

Self Care Guide for Patient Participation Groups

February 2013

The National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P.) has taken on the role of the national patient's champion for the Self Care Forum.

Many patient participation groups (PPGs) already promote good health to their local communities. Supporting self care provides a further opportunity for PPG members to have an active role in their GP practice; ensure that local people understand and get the best out of their NHS services; and that local GPs, nurses and practice staff are able to focus on providing treatment and support for those with long-term and complicated health problems.

The campaign also offers an opportunity for PPGs to raise their profile, and further develop their role as advocates for the NHS and its services in their community

This guide gives information about the self care campaign and covers the following:

- Why self care matters
- What is the Self Care Forum
- What PPG members have told us
- What can your PPG do
- Resources available
- Case-studies

N.A.P.P. is uniquely placed as the only UK wide umbrella organisation for patient-led groups within general practices. It has over 30 years' experience and expertise in promoting, supporting and developing Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) working closely with GP's, practice teams and patients.

Patient participation is a growing social movement - over 60 per cent of general practices in England now have a PPG and the number is rapidly increasing. Groups are also forming in pharmacies and dental practices. Virtual PPGs now exist alongside 'real' groups facilitating dialogue with the whole patient population through email networks and social media.

N.A.P.P.'s membership base of GP practices, PPGs, and Clinical Commissioning Groups increases monthly and currently represents a potential audience of around ten million patients. For more information visit www.napp.org.uk

Part One

What is self care and why it matters

There are estimated to be around 15 million in England with a long term health condition and this figure is likely to increase with the growing ageing population. Self care is also very important for those who are informal carers looking after family, friends or neighbours. GP consultations currently taken up for minor ailments could be used for people with more serious or long term conditions and those recovering from illnesses and injuries.

What do we mean by minor ailments?

The top ten minor ailments people visit their GP about are:

Minor Ailment	Total consultations (millions)
Back pain	8.4
Dermatitis	6.8
Heartburn and indigestion	6.8
Nasal congestion	5.3
Constipation	4.3
Migraine	2.7
Cough	2.6
Acne	2.4
Sprains and strains	2.2
Headache	1.8

(Source: IMS Health Dec. 2007 study, commissioned by PAGB; Base: 500,000 patient records from IMS database 'Data Analyser')

Until recently there were no data available on numbers of GP consultations for minor ailments and the cost of these to the NHS but in 2007 the Proprietary Association of Great Britain (PAGB) commissioned IMS to quantify GP workload for minor ailments and their costs. The findings were as follows:

- 57 million GP consultations each year involving minor ailments
- 6 million consultations involving a minor ailment plus other condition
- 51.4 million consultations involving minor ailments alone
- 18 per cent of GP workload is accounted for by minor ailments alone
- nearly half the consultations are generated by 16 - 59 year olds
- treatment of minor ailments within primary care incurs significant cost to the NHS of £2 billion a year
- 80 per cent of costs are for GPs' time, equating to £1.5 billion a year and on average over an hour a day for every GP
- over 91 per cent of all minor ailment consultations result in a prescription at a cost of £371 million.

Research tells us...

The most promising way of supporting self-management/self care appears to involve approaches that support and encourage people so they feel more confident about managing their conditions and are more likely to alter their behaviours.

Approaches which recognise people's motivations and needs, take account of their level of desire to change (or the stage they have reached in making a change) and support people emotionally and psychologically have been found to have more sustainable impacts on behaviour, clinical outcomes and healthcare resource use.

There is an increasing focus on supporting self care in a way that involves people's carers and family members.

(Source: Helping people help themselves (The Health Foundation May 2011))

What is the Self Care Forum

The Self Care Forum is leading a national campaign involving clinical leaders, policy makers and N.A.P.P. The campaign is supported by the Minister for Care Services. The Self Care Forum's campaign message is:

Better self care is good for people and makes sure there's time for longer consultations with people who need them...Help the NHS to help you.

