



### Who else can help me?

Pharmacists are an excellent resource to help with self-care. They can advise you on simple remedies and medicines to help ease your symptoms. They can also advise how long your symptoms should last before you start to feel better.

Why wait? - you don't need an appointment to see a pharmacist. This can also free up more time for your GP. It might make it easier to get a convenient appointment the next time you need one.

### Anything else I can do?

There's lots more information available if you need it at

[www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[niformulary.hscni.net/PatientZone](http://niformulary.hscni.net/PatientZone)  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/choosewell](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/choosewell)

# Go Ahead treat yourself!

Sometimes it's better to do it yourself



Most common illnesses can be treated by you. By making positive choices and taking control of minor illnesses, you will increase your confidence which is good for your health and wellbeing. Your local pharmacist can provide advice and help you manage minor illnesses.

## What is self-care?

Self-care is about health decisions that people make for themselves and their families to get and stay well, both physically and mentally.

## How does this affect me?

Common health complaints, such as coughs, colds and headaches, account for up to one out of every five GP appointments. Many of these can be treated faster and just as effectively at home using self-care, advice from your pharmacist and over-the-counter medicines bought from pharmacies or supermarkets.



## Think before you order a prescription!

Medicines are available in your local pharmacy to treat:

- Minor aches and pains
- Coughs, colds and sore throats
- Hay fever
- Indigestion
- Nappy rash
- Colic
- Cold sore
- Ear wax
- Head lice
- Occasional diarrhoea
- Vaginal thrush
- Treatments for threadworms

The following products are also available to purchase over-the-counter:

- Baby milks\*
- Tonics, vitamins and other nutritional supplements

\* Some babies may require cow's milk free formulas on NHS prescription where clinically appropriate

## Why am I being encouraged to self care?

Our Health Service has a limited budget. Spending money on treatments for minor illnesses reduces the money available for treating more serious conditions such as heart disease and cancer.

## Why should I bother?

Having to take a day off work or organise child care to see a GP or other health professional can make life difficult for people. By being able to self-diagnose and self-care appropriately, you could save yourself a lot of time and hassle.

## What's in it for me?

Being able to self-manage symptoms such as cough, fever and minor aches and pains improves people's quality of life. It helps you feel more positive and confident in your own ability to look after your health. Knowing where to find trusted information rather than going – and waiting to see – a health professional for every health problem can feel liberating. It also gives you a feeling of being in control.