



Staying Well this Winter

A guide to your local health services
in Suffolk and North East Essex



With all the different ways to access health services, it can be confusing to know the best place to go.

Our guide can help you make the right choice.

Self-Care



You can treat most minor illnesses and injuries at home.

Keep your medicine cabinet well-stocked with essentials like painkillers, antihistamine, cold and flu remedies, anti-diarrhoea and indigestion medicine. If you have children, make sure you've got the right medicines according to their age.



The NHS App



If you have a smart phone or tablet, the NHS app is a secure way to access a range of NHS services.

To use the app, you must be registered with a GP surgery in England and aged 13 or over. There are many things you can do on the app including:



- Use the NHS symptom checker
- Order your repeat prescriptions
- Get health advice
- See your test results and access other information on your health record
- See your NHS COVID vaccination status.

More information is available at www.nhs.uk **nhs-app**



The NHS website www.nhs.uk provides lots of information to help you manage your health and wellbeing. This includes:

<p>A to Z guide to Health</p>	<p>A guide to health conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help.</p>
<p>A to Z guide to Medicines</p>	<p>Find out how your medicine works, how and when to take it, possible side effects and answers to your common questions.</p>
<p>NHS Services</p>	<p>Find your nearest NHS services, including pharmacies, GPs, dentists and A&E and how to use their services.</p>
<p>Living Well advices</p>	<p>Advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>Social care and support guide</p>	<p>If you or someone you know needs help with day-to-day living because of illness or disability, the website explains your options and where you can get support.</p>
<p>Pregnancy</p>	<p>A guide which includes information about trying for a baby, pregnancy, labour and birth.</p>
<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p>	<p>Get NHS advice about COVID-19, including symptoms, testing, vaccination and self-isolation.</p>

Pharmacy



If you're suffering from a cold, cuts and grazes or minor illnesses, your pharmacist will offer you remedies, so you don't have to see a GP or nurse.

Your local pharmacist is trained to help you with the safe use of prescription, repeat prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Pharmacies are often open until late and at weekends, and many have a quiet area where you can talk to a pharmacist in private.



Self-Referral



There are some services in Suffolk and North East Essex where you can 'self-refer', by contacting the provider directly.

The Musculoskeletal Service (MSK)



If you have joint, muscle or bone problems, such as back, hips, knees, ankles and hands, you can self-refer to the local musculoskeletal (MSK) service. They can diagnose and treat your condition with physiotherapy or may refer you to another specialist medical team. Your GP can make a referral, or if you live in Suffolk you can self-refer by visiting **www.ahpsuffolk.co.uk**

Access to the service in north east Essex is by referral from the patient's own GP - Musculoskeletal Service - North East Essex Community Services (**acecic.co.uk**)



Wellbeing Service



If you are aged over 18 and are not your usual self, because you feel worried, anxious or depressed about certain issues in your life, you can contact your GP or local wellbeing service. Our local wellbeing services provide a range of free and confidential talking therapies and specialist support to help you to feel better.

Wellbeing Suffolk - www.wellbeingnands.co.uk – **0300 123 1503** - Phone lines are open Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) from 8am to 8pm.

Therapy for You - North East Essex - www.therapyforyou.co.uk – **01206 334001** - Phone lines are open Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) from 9am to 5pm.

Self-help materials including tips, guides, tools and activities are also available online: www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/

Local GP Services



If you've been unwell for more than 48 hours and need medical help, you can book an appointment with a healthcare professional at your GP practice.

When you contact the GP practice, you will be asked a number of questions to help direct you to the healthcare professional best suited for your health care needs.

GP practices provide many ways you can access their services including online consultations, telephone, video and face-to-face appointments.

If you have the NHS app you can use this to access some of the services available from your GP practice.



You can call NHS111 for help with an urgent medical problem.

You can contact the NHS111 service online at **www.111.nhs.uk** or you can call **111, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Your symptoms will be assessed and you will be provided with healthcare advice. This may include:

- Self-care
- Visiting a pharmacy
- Contacting your GP practice
- Contacting an urgent treatment or walk-in centre
- Going to A&E.

If needed, NHS111 can also send an ambulance, or where available can also book appointment times to some services.



Emergency Dental Issues



If you have an emergency dental issue, please don't call your GP. Instead, please ring 111 who can help with an emergency dental number.

Local Urgent Care Services



If you are very unwell and have an illness or an injury that requires urgent attention, but it's **not an emergency** (an emergency is when it is life-threatening), NHS 111 can make you an appointment at a local urgent treatment centre (UTC).

The urgent treatment centres are at:

Clacton Hospital	1 Tower Road Clacton CO15 1LH Open daily 8am - 8pm
Colchester Hospital	Turner Road Colchester CO4 5JL Open daily from 7am - 2am
Fryatt Hospital	Harwich Open daily from 9am - 5pm The service can be accessed by contacting NHS 111



Mental Health Crisis



If you are currently experiencing a mental health crisis or supporting someone in crisis and need urgent help, 24-hour support is available every day for adults, children or young people.

If you need an emergency service, such as an ambulance, please dial **999**.

If you need urgent medical advice, you can call the NHS on **111**.

