

## What can I do at home?

We recommend that you keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home, you don't need to see your GP for this. Your cabinet could contain the following:

- Paracetamol or ibuprofen for pain and fever
- Antihistamine for allergies
- Oral rehydration sachets for when you've been sick
- Indigestion remedies
- Constipation relief
- Diarrhoea treatment
- Treatment for insect bites and stings, as well as cuts and grazes
- Plasters and dressings
- A thermometer

Make sure your medicines are kept in the right conditions (e.g. out of direct sunlight) and return them to your pharmacy if they're past their use-by date.

Check them regularly and stock up when needed, particularly before public holidays when pharmacies may have reduced opening hours.



## Where can I get further information?

For non-life-threatening medical help or urgent advice: Call NHS 111, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles.

For advice about common conditions, medication, services available and their location, visit the NHS website:

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



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For a full list of conditions and illnesses which can be managed with over-the-counter products, please visit [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk) and search 'prescribing of over-the-counter medicines is changing'.



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If you want more information email:

[contactus@selondonics.nhs.uk](mailto:contactus@selondonics.nhs.uk)

or call the Patient Experience Team:

**0800 328 9712**

# Self-care

## Why is it so important for your health?

This leaflet will tell you what you can do when you have a minor illness (condition) or feel unwell and where you can get quick and easy advice without needing to go to the GP surgery.

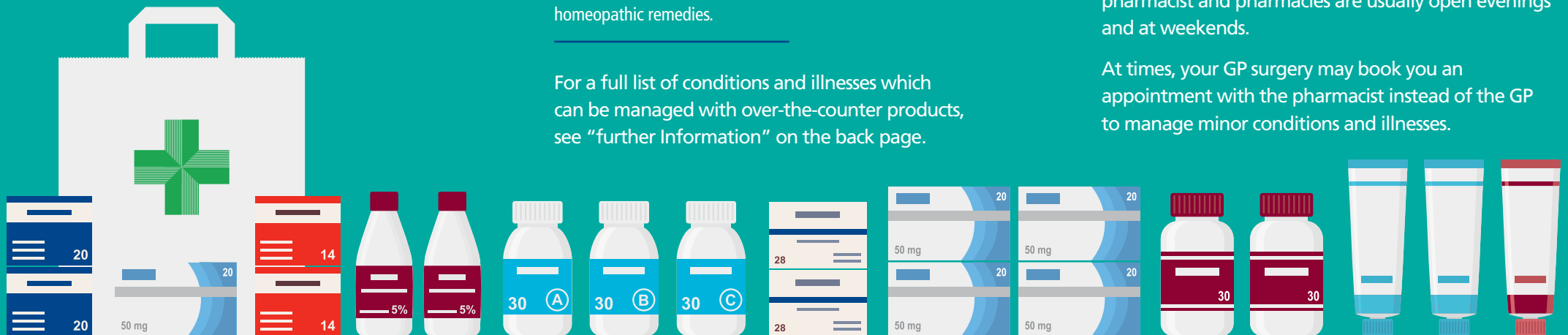


## What is self-care?

Self-care is about looking after your health, recognising, or treating minor conditions and illnesses, or knowing who to ask for help when you are not sure.

### Looking after yourself:

- You can speak to your community pharmacy for reliable advice instead of your GP surgery.
- You do not need a prescription to access self-care products or over-the-counter medicines.
- Ask your local pharmacy to see if you are eligible for local schemes to access over-the-counter medication without a prescription.



## What are some of the minor self-limiting illnesses and conditions?

### Eyes

Mild infections: styes, conjunctivitis. Dry/ tired/sore/ itchy eyes.

### Skin

Bites and stings, mild dry skin, sunburn, sun protection, mild dermatitis, mild acne, scalp or hair complaints, warts and verrucas, minor burns/scalds/ cuts or grazes.

### Pain

Infrequent migraines, aches, sprains, headaches, period pain, back pain.

### Health supplements

Vitamins, minerals, probiotics, homeopathic remedies.

### Digestive tract

Mild diarrhoea in adults, mild constipation, heart burn, indigestions, haemorrhoids (piles).

### Mild viral infections

Cough, cold, congestion, sore throat, mild fever, cold sores (lip).

### Allergies

Mild allergies, hayfever, itching.

### Infestations

Headlice, scabies, threadworms.

For a full list of conditions and illnesses which can be managed with over-the-counter products, see "further information" on the back page.

## How can a pharmacist help?

In South East London, we encourage patients to speak to their pharmacist about minor, self-limiting illnesses or conditions. This is in line with NHS guidance.

Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals who can help with many common conditions and illnesses.

Pharmacists provide expert advice on what you can do at home to look after yourself and recommend medicines available over-the-counter.

The pharmacist can tell you if your treatment is safe to take with other medication or medical conditions and when to seek help for more serious health problems or ongoing issues.

Pharmacies have a quiet, confidential area, away from other customers, where you can ask to speak in privacy.

You do not need an appointment to see your pharmacist and pharmacies are usually open evenings and at weekends.

At times, your GP surgery may book you an appointment with the pharmacist instead of the GP to manage minor conditions and illnesses.