The Self Care Forum was set up in May 2011 with the purpose of furthering the reach of self care and embedding it into everyday life. Increased self care brings many benefits, not only for the individual, but for clinicians, the NHS, government and society as a whole. The Forum also agreed seven aims within its terms of reference to help this process as well as a time frame of four to five years to develop, disseminate and promote the outputs of each aim:

1. **Aim:** Gather and promote case studies of local activities and self-care practice using the Self Care Forum (SCF) website as the first port of call for information and best practice
Benefit: Demonstrating the importance of putting self care into practice
2. **Aim:** To lobby Commissioners, Directors of Public Health, the NHS Commissioning Board and its Local Area Teams, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Public Health England to see self care as a commissioning priority
Benefit: Demonstrating the importance of implementing a commissioning strategy for self care
3. **Aim:** Promote the need to adopt a GP practice-based approach to encouraging self care by working with Patient Participation Groups and supporting the RCGP e-learning course on minor ailments
Benefit: The RCGP e-Learning module builds multi-disciplinary capabilities on implementing self care aware consultations
4. **Aim:** Produce a guide on how to bring SCF products into practice
Benefit: Implementation of combined knowledge to achieve best practice
5. **Aim:** Get health literacy about self care seen as priority in school education
Benefit: Vital for future generations
6. **Aim:** Develop information about when it's safe to self care and when it's time to consult with a health professional
Benefit: Having appropriate levels of consultation, and the chance of early diagnoses when people understand when to self-care and when to consult.
7. **Aim:** Promote and support Self Care Week
Benefit: This will provide a focal point for activities relating to self care

What PPG members have told us

Key self care messages

Over the past 12 months, we have held a number of workshops with PPG members, practice managers and GPs to get their views on self care and understand what they think the important campaign messages should be.

We were told:

- by giving people more knowledge about symptoms they feel less anxious, more confident about what to expect and what to look out for if symptoms did not improve
- having more information about proactive steps to take and appropriate 'over the counter' medication means that patients only need to visit their GP if symptoms became worse or prolonged
- remind people attending with a minor illness that they could potentially avoid the inconvenience and costs (travel, time off work, childcare, dependent care and so on) associated with a trip to their surgery if they better understood their symptoms and had more confidence to look after themselves
- GP surgeries are unhealthy places - when you feel poorly there's no place like home
- patients want support to feel confident about self care but want to know they can still access their GP if they need to.

We were told that PPG members could become our champions, taking the campaign out to the local community; and also to benefit themselves from a "self care" approach to their health and wellbeing.

Part Two

What can PPGs do to support self care?

PPGs are uniquely placed at the heart of GP practices and have an essential role in empowering individuals to access and understand appropriate information that supports shared and informed decision-making about treatment, self care, self management (or self care including self management) and lifestyle choices.

PPGs through their contact with patients in the practice population can:

- convey and share self care messages through their health awareness activities, events and patients' surveys
- signpost patients to other means of support such as support groups, health related activity, self management courses

PPG members told us that a **self care questionnaire** with some key questions they can ask the GP would be a useful resource for people to use and keep should they experience the same symptoms in the future. The basic questions could cover:

- how long might these symptoms last?
- what do I need to look out for?
- what can I do to help myself?
- what can I do to prevent problems in future?

The self care questionnaire could be supported by a poster and information for TV/display screens. PPG members have suggested other ways to promote self care including:

- providing information about self care to new patients as they register
- folders with information about self care options in the waiting area
- through the local voluntary and community infrastructure i.e. outreach to communities and groups that do not engage, citizenship training, libraries and so on
- drop-in and information events at the practice
- email and online communication
- working with community pharmacies

- talking to local media about possible stories or features
- making use of the NHS Choose Well campaign resources
- promoting self management courses available in the area

We are in the early stages of developing this campaign in conjunction with the National Self Care Forum and the NHS. The campaign will include the following:

- development of campaign materials
- training and workshop sessions for PPG members
- the development of the first **National PPG Awareness Week** which will run annually during the first week in June commencing from **1st – 8th June 2013**

What can your PPG do now

There are a number of things that your PPG can do now to promote the self care campaign:

- talk to your practice manager about introducing the self care questionnaire (see resources section below)
- use the case-studies at the end of this guide to start a discussion with your PPG colleagues, practice manager and other practice staff about how you could work together to begin to integrate self care into everyday activity
- promote the on-line symptom checker that is available on NHS Choices on your GP practice website – www.nhs.uk
- promote links to self care information on NHS Choices about self caring on your GP practice website:
 - flu <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Flu>
 - colds <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cold-common>
 - sickness and diarrhoea in children <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Rotavirus-gastroenteritis>
 - Norovirus <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Norovirus>
 - sprains and strains <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Sprains>
 - promote the interactive first aid toolkit on NHS Choices - <http://www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/firstaidtoolkit.aspx>
- promote the service finder 'Health services near you' that can be found on NHS Choices on your GP practice website - <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>
- approach local employers and ask them if they could put the links above on their websites for their staff to use

- ask your local pharmacies if they can post the same information on their own websites
- send all the links to patients who have registered with your PPG to receive updates by text or email
- promote self management for people with long term health conditions
- make use of the Choose well campaign materials. These promote self care and explain how local NHS services fit together. There is no cost involved in using them and they are available at <http://www.midlandsandeast.nhs.uk/DoOnceCampaigns/DemandManagement.aspx>

How do you start

Working with your GP practice. There are a range of materials available, including posters and leaflets. Talk to your GPs or your practice manager about how you can work together – perhaps you could look at an awareness raising session within your practice. Develop a 12-month plan, with clear roles and deadlines; as part of the plan identify all the local individuals and organisations who could help you and how you are going to approach them.

Contact your local community centres. Ask if you can put up a poster or distribute other self care information.

Contact local businesses, shops and libraries. Ask if they can put up a poster or distribute other self care information.

Organise some local promotional events. Contact local markets, supermarkets, bingo-halls, recreation centres and so on, and see if you could put up a stand, distribute leaflets and talk about the local NHS services available in your area.

Contact local voluntary sector organisations. Talk to local voluntary sector groups and ask them if you can send them information that they can email and pass on to their members, or if they can put information on their websites.

Talk to your other local PPGs. You may be able to pool resources to get materials produced, work together at promotional events and share experience.

Part Three

Case studies

The case studies below are provided by the National Self Care Forum and are taken from across the country.

Culm Integrated Centre for Health

At Culm Integrated Centre for Health there is an awareness among all staff that a conventional prescription is not the most appropriate or effective course of action for many patient ailments. As a result, education runs throughout the practice with patients firmly encouraged to take an unprecedented interest in solving their problems for themselves.

Patients can take their own blood pressure and check their height, weight and BMI in reception, and there is even a patient-run library at the practice filled with medical guides and journals for people to learn about their conditions and diagnose themselves. Patients also benefit from evening lectures held every two months about a current health topic. These lectures are often attended by over 50 people.

Key to encouraging patients to self-care is health facilitator Ruth Tucker, who joined the practice two years ago. She has been the mastermind behind patient action groups like Knit and Natter, Amblees (a walking group) and Time Out to Lose Weight, which have targeted some of the most prevalent problems facing the surgery's ageing patient population, namely depression, isolation, inactivity and obesity.

These initiatives, which aim to get patients more involved in the practice, demonstrate a belief in patient participation and empowerment as key to self-care. The practice also recognises that with its ageing patient population, getting people to self-care for their minor ailments as normal will be key to encouraging them to manage their more complicated long term conditions in the future.

Julie Carter, a healthcare assistant (HCA) at the practice remarks that whereas her role was formerly restricted to taking bloods, this is something that some receptionists have now been trained to do, freeing up her time to give advice about wound care, diet and lifestyle. Mags Pryke, a practice nurse, has seen the roles of HCAs and practice nurses legitimised by the GP triage system, where patients calling the surgery for a same day appointment are directed to the most appropriate person to treat them, which is often not the doctor. Being recommended by the doctor has made patients much more receptive to receiving self-care advice from nurses and HCAs.

To target the underlying psychological problems behind minor ailments like headaches, colds, thrush and acne, two volunteer advice workers at the surgery take referrals from doctors. Vivian Southall, one of the advisers, has found that these minor ailments often have a stress related cause, and so is able to 'cure' the patient through listening and giving advice without need for prescriptions or repeat GP visits.

