

# ONE BROMLEY

TOGETHER THROUGH

*winter* in Bromley

Please help your health and care services in Bromley this winter by taking care of yourself and using the most appropriate service when you need it.

This leaflet provides important information to help you keep well over winter. Please keep it safe so you can refer to it when you need it.

It includes:

USE THE RIGHT SERVICE

VACCINATIONS

STAY WELL THIS WINTER

PHARMACY

USE YOUR GP TEAM

NHS 111

KEEP YOUR CHILD WELL

WINTER CHECKLIST AND IMPORTANT NUMBERS



# This Winter

## USE THE RIGHT SERVICE



**Self-care is the best choice** to treat minor illnesses, such as coughs and colds etc. Use over the counter medicines and get plenty of rest.



**Ask your local pharmacist** for advice or treatment for a range of symptoms. This can avoid unnecessary trips to your GP or A&E department. No appointment is needed.



**Contact your GP practice** if you're feeling unwell and it's not an emergency. Appointments are available from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.



**Visit 111.nhs.uk** to check out your symptoms and seek further advice. If you have an urgent medical problem and your GP is closed, NHS 111 can provide advice and if necessary make an appointment for you.



**Call 999** if you or someone else is seriously ill or hurt and their life is in danger or head straight to A&E.



**Lorelie Eduarte, Senior Sister, A&E, Princess Royal University Hospital**

“Please think self-care, pharmacy, GP, or NHS 111 first. Only use emergency services when it is a serious or life-threatening injury or illness. A&E services are always busier over winter and need to be kept available for patients with critical needs.”





# This Winter

## HAVE YOUR VACCINATIONS



**Dr Ruchira Paranjape, Bromley GP**

“We have lost so many people to COVID-19 and the vaccination offers us all a way back to our normal lives. I’ve had mine. It is safe and the very best way to protect you and your loved ones.”



**The COVID-19 vaccination offers you the best protection from the virus.** A booster is available to eligible groups. For up-to-date information on the COVID-19 vaccination programme, or if you have any questions, please visit [www.nhsvaccinefacts.com](http://www.nhsvaccinefacts.com) or speak to your doctor.

If you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 it's important you get tested as soon as possible.

### Main symptoms of COVID-19:

- a **high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a **new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**



**Dr Nada Lemic, Director of Public Health**

“COVID-19 has not gone away so it is really important to protect yourself and others. Please have your vaccination and continue with frequent handwashing, ventilation, wearing face masks in indoor public spaces and social distancing.”





# This Winter

## HAVE YOUR VACCINATIONS

### Who can have the flu vaccine:

The flu vaccine is given free on the NHS to people who:

- are **50 and over** (including those who'll be 50 by 31 March 2022)
- have **certain health conditions**
- are **pregnant**
- are in **long-stay residential care**
- receive a **carer's allowance**, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick
- live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis)
- are **frontline health or social care workers**

The children's nasal spray flu vaccine is safe and effective and is offered every year to help protect them against flu. For more information on the flu vaccine for children and where you can get it, please visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine)

**NHS**

**Vaccines are our best protection this winter.**

It's easy for us to pass on COVID-19 or flu viruses without knowing. This winter there are two essential vaccines you'll need to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Find out if you're eligible now at [nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](http://nhs.uk/wintervaccinations)



### Dr Jon Doyle, Bromley GP

“The flu is unpleasant even for healthy people and can be deadly for some. If you are in one of the groups above, it is important to get yourself protected. Please do not underestimate just how serious flu can be.”



# This Winter

## HAVE YOUR VACCINATIONS

### Is it the Flu or a Cold?

Flu happens every year, usually in the winter. It's a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly. You can catch flu all year round, but it's more common in winter. Flu symptoms tend to start more suddenly, be more severe and last longer.

The most common symptoms include fever, chills, headache, aches and pains in the joints and muscles and extreme tiredness. Healthy people usually recover within 2 to 7 days – using over the counter medication to manage symptoms where needed, but for some the disease can lead to a hospital stay, permanent disability or even death.

Colds are much less serious and usually start gradually with a stuffy or runny nose and a sore throat.



### Shingles

A vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to those aged 70 to 79 years, who have not had the shingles vaccine before. Once you become eligible for a shingles vaccination your doctor will take the opportunity to vaccinate you when you attend the surgery for general reasons, or for your annual flu vaccination.

### Pneumococcal

The pneumococcal vaccine protects against pneumonia. It is recommended that babies and the over 65s have the vaccine once. Children and adults with certain long-term conditions who are therefore at higher risk of serious illness, are advised to have the vaccine every five years.

