

## Winter 2024 is coming...

### Treating your respiratory tract infections

Colds, most coughs, sinusitis, ear infections, sore throats, and other infections often get better without antibiotics, as your body can usually fight these infections on its own.

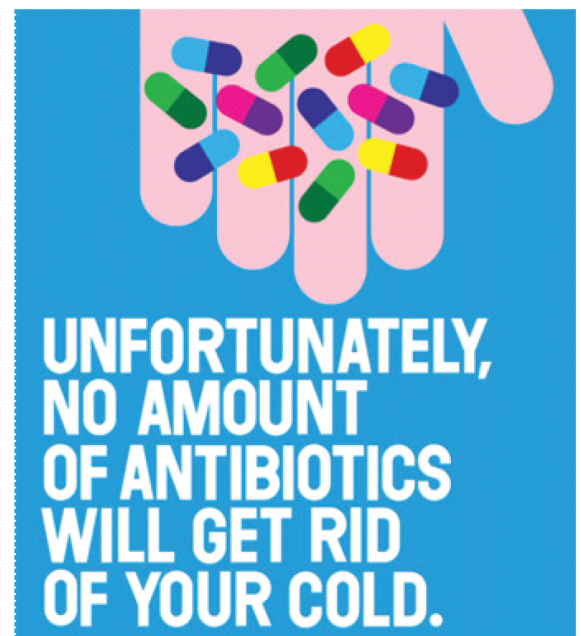
Taking any antibiotics makes bacteria that live inside your body more resistant. This means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them.

Antibiotics can cause side effects such as rashes, thrush, stomach pains, diarrhoea, reactions to sunlight, other symptoms, or being sick if you drink alcohol with metronidazole.

- Have plenty of rest.
- Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty.
- Ask your local pharmacist to recommend medicines to help your symptoms or pain (or both).
- Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you or your child are uncomfortable because of a fever.

### Most patients will be feeling better within these timescales

- Middle-ear infection.....8 days
- Sore throat .....7-8 days
- Sinusitis .....14-21 days
- Common cold .....14 days
- Cough or bronchitis .....21 days



## **Winter 2024 is coming... (continued)**

### **When to seek help for your condition**

If you or your child has any of these symptoms, are getting worse or are sicker than you would expect (even if your/their temperature falls), trust your instincts and seek medical advice urgently from NHS 111 or your GP Practice. If a child under the age of 5 has any of symptoms 1– 3 go to A&E immediately or call 999.

1. if your skin is very cold or has a strange colour or you develop an unusual rash
2. If you have new feelings of confusion or drowsiness or have slurred speech
3. If you have difficulty breathing. Signs that suggest breathing problems can be:
  - a. Breathing quickly
  - b. Turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth
4. if you develop a severe headache and are sick
5. if you develop chest pain
6. if you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling
7. if you cough up blood
8. if you are passing little or no urine
9. if you are feeling a lot worse

### **Less serious signs that can usually wait until the next available appointment:**

- If you are not starting to improve a little by the time given in 'Most are better by'
- Children with middle-ear infection: if fluid is coming out of their ears or they have new deafness.

**Further advice and support is available from the following:**

Cross Road Surgery Website: [www.crossroadsurgery.co.uk](http://www.crossroadsurgery.co.uk)  
Healthier Together Website (for parents of children 0-18 yrs): [www.what0-18.nhs.uk/](http://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/)  
NHS 111 Website: <https://111.nhs.uk>

## Why does the NHS want to reduce prescribing of over the counter medicines?

The NHS in Dorset wants each medicine prescribed to offer the best opportunity for improved health and wellbeing. For the most part, prescribing of over the counter medicines does not achieve this.

The NHS has been spending around £136 million a year on prescriptions for medicines that can be bought from a pharmacy or supermarket (£5 million a year in Dorset).

By reducing the amount the NHS spends on over the counter medicines we can give priority to treatments for people with more serious conditions, such as cancer, diabetes and mental health problems.

### What can you do to help?

Keeping a few useful medicines at home means you can treat common conditions immediately without needing to see a healthcare professional. **These could include painkillers, indigestion medicines, and a basic first aid kit.**



## #HelpYourNHS

### What if my symptoms don't improve?

Your local pharmacy team can tell you how long to expect the symptoms of your condition to last.

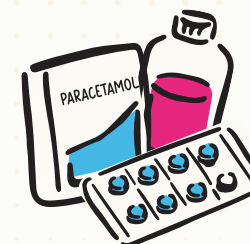
**If they haven't improved after this time or you start to feel a lot worse, you should:**

- go back to the pharmacy for further advice
- use 111 online or call 111
- contact your GP.



If you have any questions or concerns please contact NHS Dorset using the customer care email:

[customer.careteam@nhsdorset.nhs.uk](mailto:customer.careteam@nhsdorset.nhs.uk)



## #HelpYourNHS

**Prescriptions for 35 minor conditions are no longer available in Dorset.**

This allows healthcare professionals to focus on caring for people with a more urgent need.

The NHS in Dorset wants people to have the confidence to look after themselves where they can.

This gives people greater control of their health without the need to visit their GP for minor conditions.

Visit this website for more information:

[nhsdorset.nhs.uk/helptri](https://nhsdorset.nhs.uk/helptri)



For a range of minor health concerns, your GP nurse or pharmacist will not generally prescribe over the counter medicines, even if you qualify for free prescriptions. Instead, over the counter medicines are available to buy in a pharmacy or supermarket in your local community.

**This applies to treatments for these conditions:**

<b>Acute sore throat</b>	<b>Conjunctivitis</b>	<b>Indigestion and heartburn</b>
<b>Cradle cap</b>	<b>Dandruff</b>	
<b>Dry eyes /sore tired eyes</b>	<b>Earwax</b>	<b>Travel sickness</b>
<b>Haemorrhoids</b>	<b>Head lice</b>	<b>Infrequentconstipation</b>
<b>Infant colic</b>	<b>Mildhay fever</b>	<b>Coughs, colds and nasal congestion</b>
<b>Infrequent migraine</b>	<b>Nappy rash</b>	
<b>Minor burns and scalds</b>	<b>Insect bites</b>	<b>Diarrhoea (adults)</b>
<b>Mild irritant dermatitis</b>	<b>Mild cystitis</b>	<b>Excessive sweating</b>
<b>Mouth ulcers</b>	<b>Infrequent cold sores of the lip</b>	<b>Mild acne</b>
<b>Oral thrush</b>		<b>Mild dry skin</b>
<b>Sunburn</b>	<b>Prevention of tooth decay</b>	<b>Minor pain, discomfort and fever</b> (eg aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
<b>Ringworm /athlete's foot</b>	<b>Sunprotection</b>	
<b>Threadworms</b>	<b>Teething /mild toothache</b>	<b>Warts and verrucae</b>

## How your local pharmacy team can help you.

Your local pharmacy team are qualified healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to help with many health concerns.

Pharmacists can give clinical advice, right there and then, and help you choose the most appropriate treatment.

If your symptoms suggest it's more serious, they'll ensure you get the care you need.

Additionally, community pharmacies can now supply NHS medicines to treat seven common health conditions via the Pharmacy First service, which covers:

- Earache (1-17 years)
- Impetigo (1 year and over)
- Infected insect bite (1 year and over)
- Shingles (18 years and over)
- Sinusitis (12 years and over)
- Sore throat (5 years and over)
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (16-64 years)



Please note normal prescription charges will apply for prescription only medicines.