

People in Ealing are being encouraged to **choose the right care** for their need this winter to help ease pressure on NHS services.

There are many common winter illnesses and injuries, such as colds and flu, you can **treat at home** with a well-stocked medicine cabinet containing:

- Paracetamol and ibuprofen for pain relief
- Decongestants for cold and flu symptoms such as blocked noses or sinuses
- Tablets or liquids to help with heartburn and other digestion problems
- Antiseptic wipes for cuts, grazes and minor wounds
- Antihistamine tablets for allergies and insect bites
- Rehydration remedies
- A thermometer
- Plasters and sterile dressings

**Your local pharmacist** can provide professional, confidential advice and treatment without an appointment. You can see a pharmacist for a range of problems including coughs, colds, skin conditions, aches and pains, and stomach complaints or emergency contraception. They may prescribe you with over-the-counter remedies and will be able to advise on medicines that are safe to use with any other medications you are already taking.

If you're still unsure which care option to choose, **NHS 111 is a round-the-clock phone service**, dial 111 for free from landlines and mobiles. NHS 111 offers expert advice for situations when you need help urgently but it isn't an emergency.

The telephone team are fully-trained and supported by nurses, paramedics and other medical professionals. If they think you should see a healthcare professional, they will direct you to the correct service for your need, including **GP practices that are open at weekends**. Just call 111 for information.

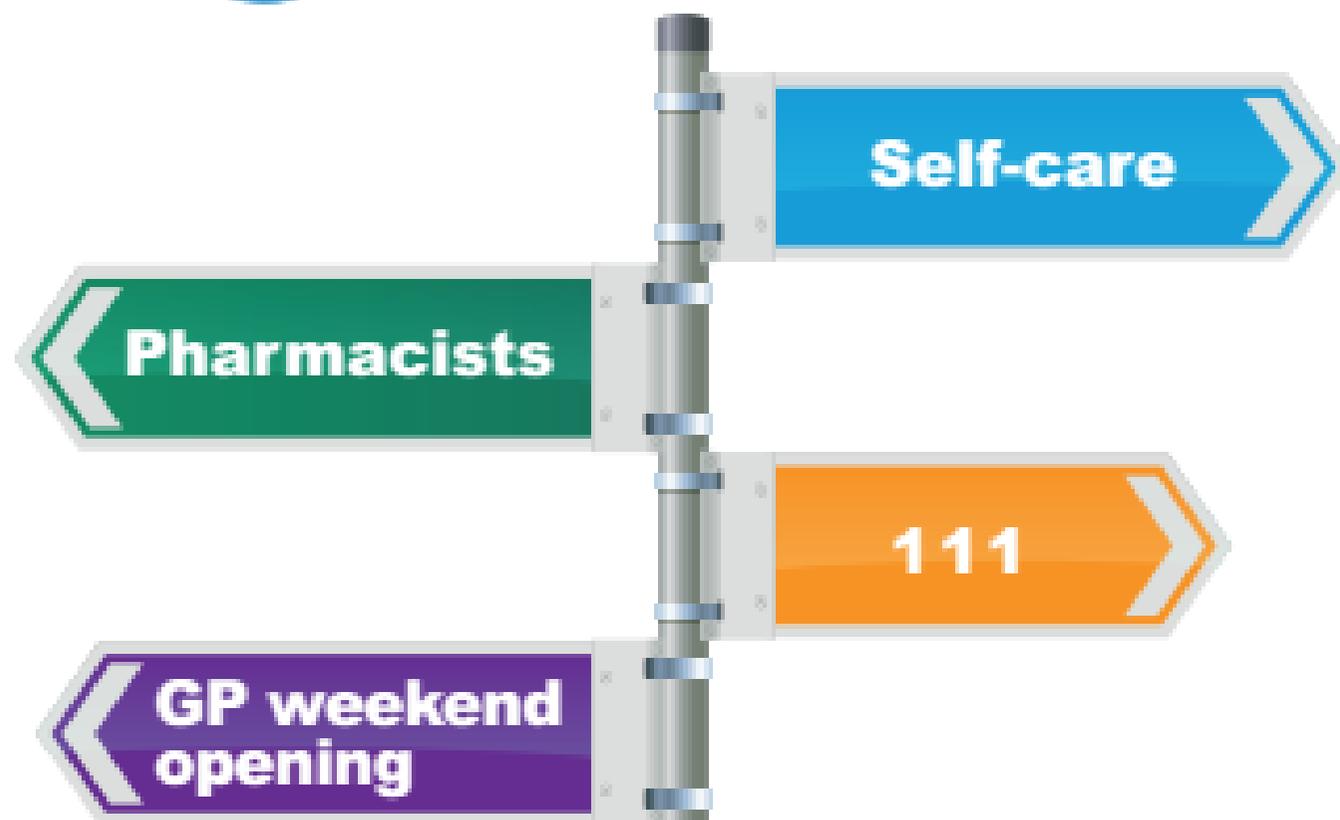
Dr Mohini Parmar, chair of Ealing CCG, said:

“During the winter months, an increase in winter illnesses and injuries puts additional pressure on health services, so it’s important to use your NHS wisely.

Self-care is important all year round but can be particularly essential during the winter months. It’s vital to drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated, and be sure to wrap up warm. We would also encourage people to check in regularly with any neighbours or family members who might be vulnerable in the cold and the dark.

A&Es come under a lot of pressure at this time, so using services sensibly not only means that you will get the most suitable advice or treatment as quickly as possible, it also frees up emergency services for people with life-threatening illnesses or injuries.”

# Choose the right care



Visit your pharmacy for free expert advice - no appointment needed.

Treat simple health problems at home.

Call NHS 111 free