

Your local Health Board

You can use your local health board's website to find out more about services in your area and how to access them over the winter and festive period. Also, look out for information about local NHS services in your GP surgery and other public venues.



NHS Ayrshire & Arran - www.nhsayrshireandarran.com
(from 1 January 2012, www.nhsaaa.com)

NHS Borders - www.nhsborders.org.uk

NHS Dumfries & Galloway - www.nhsdg.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Fife - www.nhsfife.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Forth Valley - www.nhsforthvalley.com

NHS Grampian - www.nhsgrampian.org

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde - www.nhsggc.org.uk

NHS Highland - www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Lanarkshire - www.nhslanarkshire.co.uk

NHS Lothian - www.nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Orkney - www.ohb.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Shetland - www.shb.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Tayside - www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Western Isles - www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in another language or format, such as large print, in easy read, on cassette, on video in British Sign Language (BSL) or in Braille, please contact us on 0800 22 44 88. If you have a textphone, dial 18001 0800 22 44 88.



**Be Ready for
WINTER**

NHS
SCOTLAND

Remember:
Be ready for
WINTER

This Be Ready for Winter booklet will help you to look after you and your family's health during the winter months. It tells you what medicines to keep at home, how to look after common winter illnesses and what your local pharmacist can do for you.

It also gives you the days and dates when your GP surgery is closed at Christmas and New Year and what to do if you fall ill and you can't wait until they open again.

These few simple steps will help you to look after your health over winter:

1. Restock your medicine cabinet with some over the counter remedies that can be used to treat common winter illnesses.
2. Order and collect your repeat prescription(s) before the festive holidays. **Remember, check your existing supplies and only order what you need to make sure you don't run out over the holidays.**
3. Note that your GP surgery will be closed for four days at Christmas (24 – 27 December 2011) and four days at New Year (31 – 3 January 2012).



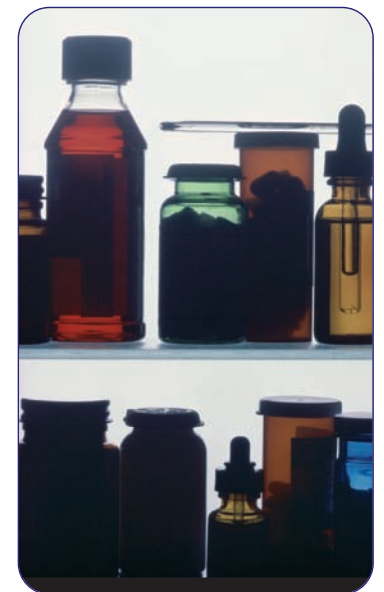
Remember to
restock medicine
Cabinet.

Don't forget to restock your medicine cabinet with some over the counter remedies.

Here are some simple ways to help combat common winter illnesses at home. Remember, a pharmacist can recommend the most appropriate treatment for you. Always follow the instructions/advice on the pack. If symptoms persist (or are severe) seek further advice.

And only restock with what you need to cover the winter period.

If you have a minor illness, a pharmacist can sell non-prescription medicines or provide them free of charge if you are eligible under the NHS Minor Ailment Service (see page 10 on where to find more details).



What to keep in your medicine cabinet:

Pain relief	Paracetamol and ibuprofen are the most common remedies and can be used safely with antibiotics. Please check the label and/or speak to the pharmacist to check that the medicine is suitable.
Anti-histamines	These help allergies and runny noses.
Anti-diarrhoeals	It is important to keep drinking fluids for the first 24 hours. Oral rehydration sachets are also recommended.
Indigestion remedy	A simple, readily available antacid will neutralise any excess acid and relieve the majority of symptoms.
Mild laxative	Try Senna for constipation.
First Aid Kit	Your local pharmacist can advise you on what your household first aid kit should contain.

NOTE: There are a number of medicines made specifically for children, and your pharmacist can advise which would be the most suitable ones to keep in the house. We would recommend at least having both paracetamol and ibuprofen available in liquid form. Again, please read the label to ensure that the medicine is suitable.

REMEMBER
Antibiotics don't kill viruses so they won't help with colds or flu and can even have unpleasant side effects.

Looking after common winter illnesses:

Coughs, colds and flu



This advice is for normally healthy adults or children over six years old:

Cough - A cough mixture may give some relief.

High temperature - Painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen can reduce a high temperature. Drink plenty of non-alcoholic liquids to replace fluids lost in sweating.

Sore throat, aches and pains - non-medicated pastilles or boiled sweets may help reduce the pain of a sore throat. Medicated throat lozenges and sprays may also ease symptoms. Paracetamol or ibuprofen are recommended for pain relief and can be taken together if required. Take pain relief at regular intervals. Do not exceed the recommended maximum dose and always follow the instructions on the pack. Keep warm and rest as much as you can.

Blocked nose

Steam inhalations can relieve symptoms, but take care to avoid scalding. Decongestant nasal sprays or anti-histamines can be used short-term to clear sinuses and a blocked nose.

Headache



Many headaches are best treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen. If possible, take the recommended dose as soon as a headache starts. You can take paracetamol and ibuprofen together if required.

Simple relaxation techniques can help ease a headache. Try applying a warm facecloth to your forehead or neck, doing some gentle exercises or massaging your shoulders and neck to release tension.

NOTE: Consult a GP immediately if a severe headache does not respond to any self-care treatment, or is coupled with other symptoms such as a rash, blurred vision, vomiting, high temperature or an aversion to light.