Patients have also been encouraged in the consultation room to consider alternatives to conventional prescriptions, in a move to try to reverse patient expectations of an automatic green slip. GP partner Dr Michael Dixon was involved in a study in 2007 where for six months every partner at the practice gave patients a choice of herb or prescription for common minor ailments like colds, arthritis, insomnia, depression and fatigue (for example, devils claw for arthritis).

Half the patients involved chose a herbal rather than conventional prescription. Dr Dixon says that this is indicative that patients are receptive to alternatives like explanation prescriptions and self-care advice. The key, he says, is "its about giving something that appeals to their imagination".

A further indicator to Dr Dixon that patients are receptive to alternative solutions is that his referral rate is 46 per cent less than the lowest referring partner in the practice and the practice as a whole prescribes less and uses fewer secondary care resources than others in the area. With high patient participation and the whole clinical team on board, self-care cannot fail to expand and develop at the practice, with patients taking an active interest in their health.

The centre has turned high levels of unemployment in the area to its advantage, setting up patient participation groups running throughout the day to get people actively engaged in their health. Healthcare assistants (HCAs) and practice nurses in particular have seen their roles change to encourage self-care.

Bromley by Bow Health Centre

At the Bromley by Bow centre, which is situated in an unexpectedly lush and tranquil setting among the high rise blocks of East London, promotion of self-care threads its way through every aspect of patient care.

Despite many challenges, including the fact that half of patients can't read or write and a third of consultations are conducted in Seleti, the practice has recognised that communication is key to self-care. Sam Everington, one of the GP partners at the practice spearheads many of the initiatives designed to let patients take more responsibility for their health.

In the first instance, the doctor / patient relationship has been redefined to encourage self-care and a sense of personal empowerment. Doctors at the Bromley by Bow centre sit side by side with their patients, rather than sitting separated by a desk, so they can look at the computer screen together if necessary and solve the problem as a team.

This helps to remove the idea that the GP is infallible, encouraging patients to take responsibility for their ailment next time around and have the confidence to self-care. Sam Everington has encouraged doctors at the practice to say "I don't know, but we will solve the problem together". As a result of this increased level of communication, 50 per cent of patients now leave their consultation with an explanation prescription, which is often a print out from the internet with details of free services or facilities that are available, a number to ring, website to visit, or even homework to do. And they are actively encouraged to try and use these sources the next time around. Sam Everington has found that the explanation prescription has satisfied the patients need to go away with something in their hand, although notes that the same cannot be said for the decidedly less popular exercise prescription.

To support this, Sam Everington created an informative and easy to understand leaflet designed to go in every patient's home. The leaflet gives details of the most appropriate number to ring or person to see in many different situations, which, as well as promoting self-care and responsibility, frees up GP time from unnecessary visits.

Bromley by Bow centre is keen to inform patients about their conditions in order for them to get more out of their consultations. The practice is currently running an initiative to educate children about their asthma, and Sam Everington notes candidly that after attending sessions and noticing changes in his condition one 10 year old boy "approached me and said, 'Sam, I want you to prescribe me this'".

The health centre uses its receptionists to their full capacity. Sam Everington points out that although in a good position to communicate with patients, they are generally an “underused resource”. In contrast to this, receptionists at his practice maintain strong relationships with patients, even sending birthday cards and personal notes of condolence to relatives when patients die.

He puts this down to the lack of physical barriers between the patient and the receptionist. The reception desk is long and curved so can be accessed at many points, and although many practices are adopting ever more stringent security policies to keep patients and staff apart, the lack of barriers at Dr Everington’s practice encourages both staff and patients to be friendly and polite to one another, leading to a lasting relationship. These strong relationships as well as intimate knowledge of patients’ medical histories place receptionists in an ideal place to signpost practice visitors to the most appropriate service, which works to deflect unnecessary visits and minor ailments away from the GPs.

Incorporated within the local community centre, the practice even uses the layout of the building and its surroundings to promote self-care. All parts of the building can be fully accessed by patients and doctors leave their doors open when not in consultation.

Although high unemployment in the area contributes to the significant volume of visits, the practice itself sits within a community centre containing an unemployment office, Sure Start centre and IT suite. This helps deflect some unnecessary visits as well as support the practice’s self-care ethos by helping people take responsibility for other areas of their lives as well as their health.

