



RIGHT CARE RIGHT TIME RIGHT PLACE

DO I NEED TO SEE A GP?

Your handy guide to community health services in Midlothian.

There are lots of services that can help you if you are unwell. This guide gives information and advice about how and when to use services in the best way. Keep it handy.





Self care

The most important type of care is selfcare. Selfcare is about looking after ourselves so that we stay healthy. It's also about taking care of ourselves when we are ill. Before asking for an NHS appointment, why not think about how you can help yourself? You might find the following websites and phone numbers useful:

- **NHS Inform: www.nhsinform.scot or 0800 224 488** Information about healthy living, illnesses or health conditions, injuries, how to look after yourself and when to seek advice
- **NHS24 helpline: 111**
Advice 24 hours a day on health problems
- **Treat yourself better: treatyourselfbetter.co.uk**
Advice on what to do if you have cold or flu symptoms
- **Self Care Forum: www.selfcareforum.org/resources/patient-portal**
Includes fact sheets about looking after yourself when you are ill



Healthy living

For advice on healthy eating, exercise and stopping smoking:

- **www.nhs.uk/livewell or www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living**

For help to stop smoking, ask your pharmacist or contact:

- **Midlothian Stop Smoking Service: 0131 537 9914**

If you are interested in exercise and being more active visit:

- **www.activemidlothian.org.uk**

If you are over 50 and want to be more active:

- **Ageing well – for people aged 50+: 0131 561 6506**

For information about local activities and support to get out and about:

- **British Red Cross Community Co-ordinators: 0131 654 0340**



Common illnesses or advice on medicines

Community pharmacist

Your community pharmacist can give you advice or treatment for many minor illnesses such as:

- Acne
- Athlete's Foot
- Backache
- Cold Sores
- Conjunctivitis
- Constipation
- Cough
- Diarrhoea
- Dry Eyes
- Earache and Ear Wax
- Eczema and Allergies
- Emergency Contraception
- Haemorrhoids (piles)
- Headache
- Indigestion
- Mouth Ulcers
- Nasal Congestion
- Pain and period pain
- Sinusitis
- Sore Throat
- Thrush
- Threadworms
- Warts and Verrucae

NHS Minor Ailment Service

If you are over 60, under 16, or receive certain benefits, you can use the NHS Minor Ailment Service. This means you can receive advice and **free treatment** from your community pharmacist for minor illnesses and conditions. Ask at your local pharmacy.

Your Practice Nurse

Practice nurses are experienced in dealing with many conditions such as high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes and a range of minor illnesses such as chest, urine and ear infections, as well as skin conditions. Many can prescribe medications and arrange investigations. It is often quicker to get an appointment with the Practice Nurse than a GP. Ask your GP practice receptionist for advice on whether the nurse might be able to deal with your problem.



Dental and mouth problems

If you have a problem with your teeth, gums or mouth, contact your dentist. If you don't have a dentist and you want to find one near you:

- **0131 537 8444** or **www.nhslthian.scot.nhs.uk/Services/Dentists**

If you don't have a dentist and need urgent treatment, you can go to a walk-in centre in Edinburgh:

- **0131 536 4800** for more information



Muscle and joint problems

You can contact the physiotherapy service directly for muscle and joint problems such as back, neck, hip or knee pain. They can give advice and an appointment if necessary.

- **0800 917 9390** or go to **www.nhsinform.scot/msk**



Foot problems

If you have a foot problem you can go to:

- **www.nhsinform.scot/msk** and search for “foot injuries”

Or, if you think you need an appointment with a Podiatrist, you can refer yourself - ask for a referral form at your GP practice.



Infants and toddlers

For advice and treatment for children and babies:

- Ask your GP practice for your Health Visitor's phone number
- Ask your local Pharmacist
- For advice on common infant and toddler illnesses – **www.whenshouldiworry.com**



Eye problems

For problems like red eyes, painful eyes and visual problems such as floaters, cataracts and other changes in your vision, you can make an appointment at any **high street optician**. Opticians are trained to recognise common eye problems. They can also provide treatment or refer you to specialist services if needed.



Hearing problems

Many high street opticians also offer hearing tests and help with existing hearing aids.



Carers

If you care for a family member, partner or friend and would like some advice, information or support contact VOCAL Midlothian:

- **0131 663 6869** or go to **www.vocal.org.uk**

VOCAL Midlothian run a Wee Breaks service which can help you plan and get funding for a break from caring:

- **0131 271 3707** or **www.weebreak.org**



Social work support

For example if you need a home carer, aid or adaptation, contact:

- **Adult Social Work 0131 271 3900**
- **Children and Families Social Work 0131 271 3860**



Depression, anxiety and mental wellbeing

- **Midspace: www.midspace.co.uk**
Provides an overview of all local mental health services
- **Midlothian Wellbeing Access Point: 0131 536 8981**
This is an open access service for people who don't need medication or urgent treatment but might benefit from other therapies or support. Midlothian Wellbeing Access Point currently run drop in sessions at Midlothian Community Hospital and the Loganlea Centre, Penicuik
- **The Orchard Centre: 0131 663 1616 or www.health-in-mind.org.uk (click "services")**
Provides a wide range support to people across Midlothian
- **Breathing Space: 0800 838 587 or www.breathingspace.scot**
Offers someone to talk to if your feelings are overwhelming you.
- **Samaritans: 116 123**
Can help you understand your problems better, or just be there to listen. It is not just for people who feel suicidal.



Alcohol and drug problems

- **Gateway to Recovery Clinics: 0131 660 6822** for more information
These are drop in clinics for anyone looking for help with a drug or alcohol problem. No appointment necessary. The clinics are currently held in Dalkeith and Penicuik.
- **Mid and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership: www.meldap.co.uk**
For a full list of advice and support services in Midlothian.



Young people

If you are aged 12-21 and you are looking for support or advice about sexual health, mental health or substance use, contact:

- **MYPAS: 0131 454 0757** or **www.mypas.co.uk**



If you do need advice from a doctor...

Phone appointments

You can make a GP phone appointment instead of attending the GP practice. If you don't need to be examined, a phone appointment can be quicker and easier. If the doctor feels they need to see you, they will ask you to come in.

If the receptionist asks what is wrong with you, please tell them.

They are asking so they can find the best appointment for you.

Reception staff are bound by the same confidentiality rules as doctors and nurses. They are not allowed to tell people outside the practice anything about you.

And if you are unable to attend your GP appointment please phone and cancel

– this means that your appointment can be offered to another patient. Around 4% of appointments are wasted as people do not turn up. This means there are hundreds of wasted appointments across Midlothian each month!

If you have any comments or queries about this leaflet or for a copy of this leaflet in a larger print, braille or your community language please contact:

**Catherine Evans, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership:
0131 271 3411 / catherine.evans@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk**

**This leaflet is based on an original leaflet designed
by Dr Drummond Begg, Penicuik Medical Practice**

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Midlothian