**If you are eligible for one of these vaccines, please contact your GP surgery to arrange an appointment.**

# This Winter

## STAY WELL



**Dr Bridget Hopkins, Bromley GP**

“Winter can be a challenging time. But there’s lots you can do to prepare yourself. Please follow our tips to stay well this winter.”



- **Have your winter vaccines**
- **Keep your house warm** – to at least 18°C. Those on certain benefits are able to claim financial and practical help with heating their home. Further information is available at: [www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment](http://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment) [www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment](http://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment)
- **To manage winter illnesses at home**, you should keep warm, rest, drink plenty of fluids, have at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up and use over-the-counter medications to help give relief
- **Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives**, especially those living alone. If you are worried about an elderly person, contact your council or call the Age UK helpline on **0800 678 1602** (8am to 7pm every day)
- **Wash your hands** with soap and water to protect yourself and others from illnesses such as food poisoning, diarrhoea, flu and COVID-19
- **Help keep health and care staff and other patients safe** by not coming to the hospital, GP practice or other services if you have diarrhoea and vomiting or any COVID-19 symptoms



**Caroline Ryden, Respiratory Nurse, Bromley Healthcare**

“Self-care is even more important in the winter months. Darker days and a drop in temperature can affect our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Help yourself by eating nutritious foods, exercising regularly, getting plenty of good quality sleep and doing activities that make you feel happy.”





# This Winter

## PHARMACY

### Seek early help from your pharmacist with minor ailments.

Pharmacists are experts in medicines, and as qualified healthcare professionals they can offer clinical advice and over the counter medicines for a range of symptoms and minor ailments.

Many pharmacies are open until late and at weekends. **You do not need an appointment.**

Most pharmacies **have a private consultation** room where you can discuss issues with pharmacy staff without being overheard.

Ensure you order repeat prescriptions in good time especially when services are due to be closed over a holiday period.



If symptoms suggest it's something more serious, pharmacists have the right training to make sure you get the help you need. For example, they will tell you if you need to see a GP, nurse, or other healthcare professional.

### Seek early help from your pharmacist for minor ailments such as:

- aches and pains
- sore throat
- coughs
- colds
- flu
- earache
- cystitis
- skin rashes
- teething
- red eye

You can request repeat prescriptions and nominate a pharmacy to collect your prescriptions from using the NHS App on your phone.



### Raj Matharu, Bromley Pharmacist

"Pharmacists are trained professionals who are experts in winter health advice. As soon as you start to feel poorly, speak to your local pharmacist who will help you."



# This Winter

## USE YOUR GP TEAM



**Dr Alka Sharma, Bromley GP**

“Please do not delay in seeking advice from your GP practice with any new or ongoing health concerns. We always see patients face to face if this is clinically needed. We are open and here for you.”



**Even if you feel well, it is really important you are registered with a GP.**

Your GP practice team includes GPs, nurses, and other healthcare professionals, such as pharmacist, paramedic, physiotherapist and you may be seen by any of them as appropriate.

Because of COVID-19, there have been changes to the way appointments at your practice are provided. You can request a consultation online, or may receive a consultation by phone or

video call. If the doctor advises you should be seen face to face because of your clinical need, please do attend the appointment arranged for you.

Instead of phoning your GP practice, you can sign up to use free online services. You can then book or cancel appointments, order repeat prescriptions and look at your records online. Speak to your practice to get started.

Your practice will get you the right help quickly if it is urgent. This may include an appointment out of hours or at another local NHS service.



**Dr Andrew Parson, Bromley GP**

“We have new community services that look after our poorly residents at home, so they don’t have to go into hospital. Your GP will be able to arrange what services you need to help you stay home and recover.”





# This Winter

## USE NHS 111 ONLINE FIRST

Use NHS 111 online if you have an urgent but not life-threatening medical need rather than going to A&E. You will get help right away and if needed a healthcare professional will call you. It is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk)

**Go to the website [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) first or use the NHS App, it's much quicker.**

If you need more help or don't have the internet, then call 111.



### How does it work?

You answer questions about your symptoms on the website or by speaking to a fully trained advisor on the phone. You can ask for a translator.

