



[Home](#) » [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) » [GP appointment guidance](#)

PLEASE NOTE - The content on this web page was accurate when published at 17:00 on 16.06.20.

We will endeavour to update this information as regularly as possible in line with new national and local guidance and advice issued.

GP practices

Booking your appointment:

Is my GP practice still open?

Due to coronavirus, GP practices are working differently to protect staff and patients.

Practice are working between the hours of 8.00am and 6.30pm but are using telephone, video and online consultations to hold appointments with patients. When you speak to your practice, they will decide whether you need a telephone/video or face to face appointment with your doctor/nurse.

You may be asked to visit the practice if necessary.

I need to book an appointment at my practice for myself, my child or for someone I am looking after. How do I do this?

If you need to book an appointment, please do not go to the practice in person.

You can call your practice to make an appointment or at some practices you can book your appointment online. Please check your practice website. You may also be able to book an appointment through the NHS app. [Click here for more information.](#)

Your practice will then give you advice about the next steps.

How do I know if my problem can be managed without visiting the practice?

All requests for appointments will initially be dealt with over the telephone or online. Your practice will decide what kind of appointment you need based on the information you give them. You may be offered a telephone or video consultation. In some cases you may be asked to visit the practice for an appointment if this is the best way to manage your medical problem.

Please ensure your practice has your up-to-date mobile/contact details.

Why do I have to tell the receptionist about my symptoms?

This is important to make sure that you are offered an appointment which best meets your needs. All health care staff are bound by confidentiality and the information you give us is used only for your care.

How does a video consultation with my doctor work?

Many practices are now able to offer video appointments between doctors/nurses and patients. Your practice will tell you which video apps they use and help and support you to use it. This is a new way of working for us all so we will do all we can to make sure things run as smoothly as possible.

Practices are using a variety of apps and software. Your practice will let you know which one you need to use and provide you with instructions on how to get up and running.

To have a video appointment, you will need a smart phone with a video camera and a good WiFi connection and/or data connection.

Please see the guide to video consultations at the end of the FAQs for a brief outline of how it works. If you do not have a smart phone with a video camera, your practice will arrange a different way to support you.

Advice on face coverings and attending your appointment:

My doctor has advised that I need to go into my practice for an appointment. How can I prepare?

Different practices will have different things in place to make your visit safe. Your practice may have specific instructions about where to wait and how and when to enter the practice. Please follow their instructions carefully.

Please do not arrive early to your appointment so that time spent in the waiting room can be reduced for your safety. If you arrive early, please wait outside the practice or in your car.

Please read any notices in your practice regarding social distancing to help stop the spread of coronavirus. Some practices may provide disinfectant sprays and hand sanitiser for your use.

Please wear a face covering to help protect others. This includes a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. There is guidance online on how to make a face covering at home.

Do I have to wear a face covering?

Yes, you must now wear a face covering when going into any health setting including your GP practice, hospital and an urgent treatment centre. This is to protect others around you and help to stop the spread of coronavirus.

If you are required to have a face to face appointment, you will be reminded whilst your appointment is being booked to bring a face covering with you.

What type of face covering do I need to wear?

Face coverings can be cloth and/or homemade, this includes a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. Advice on how to wear and make face coverings can be found on the government website. Face coverings worn as part of religious beliefs or cultural practice are also acceptable, providing they are not loose and cover the mouth and nose.

Can my GP practice provide a face covering?

GP practices have limited supplies of surgical masks for their staff so are unable to provide these to patients.

If you are not able to find a face covering or scarf, there is guidance on how to make a face covering at home.

Face coverings include a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head.

Will my doctor and/or nurse in the practice wear a face covering?

Yes, all doctors, nurses and other health care professionals will wear surgical face masks to protect you. They may also wear gloves, plastic aprons, visors and in some situations, gowns. This is nothing to worry about and is to help protect you as they continue to provide care for patients.

Can I bring someone with me to my appointment?

Please **come alone** to your appointment unless you have a carer or guardian who helps you with your care or communication needs. This is so we can maintain social distancing for the safety of our patients and staff.

If you need a translator or British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, please tell your GP practice prior to your appointment so they can arrange this.

Translators and BSL interpreters can also be arranged if you are having a video appointment.

How will social distancing work in my GP practice?

All practices are following guidance to make attending an appointment as safe as possible.

Please follow the social distancing measures that are in place at your practice.

If you arrive early for your appointment, please wait in your car or outside the practice to reduce time spent in waiting rooms

for your safety.

If you need to use the waiting room, there may be points clearly marked on the floors and distance between seats to maintain social distancing.

Check-in screens may not be in use.

Please remember to wear your face covering. This includes a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head.

Coronavirus guidance:

I have symptoms of coronavirus, should I visit my GP?

If before your appointment at the practice, you develop symptoms of coronavirus (including a high temperature and/or a new continuous cough and/or or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste), please do not attend your appointment.

You need to self-isolate at home to stop the spread of the virus. This means you must not leave your home. More guidance on self-isolating is available on the NHS website.

Please seek advice from the 111 online coronavirus service to check your symptoms.

