



# Cut-Out-and-Keep Guide

## NHS Out-of-Hours Services

### NHS Direct/NHS24

NHS Direct/NHS24 should be your first port of call for medical advice and local healthcare information, provided via the phone, website or satellite digital TV.

**When you should use it:** for credible advice on what to do if you or a family member is unwell – including whether you need to go to A&E, or can treat the problem yourself. Also update yourself on your local health services, including location and opening hours of your nearest walk-in centre.

**Treated by:** An advisor will assess your query and will pass you on to a trained nurse if you require specialist advice.

**Availability/Access:** NHS Direct in England and Wales, NHS24 in Scotland. 24hr, seven days a week.

**NHS Direct England and Wales**  
**NHS24 Scotland**

**0845 4647 or [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)**  
**0845 424 2424**

Also available on satellite digital TV and the self-help guide in the Thompson Local Directory.

### NHS Walk-in Centres

Nurse or doctor-led centres which offer free access to treatment for minor illnesses and injuries without an appointment...ideal when you can't get to see your local GP.

**When you should use it:** Treatment and advice for a variety of problems, including minor infections and rashes, emergency contraception and advice, stomach upsets, superficial cuts and bruises, or minor burns and strains.

**Treated by:** Nurses (some centres have doctors)

**Availability/Access:** England/Northern Ireland. Most NHS Walk-in Centres are open from 7am to 10pm, Monday to Friday, 9am to 10pm Saturday and Sunday.

### Out-of-hours GPs

For urgent treatment out of surgery hours, you can call the out of hours number at your local GP. This may result in you visiting an out-of-hours clinic, or in a home visit if there is a clinical need.

**When you should use it:** For urgent medical problems out of normal GP surgery hours.

**Treated by:** Doctors, nurses, Emergency Care Practitioners and paramedics

**Availability/Access:** UK-wide. Typically 6.30pm – 8am, Mon-Fri, weekends and bank holidays



## Minor Injuries Units

Treatment for people with minor injuries such as sprains, strains and minor breaks.

**When you should use it:** treatment for minor injuries such as sprains and strains, fractures, bites and stings, infected wounds, and minor eye infections and scratches.

**Treated by:** Nurses and doctors

**Availability/Access:** UK-wide. Minor injury units' hours vary but most are open at least 8 am to 8 pm daily, and are usually found in hospitals – as a good alternative to A&E.

## Pharmacies

High street pharmacists are qualified experts and you don't need an appointment. Many have a quiet area where you can discuss symptoms, your medicines and health concerns.

**When you should use it:** For medicines and advice on minor ailments such as coughs, colds, headaches, your medication and contraception. Pharmacists can also help you decide whether you need to see a doctor. Pharmacists can now offer a range of new services, such as repeat dispensing, help with managing your medicines, advice on how to live a healthy lifestyle, for example, advice on a healthy diet, increased physical activity and stopping smoking.

**Treated by:** Pharmacists

**Availability/Access:** UK-wide. Normally open at least 9am to 5pm Mon-Fri, with many pharmacies open longer hours on weekdays and at weekends.

## A&E/999

Open 24 hours a day, every day to treat *serious and life-threatening* injuries or illnesses.

**When you should use it:** Go there or call 999/112 for serious illness, critical injury or sudden collapse including suspected heart attack, suspected stroke, chest pain, unconsciousness, heavy blood loss, suspected broken bones, severe breathing difficulties, head injuries, and deep wounds.

**Treated by:** A consultant, doctor, nurse, emergency care practitioner or paramedic

**Availability/Access:** major A&E departments can be found alongside acute NHS hospitals across the UK. You can telephone 999 or 112 free of charge from any UK telephone, including mobiles. 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

To find out opening hours of your local service, contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647 (England/Wales), 0845 424 2424 (NHS 24 Scotland) or visit [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk).

**For further information, please contact the Department of Health Consumer Media Team on 020 7210 5257**