

What is self care?

Self care is looking after yourself in a healthy way, for example taking exercise and eating a healthy diet. It is also about understanding when you can look after yourself, when a pharmacist can help, and when to get advice from your GP or another health professional.

Rather than visit their GP or nurse, most people can take care of themselves when they have common illnesses such as sore throats, coughs etc.

Pharmacists can also help you to look after yourself.

They can also advise you on over the counter medicines. If your symptoms carry on longer than is normal for a minor illness then make an appointment at your GP Practice.

This leaflet explains a bit more about how you can look after yourself if you have any of the conditions listed.

Medicines for self care

The following minor illnesses can be treated effectively and safely using over the counter medicines.

Treatments for these conditions are no longer recommended on prescription. You can speak to your pharmacist for advice.

- Acute sore throat
- Conjunctivitis
- Coughs, colds and nasal congestion
- Cradle cap
- Dandruff (mild scaling of the scalp without itching)
- Diarrhoea (adults)
- Dry eyes/sore tired eyes
- Earwax
- Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)
- Fungal nail infections
- Haemorrhoids
- Head lice
- Infant colic
- Infrequent cold sore of lips
- Indigestion and heartburn
- Infrequent constipation
- Infrequent migraine
- Insect bites/stings
- Mild cystitis
- Mild irritant dermatitis
- Mild acne
- Mild dry skin
- Mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis
- Minor burns/scalds
- Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/or fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
- Mouth ulcers
- Nappy rash
- Oral thrush
- Prevention of dental cavities
- Probiotics
- Ringworm/Athlete's foot
- Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure
- Sun protection
- Teething/mild toothache
- Threadworm
- Travel sickness
- Upset stomach
- Vaginal thrush
- Vitamins and minerals for prevention/maintenance
- Warts and verrucae

Benefits of self care

Expert advice to support you

Pharmacists can offer expert advice on a wide range of illnesses and you don't need to make an appointment. Your consultation will be confidential and discreet.

Save yourself time

There's no need to wait for a GP appointment - a lot of pharmacies are open late and at the weekend.

Save your GP practice time

Choosing to self care can free up more clinician time so they can spend more time with patients with more complex conditions.

Save the NHS money

In 2017, practices across Greater Nottingham spent £6million on prescribing over the counter medicines. For minor conditions many of these items are widely available and specialist advice is also available from your local community pharmacy

The money spent on those prescriptions for minor illnesses could be spent on treating more serious conditions or developing life-saving treatments.