

Urgent medical help from NHS 111

What is NHS 111?

NHS 111 is the non emergency number to call when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.

It's available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

You can use [NHS 111 online](#) (for people aged 5 and over) to access advice and request a call.

In an emergency call the Emergency Services on 999.

When to use NHS 111

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life threatening situation.

Call 111 if you:

- need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- think you need to go to [A&E](#) or need another NHS urgent care service
- don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- need urgent medical help and your GP's is closed
- need health information or reassurance about what to do next

For less urgent health needs, contact [your GP](#), [drop in to Urgent Treatment Centre](#) or [local pharmacist](#). If a health professional has given you a specific phone number to call when you are concerned about your condition, continue to use that number.

How does NHS 111 work?

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straightaway to the local service that can help you best. That could be:

- Accident and Emergency (A&E)
- an out of hours doctor
- an [urgent care centre](#)

- a community nurse
- an **emergency dentist**
- or a late-opening chemist.
- mental health crisis support

Where possible, the NHS 111 team will book you an appointment or transfer you directly to the people you need to speak to. If NHS 111 advisers think you need an **ambulance**, they will immediately arrange for one to be sent to you.

Calls to 111 are recorded. This information is kept securely and will only be shared with others directly involved with your care.

Mental health crisis support from NHS 111

When calling NHS 111 you will be offered the option to press 2 if you need crisis mental health support. When you choose option 2 you will be put in contact with mental health advisors, who will be supported and supervised by trained mental health clinicians. You may have contacted a local mental health crisis number before, this is now replaced across the UK by NHS 111.

The service is for people of all ages, including adults, children and young people.

What information will I need when I call NHS 111?

If you need advice about a health problem, you will be asked if you are calling for yourself or on behalf of someone else and will be asked to explain:

- what the symptoms are, how they affect you (or the person you are calling about) and when they began
- what you (or the person you are calling about) have tried already
- any drugs you (or the person you are calling about) are already taking
- any existing medical conditions
- anything else that you think is relevant

If you are calling on behalf of someone else, that person needs to be in the same room as you so that the nurse can accurately assess their symptoms. An NHS 111 advisor will then tell you what to do next.

What if I don't speak English or I'm hard of hearing?

If English is not your first language, you can use the NHS 111's interpreting and translations service. When you phone NHS 111 just say the language you would prefer to use.

For deaf people or people who are hard of hearing a textphone service is available. **Tel: 18001 111**

There is a **British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter service**. Using a webcam you can make a video call from 8am to midnight. The BSL interpreter relays your conversation to the NHS 111 adviser.

What is NHS.UK?

NHS.UK (previously NHS Choices and NHS Direct) is a website that:

- provides information on health conditions and treatments
- has a facility for searching for services near you
- has interactive tools, smartphone apps and podcasts to help you improve your health and lifestyle
- connects to a range of online communities
- brings the latest health news

The NHS Health A-Z contains over 700 topics covering illnesses and conditions, tests, treatments and operations.

What is NHS 111 Online?

This is the new website that you can use instead of calling NHS 111.

NHS 111 online asks you questions about your main symptom and then tells you:

- where and when to get help
- be contacted by a nurse if needed
- how to arrange an emergency prescription if you have run out of medication

If the guide suggests dealing with the problem yourself, it will give you advice on:

- what to do;
- what medicines, if any, you can buy from your pharmacist which could help; and
- which other people or organisations can offer you more advice

What is an emergency?

In a medical emergency call **999**. This means someone's life is at risk because they have:

- lost consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- persistent, severe chest pain
- breathing difficulties or stopped breathing
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds

Useful Organisations

NHS 111

Website: www.nhs.uk/111

999 Emergency Services – Fire, Police, Ambulance and Coast Guard

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/999-and-112-the-uks-national-emergency-numbers>

Telephone: 999

NHS

Website: www.nhs.uk

Telephone: 999

Relay UK Emergency SMS Service

Website: <https://www.relayuk.bt.com/how-to-use-relay-uk/contact-999-using-relay-uk.html>

Telephone: 18000

Emergency Department – Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI)

Website: <https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/emergency-department-ae/>

Telephone: 0191 233 6161

Address: Queen Victoria Road, NE1 4LP

Related Articles

[Walk-in centres \(Urgent Treatment Centres\)](#)

[Introduction to First Aid](#)

[Your Doctor or GP](#)

[Getting to hospital](#)

[Pharmacy \(or Chemists\)](#)

Mental health emergency or crisis services

Eye Casualty