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea



Drink plenty of non-alcoholic, non-milky liquids to replace lost fluids.

Take oral rehydration solution to replace lost salts and fluids. Maintain good personal hygiene to prevent the illness spreading. Don't prepare food for other people, especially babies and older people until 48 hours after you are free of symptoms and don't visit friends or relatives in hospital. Eat what you can – especially soups and foods high in carbohydrate such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes.

For children aged one to six years old

Painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen can reduce a high temperature and ease aches, pains and sore throats. Give plenty of fluids. A simple cough mixture like glycerol, lemon and honey may be used if required.

For infants under one year of age

Remember a pharmacist can recommend the most appropriate treatment for young infants. Seek further advice if the patient is under one year of age or if symptoms persist or are severe.



Regular Medication

If you take regular medication, make sure you order what you need, to cover holiday periods and weekends. Remember to collect any repeat prescription you have ordered before the holidays, and make sure you don't run out.

GP surgeries are closed for four days at Christmas and four days at New Year (see page eight for dates). So if you need prescription(s) remember to order and collect them in time.

If you have queries about medication (prescribed, purchased or herbal) the pharmacist can answer them either in the pharmacy or over the telephone. You may want to know, for example, can you take paracetamol with your prescribed medication? Can you have a glass of wine with your medicine? What should you do if you have missed a dose of your medication?



Remember to take your medication with you if you are travelling, and remember that, if you do forget it, you can get help and advice from any pharmacist in Scotland. In certain circumstances a prescription is not always necessary and a pharmacist can help to arrange a supply of your repeat medication if needed.

Remember to check when your pharmacy is open over the festive period especially if the pharmacy dispenses your medication in a compliance aid (medication tray) or supplies your medicine to you on specific days.



The pharmacy will have a private area where you can discuss sensitive issues. Most pharmacies provide Emergency Hormonal Contraception (morning after pill) where appropriate, free of charge.

Note: If you do run out of your regular medication, and your GP surgery is closed, a pharmacist can provide advice and help to arrange a supply of your repeat medication if needed.

Note: Pharmacy telephone numbers are printed on any labelled medicine you have. You can also visit www.nhs24.com or call NHS inform on **0800 22 44 88** to find the telephone number and opening times of the pharmacy nearest to you, including those open over the Christmas and New Year holidays. Textphone users dial **18001 0800 22 44 88**.

Remember GP surgery closed for 4 days at Christmas AND 4 days at New Year.

Over Christmas, **GP surgeries will be open on Friday 23 December** and then closed for four days from Christmas Eve (Saturday 24 December). **They open again on Wednesday 28 December for three days.**

Over New Year, GP practices will be closed from New Year's Eve (Saturday 31 December) for four days, **opening again on Wednesday 4 January.**

See the table for these important dates for your diary or calendar. It shows you when your GP surgery will be open and closed this Christmas and New Year.

Fri 23 Dec	Open
Sat 24 Dec	Closed
Sun 25 Dec	Closed
Mon 26 Dec	Closed
Tues 27 Dec	Closed
Wed 28 Dec	Open
Thurs 29 Dec	Open
Fri 30 Dec	Open
Sat 31 Dec	Closed
Sun 1 Jan	Closed
Mon 2 Jan	Closed
Tues 3 Jan	Closed
Wed 4 Jan	Open

Can't wait for your surgery to open?

If you are ill on a day or at a time when your GP surgery is closed and you can't wait until it re-opens, you can call NHS 24 on **08454 24 24 24** who can arrange for you to be seen at your local out-of-hours services, if it's appropriate.

Emergencies

You should only dial 999 in the event of an emergency.

As always, the Scottish Ambulance Service will respond to medical emergencies. All calls to the ambulance service are prioritised so that those who are most seriously ill receive the fastest response. If you are not so ill that you need emergency medical treatment, then the ambulance call-taker will give you advice on the most appropriate help available to you.



Where to get more advice and help on winter illnesses?

NHS inform

Website: www.nhsinform.co.uk

Tel: **0800 22 44 88**

Textphone users dial **18001 0800 22 44 88**

Provides up-to-date, quality assured information on illnesses, diseases, conditions, NHS services, support groups and organisations, health promotion and disease prevention.

Telephone service is open from 8am to 10pm, 7 days a week.

NHS 24

Website: www.nhs24.com - Health website with pharmacy opening times and self help guide when you're feeling unwell.

Telephone: Call **08454 24 24 24** when you are ill and it can't wait until your GP surgery re-opens. **Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**

Digital TV

NHS Scotland digital television channel, gives access to health information services through the TV.

The service gives people access to online resources such as nhs24.com, NHS inform and Care Information Scotland, direct from their own homes through **Freesat for Sky, Sky** and **Virgin** channels.

SKY: Go to **Community Channel (539)** > Press Red

VIRGIN: Press the **Home** button > Choose **Interactive #7** button > Select **News & Info** > Select **Looking Local #6**

Wii & PC: Insert the following URL into your browser: lookinglocal.gov.uk/nhsscotland/

MOBILE: Via any web enabled phone: lookinglocal.gov.uk/nhsscotland/

NHS Minor Ailment Service from your local chemist/pharmacy

www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/06/26102829/1

For information on the Minor Ailment Service. If you are eligible, a pharmacist may be able to provide you with a non-prescription medicine free of charge.

Immunisation Scotland

www.immunisationscotland.org.uk

Information and advice on seasonal flu and the flu vaccine.

Ready Scotland

www.readyscotland.org

For information on how to protect yourself, your home, your family and your business should an emergency happen.