You can talk to Samaritans anytime on **116 123**.

Mental Health and Young People



The impact of the pandemic on young peoples' mental health has been significant. During the winter months, it is important that you seek support if you feel you continually depressed or anxious. Please consider contacting the Talking Therapies services listed for Suffolk and north east Essex in the above section.

Pregnancy and Maternity Services



Our local hospitals and community midwives provide a range of services to support you through your pregnancy and birth.

You can refer yourself directly to maternity services. Alternatively, you can visit your GP practice for a referral. Your first contact with a midwife should happen before your first scan. For early, urgent pregnancy advice, please contact your GP. For routine pregnancy information, please speak to your midwife.





As well as accessing the right service, there is plenty we can all do to take care of ourselves this Autumn and Winter.

Please do have the Flu vaccination – available from our local GP practice and pharmacy.

In addition, please take up the offer of the Covid vaccination when invited to do so.

We have a range of walk in clinics available which are publicised on the Suffolk and north East Essex vaccination website – www.sneevaccine.org.uk

Advice for Parents



Signs relating to:

As a parent you have great instincts, please do use them.

Appearance	Breathing/Chest	Hydration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal skin, lips and tongue colour • Responding normally/still smiling • Stays awake or wakes up easily • Normal cry or strong cry • Mild pain e.g. earache, tummy ache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathing normally with no wheeze • Mild cough or runny nose without affecting breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby feeding/child drinking as normal or slightly reduced • Sick, but drinking and keeping most fluids down • Diarrhoea for less than 2 days • Passing urine, normal colour or slightly darker than usual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child becoming worse/parents more concerned • Less activity/more sleepy than usual • Change in normal behaviour/ not acting in usual manner • Irritable/no smile • Pain e.g. persistent severe earache, severe tummy ache - seek advice • Mild/moderate allergic reaction - seek advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy breathing/ wheezy/fast breathing nasal 'flaring' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking less than half of usual amounts/vomiting most feeds • Less wet nappies than usual/less urine or darker concentrated urine • For babies under 1 year - sick more than 3 times in 24 hours, diarrhoea 6 times in 24 hours • For children 1 and over - diarrhoea for longer than 2 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collapse/unresponsive • Hard to wake/floppy or listless • Mottled blue or ashen skin • Fitting (seizure) without a temperature • Severe allergic reaction/anaphylaxis • Rash that does NOT disappear under pressure (glass test) • Neck stiffness • High pitched, weak or continuous cry • Bile stained sick (green) • Bulging fontanelle (soft spot) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe difficulty in breathing • Grunting/very fast breathing/ sucking in and out between ribs • Breathless - unable to talk in sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunken fontanelle (soft spot) • Very little urine/dry nappies

If you feel that your child is unwell, or you are unable to care for them, seek medical help. This could be your local pharmacist, NHS111, GP, an urgent treatment centre (UTC) or A&E.

Temperature

- Mild temperature raised up to 38°C (101° F) but controlled if paracetamol is given. Seek advice if temperature continues for 3-5 days

GREEN - CARE AT HOME

- Your local pharmacist or NHS111 can give advice
- Check www.nhs.uk
- Consider paracetamol
- Encourage rest and drinks, even if only in small amounts



- Over 3 months - temperature over 39°C (102° F)
- Persistent temperature for more than 3-5 days or not controlled by paracetamol - seek advice

AMBER - GP/NHS111

- Phone your GP for advice and decision - this may be by telephone/ video or face to face
- Call GP/NHS111 if concerned
- If worried, always seek advice



- 0-3 months - temperature over 38°C (101° F)
- Over 3 months - temperature over 39°C (102° F) and/ or cold hands or feet
- Any child with a temperature below 36°C (97° F)
- Any child with a high temperature and fitting (seizure)

RED - URGENT HELP REQUIRED

- Take your child to your nearest A&E department
- CALL 999 FOR BREATHING DIFFICULTIES OR A NON-BLANCHING RASH (rash that does not fade and lose colour under pressure - glass test)/COLLAPSE



Emergency Services - Ambulance and A&E



Emergency services should only be used for life-threatening illnesses or accidents which require immediate, intensive treatment.

In an emergency you should ring the ambulance service (via 999) or go to the hospital's Accident and Emergency (A&E) department.

If it's not life-threatening or an emergency, please use the other options available to you.



Looking after yourself during Autumn/Winter



- Look after your ears – don't let them build up with wax. Speak to a pharmacist about earwax build-up. They can give advice and suggest treatments.
- Protect yourself and others by keeping up to date with vaccinations such as COVID and flu vaccinations. More details about the covid vaccinations can be found at www.sneevaccine.org.uk
- Please ensure you give plenty of notice around repeat prescriptions. Little notification puts a strain on other services when they are contacted at short notice for repeat prescriptions.
- If you're invited for an NHS Health check or for an assessment with a long term condition (such as asthma) that you may live with, please do attend. Prevention is often better than cure or a quote from a clinician to that affect?

Do you need this document in a different format?



Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent infectious diseases. Having a vaccination is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and your family against ill health.

www.sneevaccine.org.uk