The practice sees communication as a key enabler for self-care, and this runs through every aspect of the patient experience. The practice uses all the tools at its disposal to encourage self-care, with the result that rather than a bolt on initiative that patients may or may not feel the effects of, patients cannot help but be touched by some aspect of self-care that threads itself through the Bromley by Bow centre.

Using the explanation prescription, GPs can address the underlying fears behind patient visits which often stem from a family history of a particular illness or misunderstanding of symptoms. This directly benefits the practice by cutting down unnecessary repeat visits.

Thornley House Medical Centre

At Thornley House Medical Centre in Hyde, Dr Amir Hannan has developed an innovative website (www.htmc.co.uk) to act as a first port of call for self care. An ever growing and changing resource that is able to respond to patient needs, the website has the full backing of all practice staff and gradually the message about self care is starting to get through.

Despite a challenging patient population in which the majority are social class 4 and 5, 50 per cent don't have a car and 25 per cent have little or no English, GP at the practice Dr Nadeem Ahmed says that he has noticed a decrease in his workload around minor ailments.

This is the culmination of five years of hard work combining strong doctor/patient relationships with unparalleled patient resources. Five years ago the practice's performance was in the bottom 10 per cent for the PCT, despite having three young enthusiastic doctors. Now it has perfect QOF figures in almost all categories and staff that pride themselves on the quality of care they give.

The practice's website is the brain child of Dr Hannan, who stopped doing out of hours work three years ago to dedicate time to it. Although Dr Hannan managed to get the initial website developed for free, he estimates that up to now it would have cost around £10,000. Dr Hannan is keen to stress that although he supports self care, "self care is not free care" for the provider.

The website addresses some of the challenges put to the practice team by the patient population. Dr Ahmed observes that people who are entitled to free prescriptions will travel to the surgery and wait to see the doctor, even if the prescription is for a simple over the counter medicine like paracetamol. To try to reverse this behaviour, the website informs patients of the actual cost of their visit, from taxi fares to petrol prices, and the cost of Nurofen at the pharmacy or supermarket, which stands at under £3.

The staff at the practice recognise that it is their responsibility to encourage the website as the first port of call. Dr Hannan believes this is one of the best ways to reach the majority of patients, as despite deprivation, 70 per cent of the practice's patients have access to the internet.

The patient participation group (PPG) has noticed that the doctors are very supportive of patients who want to self care, and that patients are always directed to the website for further information. PPG member Margaret Rickson says the website empowers her as she can look at it and be informed when she is in consultation with a doctor, and Dr Hannan says the website creates a community feel in which patients can support each other as they self care.

He goes as far as to say that patients get upset when they move from the practice as they fear they will not receive the same support to self care elsewhere. To encourage self care in the non-English speaking - mainly Bangladeshi - population who don't use the website, the practice has brought in an interpreter. Connie acts as a triage system, signposting patients to the right service or perhaps just to the blood pressure machine in the waiting room. Before Connie arrived, Bangladeshi patients were using 30-40 per cent of emergency appointments, but through effective communication with patients she has been able to significantly decrease unsuitable use of emergency appointments.

The GPs have bold ideas of where they'd like to see self care go next. Dr Ahmed would like to see more responsibility with the pharmacist, so that children in particular could be registered with a pharmacist and go straight there for their prescriptions. Dr Ahmed thinks that as long as people can get their free prescriptions at the doctor, they will continue to sit and wait. Dr Hannan would like to see a national campaign for self care ("I like to compare self care to smoking cessation"), with support in the community for people who are trying to self care, and a system that flags up to GPs to educate patients about self care every time they walk through the door.

For now though, the GPs will continue with the high standard of care and communication they provide to patients in order to empower them to self care, and of course will carry on encouraging use of the website as the first port of call for minor ailments. Meanwhile, Dr Hannan will ensure the website continues to grow and adapt to respond to every self care need.

Highcliffe and Mundeford Medical Centre Patient Participation Group

Pat Vinycomb, a member of the patient Participation Group (PPG) at Highcliffe Medical Centre in Dorset set up a Health Information Centre in 2010 with the help of a small amount of pump priming money from the National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P). This is working well and offers patients and families a wide range of information and also the opportunity to request information on specific topics which can help them or a member of their family to understand more about the health problem / condition for which they are receiving treatment.

