emergencies, such as a suspected heart attack or stroke, severe breathing difficulties or severe bleeding.

How to access the service

In an emergency you should always go directly to **A&E** or call **999**.

Our A&E services are exceptionally busy so we encourage everyone to think carefully before attending. If you do go directly to A&E and it is not the most appropriate place for your care, the A&E team will first make sure you are safe before redirecting you to the best place for your treatment.

If you are unsure whether you need to go to A&E you should visit **NHSinform.scot** in the first instance. If you think you do need to go to A&E, but it is not life threatening, you should call **NHS 24** on **111** first.



PLANNED HOSPITAL CARE (ELECTIVE CARE/ OUTPATIENTS)

NHS Scotland is continuing to treat patients based on their clinical urgency.

If you are currently waiting for an appointment or procedure and your symptoms worsen, please contact your hospital clinical team or General Practice.

COVID-19 is still among us, and services have to be measured against the need to keep the virus under control, while continuing to protect the NHS, and save lives.

For further information around Planned Care during the pandemic please visit: **NHSinform.scot/waitingtimes**.



MATERNITY CARE

Maternity services have continued to provide high quality care and support throughout the pandemic. Your midwife will speak to you about the appointments you should attend, such as your routine scan appointments. However, how you receive some of your care may change. For example, your appointment may be by video call instead of in person.

Your midwife will make sure that you have phone numbers to contact for care, but further advice is also available at [NHSinform.scot/ready-steady-baby](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare/ready-steady-baby) and [parentclub.scot](https://www.parentclub.scot).

You should continue to follow health advice during your pregnancy, and if you have any concerns at all please do not delay speaking to your midwife. You should also continue to monitor your baby's movements and contact your midwife immediately if you feel your baby is moving less than normal. Do not wait until the next day to get help.



Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines are strongly recommended in pregnancy and are the best way for you to protect against the unknown risks of COVID-19 in pregnancy for both you and your baby. More information is available at [nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare/covid-19-vaccine).

Flu is serious and, with COVID-19 around, it is even more important to get your free flu vaccination to keep both you and your baby well. More information is available at [nhsinform.scot/flu-vaccine/who-can-get-the-vaccine/pregnant-women](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare/flu-vaccine/who-can-get-the-vaccine/pregnant-women).

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



What these services are for

There are a range of mental health and wellbeing services available in addition to your General Practice. They provide free support for a range of conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression, and feelings of panic.

Many services can be accessed directly as detailed here. Your General Practice may also help by signposting you to other services or by making arrangements for the most appropriate practice team member to assist. Please contact the General Practice by telephone to discuss in confidence.



How to access the services

Your General Practice is open and available to help. When making an appointment you may be asked some questions about your needs. This is completely confidential and will ensure you are directed to the right care.

Telephone support

If you're struggling with your mental health or need emotional support you can call:

- Breathing Space on **0800 83 85 87** open weekdays Monday – Thursday 6pm to 2am and weekends Friday 6pm to Monday 6am. You can also visit breathingspace.scot.
- For urgent support please call **NHS 24** on **111**, 24 hours a day.

NHSinform.scot/mentalhealth has resources to help with your mental health, whether you're looking for advice, information or local support. Or you can visit clearyourhead.scot for practical advice and ideas on how to look after your mental wellbeing.

DENTIST



What this service is for

You should contact your dentist if you have any pain or problem in your mouth that you want to have checked. This includes mouth injuries and ulcers that won't heal.

How to access the service

Dentistry is still getting back to normal and your local practice will have a number of COVID-19 safety measures in place to allow them to carry out more routine care and provide greater access to dental care for children.

For instance, you may first be assessed by phone for COVID-19 and other respiratory infections. Patients with a respiratory infection will usually have their appointment delayed until they can be seen with strict infection controls in place.

If you have an urgent dental problem while your dental practice is closed, you can contact **NHS 24** on **111**. If you're not registered with a dentist, you should phone your regional dental helpline. You'll find the number online at **NHSinform.scot/dental** - under 'Accessing emergency dental care'.