You can also book a test online to see if you have coronavirus. Drive through test centres are operating, you or someone you live with must have a car to get to a regional test centre. If you do not have a car, you may be able to request a home testing kit. To find out more, [click here](#).

If you do not have access to the internet and want advice on your symptoms, please call NHS 111. If you require a test but do not have access to the internet, please call 0300 303 2713.

I am due to have my doctor's appointment but a member of my household is self-isolating, what should I do?

If a member of your household is self-isolating due to suspected coronavirus, please **do not** attend your appointment.

You also are required to self-isolate at home to stop the spread of the virus. This means you must not leave your home. More guidance on self-isolating is available on the NHS website.

I'm due to have my doctor's appointment but have started to feel unwell, what should I do?

If you are unwell due to symptoms of coronavirus, please **do not** visit your GP practice and self-isolate at home (see above).

If you are feeling unwell but do not think it is coronavirus, please call your GP practice to get advice on whether you should still attend your appointment.

In an emergency, call 999.

Support with routine/other appointments:

I have symptoms I am worried about which are not linked to coronavirus, should I still contact my GP?

If you have symptoms you are worried about, it's really important you contact your GP practice so they can find out more and make sure you are getting the care you need.

Please contact your practice who will arrange a telephone/video or face to face appointment with your doctor/nurse.

You may be asked to visit the practice if necessary.

I have been shielding – can I visit my GP practice now and how do I get support?

If you have been shielding and you need an appointment, you should contact your practice either by telephone or online. If your medical problem cannot be managed by a telephone, video or online consultation you may be asked to attend the practice

If you are asked to attend your practice, arrangements will be made to ensure it is as safe as possible.

If you need support with collecting food and medicines, NHS Volunteer Responders can help. An NHS Volunteer Responder can pick up and deliver your shopping to you. They can also pick up prescriptions or any other essentials you need. Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange volunteer support.

Can I get a home visit from my doctor/nurse?

Yes in certain circumstances home visits can be arranged if a telephone or video consultation is not possible and you are unable to attend the practice because you are housebound or terminally ill. Patients who are shielding are able to leave their home to attend medical appointments.

How can I order a repeat prescription?

If you have a repeat prescription that you usually request at your GP practice, you can do this online or via the NHS App. If you cannot order your prescription online then you should call your practice.

If you normally order your repeat prescription through your pharmacist you can continue to do this over the phone.

Please do not go to your GP practice or pharmacy to order prescriptions.

I have long term health conditions and am due routine review appointments at my practice. How do I arrange these?

If you have a long term health condition and are due for your review appointment, please wait for your practice to contact you to arrange this.

Due to coronavirus, there may be a delay in arranging this but your practice is planning how best to meet your care needs whilst keeping you safe. If you have concerns that your long term condition may be getting worse please contact your practice who will arrange for you to speak to a GP or nurse.

I'm a new mum. What do I do about injections for my baby?

If you have a newborn, please get in touch with your GP practice to arrange vaccinations for your baby. Immunisation and vaccination services are still being provided by GP practices. It is extremely important routine immunisations are given at the right time to best protect your baby, Social distancing measures will be in place at your practice.

Can I still get a blood test at my GP?

If you need a blood test, please contact your practice who will advise you on next steps. Some routine blood tests have been delayed due to coronavirus but urgent tests are still being carried out.

I am due my cervical smear test. Can this be arranged?

Your practice is still able to carry out cervical smears. Some routine cervical smear tests have been delayed due to coronavirus but your practice will contact you to arrange this. If you have any concerns, please contact your practice to discuss this.

I think I may need to see a specialist. Can this be arranged?

It is very important that if you have symptoms you are worried about that you make an appointment with your GP. Urgent hospital appointments for suspected cancer and other potentially serious conditions are still being arranged. Your GP can still refer you to the hospital for problems that are not urgent but you may receive a delay in receiving an appointment due to coronavirus.

I am already going to the hospital for a medical problem. What will happen to my on-going care?

Your hospital team will contact you to keep you updated. The majority of hospital appointments are being carried out either by telephone or video. Please ensure your hospital team has your up-to-date mobile/contact details.

How can I help my GP practice to help me?

Please ensure your practice has your up-to-date mobile/contact details.
Please do not visit the practice unless you have been given an appointment.
Please follow social distancing measures and wear a face covering if you visit the practice.

Guide to video consultations:

Video software is currently being used by many practices. Please see a brief outline of the guidance below. Please remember your practice will tell you what video apps or software they are using and provide support on how to use this.

- Ensure you are in a place where you are comfortable to talk about your health confidentially.
- You will receive a text message with a link included when your doctor/nurse is ready to start the consultation
- Click the link which will take you to the video consultation in your phone browser – you are not required to install an app
- You may be prompted by your browser for permissions to use your microphone and camera, it is fine to do this. Click 'Allow'
- You may need to click 'Join meeting'
- Ensure your camera is on and your microphone is not muted

→ NHS III	ADDRESS	Access to information
→ NHS	1 Standard Court	Press and media
→ Department of Health	Park Row	Privacy policy
→ NHS Constitution	Nottingham	
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