This project entitled 'Be Health Wise' has led to another project for carers in Highcliffe and Pat is now an Ambassador for Carers UK for Dorset. The PPG is being successful in encouraging carers to register their role at the Medical Centre and promoting self care is part of this project. Pat has been successful in receiving funding from Access Dorset / Dorset CC and Dorset PCT to develop a community based service to carers and also to explore the needs of people after their caring role has ceased.

For more information on these projects please contact Pat at: patvinycomb@gmail.com

Part Four

Resources available

On the next three pages you will find resources that you can use now to promote self care within your GP practice and your local community, including:

- an example of a draft poster promoting self care for colds (see page 18)
- a template self care questionnaire that you can photo-copy and use within your GP practice (see page 19)
- a version of the questionnaire that you can use if you do not have access to a colour photo-copier (see page 20)
- examples of some of the materials that are available as part of the national NHS Choose Well campaign (see page 21)

Anyone with everyday cold symptoms might not have to go to their GP surgery for an appointment—they might be better phoning their GP surgery first for advice. The poster depicts someone at home.

FACT: Nine out of ten people with an everyday illness will have already done something to help themselves and started feeling better by the time you have read this poster.

If you are here with symptoms that might be treatable at home you could:

- Stop worrying and feel more positive,
- Save yourself time,
- Get better faster...



By taking these simple steps...

- Ask during your appointment how long the symptoms might last and what to look out for.
Common symptoms can take two weeks to get better!
- Ask what your symptoms mean and what you can do for yourself.
Having basic knowledge and confidence puts you more in control.
- Ask what you can do to take care of yourself to prevent common problems in the future.
Help yourself and your family to get and stay fit so you avoid the hassle of everyday illness and have a better quality of life.

This practice has a Patient Participation Group which you can contact for support and information. Patients in the group take an active interest in their health care and work closely with your practice to ensure services are responsive to patients needs. Contact _____



National Association for
Patient Participation

Self Care Forum
Helping people take care of themselves

Self Care Questionnaire

Please hand to patients before their appointment for completion during their consultation

When you're feeling poorly with a minor everyday illness there's no place like home...



Having some basic information and advice can put you in control, stop you worrying, save you time and money and help you get better faster.

Here are some simple questions you can ask your GP or practice nurse to help you with your on-going recovery.

So why not keep the answers to these questions somewhere safe for next time?

- 1. How long might my symptoms last?*
- 2. What should I look out for?*
- 3. What you can I do for myself?*
- 4. Is there anything I can do to prevent similar problems in the future?*

You will also need to tell your GP or practice nurse about the things you might have already done to deal with the problem e.g. taken over the counter medicines or other remedies such as any alternative therapy you have already tried.

The information in this leaflet is supported by your Patient Participation Group (PPG), the National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P) and the National Self Care Forum. Thanks to the PPG members who attended meetings in London and Manchester and who helped us to develop this questionnaire. Find more information about your local PPG:

Self Care Questionnaire

Please hand to patients before their appointment for completion during their consultation

When you're feeling poorly with a minor everyday illness there's no place like home...

Having some basic information and advice can put you in control, stop you worrying, save you time and money and help you get better faster.

Here are some simple questions you can ask your GP or practice nurse to help you with your on-going recovery.

So why not keep the answers to these questions somewhere safe for next time?

1. *How long might my symptoms last?*
2. *What should I look out for?*
3. *What you can I do for myself?*
4. *Is there anything I can do to prevent similar problems in the future?*

You will also need to tell your GP or practice nurse about the things you might have already done to deal with the problem e.g. taken over the counter medicines or other remedies such as any alternative therapy you have already tried.

The information in this leaflet is supported by your Patient Participation Group (PPG), the National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P) and the National Self Care Forum. Thanks to the PPG members who attended meetings in London and Manchester and who helped us to develop this questionnaire. Find more information about your local PPG:

Choose Well resources – some examples of materials available

A copy of the brand guidelines for the Choose Well campaign and electronic versions of the materials can be found at: <http://www.midlandsandeast.nhs.uk/DoOnceCampaigns/DemandManagement.aspx> Your local NHS communications team may be able to help you to adapt and localise the materials.