OPTOMETRIST



What this service is for

If you have an eye problem you should always contact an optometry practice (opticians) in the first instance. The majority of eye conditions can be managed by optometrists, who are highly skilled clinicians. If your optometry practice is closed and you're concerned about your vision, phone **NHS 24** free on **111**.

Free NHS eye examinations are available to all UK residents. It's important that you have your eyes regularly examined, even if you're not worried about your vision, to help early detection of eye problems and signs of other health conditions. If necessary, your optometrist can refer you for any further help you need.

How to access the service

To make an appointment, phone or email a practice or follow advice on their website.

If you are unable to leave home unaccompanied because of illness or disability, you can have a home visit. Contact an optometry practice for help in arranging this.

For further information on eye health and eye care services visit **Eyes.Scot**.

SOCIAL CARE



Social care services are here to provide personal and practical assistance for children, young people and adults who need extra support, as well as for paid and unpaid carers.

Social care in Scotland is delivered by local Health and Social Care Partnerships through self-directed support arrangements. These are in place to ensure everyone is provided with the information they need to have more choice and control over how they would like their support provided.

Care Information Scotland

careinfoscotland.scot provides a range of information and advice on care services, and how to access them. They also have a phone line and chat feature where people can make contact on **0800 011 3200**. If you help to care for a friend, relative, or neighbour, please visit Care Information Scotland for information on rights and support for unpaid carers as well as contact details for your local carers centre.

Living Made Easy

livingmadeeasy.org.uk is an information website brought to you by the DLF, the charity previously known as the Disabled Living Foundation. The site has been developed by DLF's team of occupational therapists and contains free and impartial advice for anyone looking for solutions, gadgets, adaptations and aids to make life easier.

AskSara

[AskSARA at livingmadeeasy.org.uk](http://livingmadeeasy.org.uk)

is a useful guide if you are not sure what equipment might help. The online self-assessment tool produces a personalised advice report detailing what equipment could help, and can signpost you to other services as needed. The site also links to around 60,000 products that you can buy yourself.

Older people can also call the free Age Scotland helpline on **0800 12 44 222**, which provides information, advice and friendship for those looking for a chat. It is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

COVID-19 – PROTECTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Test & Protect

If you have respiratory or other COVID-19 symptoms (fever, loss of sense of taste or smell) you and your household must isolate and book a PCR test straightaway at [NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect](#) or call **0800 028 2816**. Do not wait to see if your symptoms improve before booking a test and call **0300 303 2713** if you need help booking.

Self-isolation advice:

If you test positive you should stay at home for 10 days (or longer if fever persists), and you will be put in touch with a contact tracing team so that your close contacts can be identified.

The isolation requirements for household members and close contacts of anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will depend on their age and vaccination status. The contact tracing team will advise on this and guidance can also be found at [NHSinform.scot](#).

If your symptoms worsen or last for more than 10 days, call **NHS 24** on **111**. If you have a fever for more than 10 days, continue isolating for 48 hours after it ends. Other symptoms, such as coughing or continued loss of sense of taste or smell, may continue beyond the 10 day isolation period but do not require continued isolation.

Self-isolation support:

If you're asked to self-isolate and need support, you can phone the National Assistance Helpline (**0800 111 4000**) or textphone (**0800 111 4114**) from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. The helpline can also advise you on the £500 Self-isolation Support Grant, available for workers on low income benefits.

Protect Scotland app:

Download the free [Protect Scotland app](#) at [protect.scot](#). It only takes a few minutes and helps contact tracing to break the chains of transmission quicker.

For COVID-19 information visit [NHSinform.scot/coronavirus](#)

BE PATIENT, BE KIND

Our health and social care workers are working tirelessly to deliver our care despite the added pressures of the pandemic, and we thank you for your patience and support as our services adjust to the increased demand. Our NHS staff are here to help but sadly, they continue to endure abuse from a small minority. Violence and aggression will not be tolerated, and will not speed up anyone's care.



Visit [gov.scot/right-care](#) for this booklet in additional languages and formats or write to Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG quoting reference 'right care'.

