

Check your medicine cabinet

Be prepared this winter and, if you can, have over-the-counter medicines at home for common conditions such as a cold, indigestion or diarrhoea. Ask your pharmacist what's appropriate for you and your loved ones. A first aid kit with items like plasters, a thermometer, and antiseptic may also be useful. Remember to keep medicines locked away or out of the reach of children.

Order repeat prescriptions with ease

If you take medicine regularly you'll usually have a repeat prescription. This means you can order your medicine when you need it without having to see a GP until your next medicine review.

One easy way to order your repeat prescriptions is to log into your online NHS account, using the NHS app or NHS website. Find out more and register at nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services

You can ask for your medicine at your GP surgery if you don't want to do this online. Ask your surgery how you should let them know when you need your repeat prescription.

Keeping warm at home

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. If you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition – such as heart or lung disease – heat your home to at least 18C if you can. If possible, keep your bedroom at 18C all night and your bedroom window closed.

To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome, babies should sleep in rooms heated to between 16C and 20C.

If you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, as long as you're comfortable.

Visit nhs.uk/keep-warm-keep-well for more information.

If you're struggling with energy bills or need support to stay warm, contact Islington Council for advice on benefits, other ways to make your money go further and information on Warm Community Spaces where you can enjoy some company and hot refreshments. Call **020 7527 8222**, email heretohelp@islington.gov.uk or visit islington.gov.uk/benefits-and-support or islington.gov.uk/costofliving

Look out for others

Older neighbours, friends and family may need extra help over the winter. Keep in touch and make sure they have enough food and medicine, in case they can't go out for a few days. If they need help when their GP or pharmacy is closed or they're unsure what to do, visit 111.nhs.uk or call **111**.

Support with the cost of living

If you are struggling with the cost of food, energy, and other bills you are not alone and help is available. Contact Islington Council for advice and support. They can identify what benefits and financial support you are entitled to, help you make a claim and put you in touch with other local services that may be able to help you. Call **020 7527 8222**, email heretohelp@islington.gov.uk or visit islington.gov.uk/costofliving

Stay well this winter

Information and services for
Islington residents

Winter 2023-24

NHS 111 for urgent medical needs

When you have an urgent medical need that isn't life threatening, or you're unsure what to do, visit 111.nhs.uk or call **111** free from your mobile or landline.

NHS 111 is always open and, depending on the situation, can:

- advise on what local service can help you
- connect you to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist or GP
- book you a face-to-face appointment if needed
- give you an arrival time if you need to go to A&E, an urgent treatment centre, or walk-in centre
- explain how to get any medicine you need
- offer self-care advice.

Other ways to contact NHS 111:

- Text relay: Call **18001 111**
- British sign language (BSL):
Use signvideo.co.uk/nhs111
- Help in other languages:
Call **111** and ask for an interpreter.

For life-threatening injuries or illnesses go straight to A&E or call **999**. Text relay users can call **18000** to get through to **999**.

Pharmacies: Help is around the corner

Pharmacists are highly-trained health experts, who can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses. If symptoms suggest it's something more serious, pharmacists will tell you if you need to see a GP, nurse, or other health professional.

Many pharmacies are open late and at weekends. You don't need an appointment and most have a private consultation room where you can speak

without being overheard. Find your nearest pharmacy and opening times at nhs.uk/find-a-pharmacy

You may be able to get help with the cost of some over-the-counter medicines through the Self-Care Pharmacy First scheme. Visit nclhealthandcare.org.uk/self-care for details.

GP services including evenings and weekends

Your GP surgery can help with physical and mental health concerns, and refer you to a hospital or other medical service if you need specialist or urgent care.

To book an appointment, phone or visit your surgery. You may also be able to book by logging in to your NHS account, via the NHS app or NHS website. You can also usually contact a GP using a secure, confidential online form on your surgery's website, to let them know about symptoms, ask a question, or follow up on something.

Appointments may be with a GP, nurse, or other healthcare professional and take place face to face, by phone, or online – depending on your needs.

Evening and weekend appointments are available in your local area. To book, contact your own GP surgery during normal opening hours.

Being registered with a GP will help you get the right care when you need it. Anyone in England can register and receive care – you do not need proof of address or immigration status, ID or a NHS number. Contact a local GP surgery or visit nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps for details.

Support for mental health

Contact your GP if you, or someone you care for, is concerned about their mental health.

You can also visit:

- icope.nhs.uk or call **020 3317 7252** for free, confidential help for common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia
- islington.gov.uk/mentalhealth for information about support and local services
- good-thinking.uk for NHS-approved London-wide information and advice
- samaritans.org or call **116 123** any time, day or night, if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts.

If you need help for a mental health crisis or emergency, you can speak to a qualified professional and get advice about services using our crisis helplines which are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Children and young people (under 18):
0800 151 0023
- Adults (18+): **0800 917 3333**.

Advice on urgent dental care

If you need urgent dental treatment, contact your usual dental practice. They may be able to see you or direct you to an urgent dental care service. If you don't have a regular dentist, visit 111.nhs.uk or call **111** for advice.

Get winter strong

Everyone over 65 can get a COVID-19 and flu vaccine this autumn. More people can also get the shingles vaccine – check with your pharmacist or doctor if this includes you. If you are eligible, be sure to get your vaccines as soon as possible. It's safe to have COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time. Visit nclhealthandcare.org.uk/covid to find out more.