Depending on the situation you will:

- find out what local service can help you
- be connected to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist, or GP
- get a face-to-face appointment if you need one
- be given an arrival time if you need to go to A&E – this might mean you spend less time in A&E
- be told how to get any medicine you need
- get self-care advice
- Be advised to go to an urgent treatment centre. In Bromley these are available at either Beckenham Beacon (which has x-ray facilities) or the Princess Royal University Hospital





# This Winter

## KEEP YOUR CHILD WELL



**Dr Bhumika Mittal, Bromley GP**

“It is normal to feel worried when your child is ill. Most illnesses get better by themselves and will make your child better able to resist similar illnesses in the future. More information and advice is available at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/health](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/health).”



### High temperature (fever) in children

If you think your child has a temperature, check this using a thermometer. Normal temperature should be about 36.4°C but this can vary from child to child. A fever is a high temperature of 38°C or more. High temperatures are common and are the body's natural response to fighting infections like viruses including coughs and colds but can also occur with teething or following vaccinations. Often, they clear up by themselves without needing any treatment. You do not need to treat every temperature with a medicine but if your child appears distressed, you can give them paracetamol or ibuprofen. In most cases there should be no need for antibiotics as they do not treat viruses. Taking antibiotics when they are not needed

could cause side effects and stop them working when they really are required.



**Sometimes a high temperature can be a sign of more serious infection.**

You should contact your GP practice (or call 111 if it is closed), if you are worried, or if your child:

- Is under three months old and has a temperature of 38°C or above
- Is between three to six months and has a temperature of 39°C or above
- Has a fever that lasts more than five days
- Is less active than usual
- Is getting worse instead of better



### You should seek immediate help if your child:

- is dehydrated (dry nappy, no tears when crying, sunken eyes, dry lips)
- is drowsy or unusually sleepy or difficult to wake up
- is irritable, confused or agitated
- Has a fit for the first time (a stiff body with jerky movements)
- Develops a rash that does not disappear when you press a glass against it
- Has unusually cold hands or feet

### Wheezing and shortness of breath

Any kind of breathing difficulty your child experiences can be scary. It may be nothing to worry about so use your instincts and seek help if you need it. Contact your GP practice if your child finds breathing hard work and is flaring their nostrils or sucking in their ribs and tummy, or if they are unable to complete a sentence without stopping for breath. Dial 999 or take your child to A&E if it looks as if your child's chest is 'caving in' or they appear pale or even slightly bluish.

### Be prepared at home

Keep some essential medicines and first-aid supplies at home. Remember to keep all medicines out of the reach of children, to check regularly that they are in date, and read the instructions

- a digital thermometer (and spare batteries)
- children's liquid painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen
- antihistamines
- decongestant or vapour-rub
- oral rehydration sachets
- antiseptic cream
- calamine lotion or cream
- teething gel
- plasters and sterile dressings
- hand sanitiser

**If your child is asthmatic**, please make sure that they have their annual asthma review, to check their asthma control with a healthcare professional (Doctor/Nurse/Pharmacist). They will be able to check their inhaler technique and ensure they have an up-to-date asthma plan.



# Your Winter

## CHECKLIST

✓	Have my COVID-19 vaccination or booster
✓	Have my flu vaccination
✓	Seek early help from my pharmacist with minor ailments
✓	Download the NHS app on my phone
✓	Sign up for access to online GP services
✓	Order and collect repeat medicines
✓	Make sure I have enough food and medicine in the cupboard
✓	Keep an eye on elderly neighbours and relatives



**Sue Potter, Information Manager at Bromley Well**  
 “Bromley Well provides free support to help you stay emotionally and physically well. The service is delivered by a partnership of local voluntary sector organisations which brings together many years of expertise to provide a range of services for local people.”

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### My GP surgery

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

#### My Pharmacy

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_



**Bromley Council**  
 Tel: 020 8464 3333



**Bromley Well**  
 FREEPHONE: 0808 278 7898  
 Email: [spa@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:spa@bromleywell.org.uk)  
[www.bromleywell.org.uk](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk)



**Mindful Mums**  
[www.blgmind.org.uk/mindful-mums](http://www.blgmind.org.uk/mindful-mums)

**DadPad®**  
**DadPad app**  
 Help for new dads  
[www.thedadpad.co.uk](http://www.thedadpad.co.uk)

Visit [www.nhsfreemyourmind.co.uk](http://www.nhsfreemyourmind.co.uk) for advice on your mental wellbeing. If you or a loved one is experiencing a mental health crisis, call the 24 hour service on 0800 330 8590

To get a copy of this leaflet in other languages or formats, please email [broccg.patientquery@nhs.net](mailto:broccg.patientquery@nhs.net)