

think!

right treatment
right place



NHS

The NHS in Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire wants everyone to be safe, healthy and happy throughout the forthcoming winter period. And you can help us to make sure people who need medical support get the treatment they need.

As we move into winter, we all suffer a bit more with illnesses such as coughs, colds and sore throats.

Usually, though, if you're normally fit and healthy, there is no need to visit the doctor.

Most minor illnesses should be treated at home with remedies available over the counter at the pharmacy. Pharmacists are trained health professionals and can give you advice about your condition.

Research shows that people often seek a doctor's advice earlier than they need to. In many cases, just allowing a minor illness such as a cold a chance to run its course or buying a remedy over the counter at a pharmacy is a better way to treat the symptoms.

We want you to be part of our **#teamWinter** by looking after yourself properly.

Where should I go?

Accident and Emergency/999

Calling 999 or going to A & E is for people who are seriously ill or whose life is in danger.

Urgent Care Centres

Urgent Care Centres are for serious conditions such as suspected broken bones or breathing difficulties which need immediate care but are not life threatening. They are NOT for dental problems, cold symptoms, upset stomachs or to get prescriptions.

Minor Injuries Units

Minor injuries units deal with problems such as suspected fractures, cuts, bruises, minor eye problem, burns, scalds and sprains.

To find your local services please enter your postcode here: <http://bit.ly/1cZwwaa>

GP Surgery

Your local family doctor (GP) is the main point of contact for you and your family's general health care.

Pharmacy

Your pharmacy will give you advice on most minor illnesses and you can buy over-the-counter remedies to relieve your symptoms.

Dr Mike Ions, a GP and Chief Clinical Officer of East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group, says that it is better for everyone, especially the patient, if they go to the right place for their treatment.

"As you might expect, there are more illnesses and injuries over winter, which puts great pressure on local health services. All we ask is that people think about where they can get the right care for their illness."

Dr Pervez Muzaffar, a Darwen GP and Clinical Lead for Health and Wellbeing at Blackburn with Darwen CCG, said that in most cases of minor illness, looking after yourself is the best way to treat the symptoms.

"Many of these illnesses, particularly winter illnesses such as coughs and colds, are caused by viruses. So antibiotics simply won't cure them. The best thing people can do is rest, drink lots of fluids and visit their pharmacy for advice or remedies which they can buy over the counter."

The top 10 minor ailments for which people seek GP appointments unnecessarily are:

- ✓ Acne
- ✓ Constipation
- ✓ Coughs
- ✓ Eczema
- ✓ Fever (in children over six months old)
- ✓ Headaches and migraines
- ✓ Heartburn and indigestion
- ✓ Lower back pain
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Sprains and strains

Help us to help care for you by looking after your health. Join

 **#TeamWinter**



You can also check symptoms at www.nhs.uk/symptomchecker

This advice was brought to you by Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups.