For more information email:
cathy.stuart@northwest.nhs.uk

NHS

Feeling unwell?

There are a range of NHS services on your doorstep.

- Self-care
- NHS Direct
- Pharmacy
- GP
- NHS Walk-in centre
- A&E and 999

Choose well. Make sure you Choose Well. Get the right treatment for you and help the NHS to manage its resources.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea.

The facts.
Sickness and diarrhoea bugs are caught easily. They are often passed on in situations where there are lots of children, such as daycares, nurseries or school.

Feeling sick or sudden vomiting are normally the first signs. Diarrhoea usually follows afterwards.

Treatment tips.

- Give your child plenty of fluids
- Give them lots of reassurance and stay with them
- When they can eat offer bland, easy digested foods - nothing rich or fatty
- If you are breastfeeding keep on doing so

Call your GP practice if...

- Vomiting and diarrhoea last longer than 24 hours
- Your child appears dehydrated

In babies: has a sunken fontanelle (soft spot) or dry nappies

In older children: has sunken eyes and cheeks

General Advice.

If your symptoms suddenly get worse, or fail to improve after a few days, you can:

- Speak to your local pharmacy staff
- Look online for advice at www.nhs.uk
- Phone your GP for advice
- Call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47

Interactive first aid kit.

Find out what to keep in your kit and how to use it: www.nhs.uk and search for 'first aid kit'

Make sure that you Choose Well:

- Save yourself time
- Help GPs have more time to treat people with serious health problems
- Ensure that A&E, emergency and 999 services are free to treat people with life-threatening and emergency conditions

Download further information on your mobile - go to www.northwest.nhs.uk or scan the QR code on the right with your smart phone.

NHS

Facts and treatment tips for you and your child.

Coping with common childhood illnesses:

- Coughs
- Colds
- Sore throats
- Vomiting and diarrhoea

Choose well.

Sprains and Strains.

Mild to moderate sprains and strains can be treated at home. The pain should improve after four days of self-treatment.

Treatment

Basic advice for the first 48 to 72 hours:

- Rest the injured joint or muscle and avoid activity
- Apply ice wrapped in a damp towel to the injured area for 15-20 minutes, every two to three hours during the day, but not while you sleep
- Use a crepe or elastic bandage to limit any swelling, but take the bandage off before you go to sleep
- Keep the injured area raised and supported on a pillow to reduce swelling
- Taking paracetamol will help to relieve pain

Cuts and Grazes.

Cleaning cuts and grazes thoroughly and covering them with a plaster or dressing is all that is needed.

Treatment

- To stop bleeding, apply pressure to the area using a bandage or towel
- Raise the part of the body that has been cut to slow down bleeding
- Wash and dry your hands and then clean the wound under running tap water
- Pat the area dry with a clean towel
- Do not use antiseptic cream as it may slow healing
- Apply a sterile, waterproof dressing, such as a waterproof plaster. Change the dressing regularly
- If the wound is painful, take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen

General Advice.

If your symptoms suddenly get worse, or fail to improve after a few days, you can:

- Speak to your local pharmacy staff
- Look on-line for advice at www.nhs.uk
- Phone your GP for advice

Interactive First Aid Kit.

Find out what to keep in your kit and how to use it: www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/firstaidtoolkit.aspx

Make sure that you Choose Well:

- Save yourself time
- Help GPs have more time to treat people with serious health problems
- Ensure that A&E, emergency and 999 services are free to treat people with life-threatening and emergency conditions

Download further information on your mobile - go to www.northwest.nhs.uk or scan the QR code on the right with your smart phone.

NHS

Summer health survival guide.

expert health advice

...right on your high street!

at your local pharmacy, it's coming this hot summer!

Choose well.

NHS

expert help with your family's everyday illnesses

...no appointment needed

just what I needed!

Two massive reasons to choose your local Pharmacy.

For life's minor illnesses and complaints, Choose well and get the right treatment.

Choose well.

NHS

Family guide to your local NHS services.

This guide will help you choose the right services for you and your family this winter.

Choose well.