

## What all parents should have at home – your basic first aid kit

- Liquid paracetamol or ibuprofen
- A thermometer – always test your child's temperature before contacting or visiting a health professional
- Antiseptic cream and plasters
- Oral rehydration solution suitable for your child's age

Your **pharmacist** can help with all of these.



# What to do if your child is unwell

A guide for parents of babies and toddlers.

## A new born baby – fears and concerns

### Crying

All babies cry. It's their way of letting you know they need changing, are hungry or just need a cuddle. If your baby cries suddenly and often they may have colic. Colic is common but is not serious and will lessen over time. Talk to your **pharmacist**.

If your baby suddenly develops a high pitched cry, call **111** or contact your **GP**.

### Wheezing and breathing difficulties

These can be scary but are often nothing to worry about. Illnesses like bronchiolitis, mild croup and a cough can often be treated at home by **self care**. Quick breathing or panting is common in babies and rattly breathing can be helped by holding baby upright. If you are worried, talk to your health visitor.

### Rashes and dry skin

It's normal for babies to develop rashes, but if your baby develops a rash and seems unwell contact your **GP**. Other complaints such as nappy rash can be helped with creams from your local **pharmacist**.

## Babies and Toddlers

### Coughs and colds

Coughs and colds are part of normal child development and helps them build up their immune system, an average child will have between 8-12 viral infections each year.

Most bugs will run their course and your child will get better on their own but you can help them:

- Give your child lots to drink
- Try liquid paracetamol or liquid ibuprofen suitable for children

Talk to your **pharmacist** about other remedies

Contact your **GP** if your child's temperature goes above 38°C or if they have a fever with a rash which does not get paler when pressed with a glass.

### Ear infection and tonsillitis

Ear infections are common in very young children. They often follow a cold and can cause a temperature. They are painful and you may need painkillers from your **pharmacist**.

Earache can also be caused by tonsillitis, a common infection in children. Other symptoms include a sore throat, coughing and a high temperature. If the pain becomes more severe or your child has breathing difficulties, contact your **GP**.

### Upset tummy

Feeling and being sick are normally signs of an upset stomach or tummy bug, followed by diarrhoea.

Keep your child at home and, if they are not vomiting too often, give them frequent, small amounts of water (e.g. a couple of tablespoons full every 10 minutes), to stop them becoming dehydrated. Rehydration solutions can also help and can be bought at your local **pharmacy**.

### Bumps and bruises

Minor cuts, bumps and bruises are normal. Most of your child's bumps will require nothing more than a cuddle but you will know by their reaction if it's more serious. A cold flannel or a covered ice pack on the spot for a few minutes will help reduce swelling and cool it down.

If your child has a bump to the head and it looks serious, or symptoms worsen, call **111** for advice or contact your **GP**.

For round-the-clock medical information and confidential advice, call NHS 111. This is a free service.

Most infections are viral infections, which cannot be treated by antibiotics. This includes cold and flu.

## Self care

**For coughs and cold, sore throats, grazed knees and elbows and mild tummy aches.**

Lots of conditions can be treated at home – in fact that’s the best place for your child.

A major part of helping your child to recover from minor illness is to get them to rest and drink plenty of fluids. Plan ahead by stocking up on essentials, including liquid paracetamol or ibuprofen, a thermometer, antiseptic cream and plasters. Do not give aspirin to a child under 16.

## NHS 111

**If you are not sure how to deal with your child’s medical condition, NHS 111 is a great place to start.**

You can get free round-the-clock medical information, confidential advice and reassurance.

Health advisors will ask you questions and give advice on what to do and where to go next.

You can also see a GP outside of usual opening hours by calling 111. Ask to be put in touch with ‘GP Out of Hours’. You can also book an appointment at one of our seven GP hubs which provide GP appointments on weekday evenings and at weekends.

## Dental care

If you have concerns about your child’s teeth, including dental pain, contact a dentist. NHS 111 can help you find your nearest dentist or the nearest emergency dental service. There are no emergency dental services at our local hospitals.

## Pharmacists

**For diarrhoea, constipation, skin irritations and mild fever**

Many of your child’s medical problems can be treated by health professionals at your local pharmacy.

Pharmacists give expert, confidential advice and treatment. Best of all there is **no need for an appointment.**

## GP

**For high temperatures, persistent coughs and ear aches, eczema, severe tummy aches, vomiting and diarrhoea.**

Your GP is the first port of call for your child for non-urgent illnesses and injuries that won’t go away. Many GPs are open longer hours, including Saturdays and early mornings and they can offer emergency appointments for urgent cases.

Our seven GP access hubs in Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge provide urgent appointments with a GP on weekday evenings and at weekends. Call 111 to book an appointment or to contact the GP out of hours service.

## Walk in services

**For cuts, minor infections, rashes, a suspected break or fracture.**

If it’s not an emergency, but your child needs medical attention quickly, take them to your nearest walk-in centre or polyclinic.

In our area, these are at Harold Wood polyclinic, Loxford polyclinic and the walk in services at South Hornchurch and Upney Lane in Barking. All are open seven days a week. You don’t need to make an appointment and your child will be seen much more quickly than at A&E.

## A&E

**For blacking out, suspected meningitis, choking, fitting, struggling to breathe, and bleeding that won’t stop.**

Hospital A&E provides urgent treatment for serious, life-threatening conditions. You should take your child to A&E yourself if possible but if your child is too ill, dial 999 for an ambulance.

For more information on local services, visit [www.myhealth.london.nhs.uk](http://www.myhealth.london.nhs.uk) and search for a service.

