

Using the NHS app and NHS websites to manage your health online



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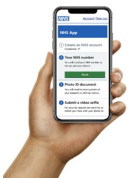
The benefits of accessing health information online

If you're a patient, digital resources give you better access to information and care at a time that's convenient for you. Going online means you can take better control of your health and shared care. If you work within the health and care system, digital health can result in more effective delivery of care, along with better outcomes and reduced costs.

Whatever your background, this guide will support you to get more out of available online resources.

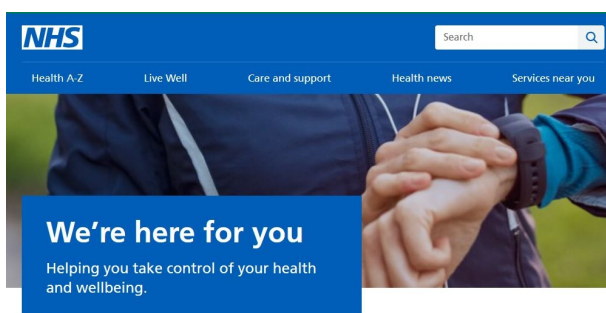
Read on to learn about:

- How to register to use and download the NHS app.
- GP Online services and how to register.
- The NHS Website.
- The NHS e-Referral service.
- What to use each of these resources for.
- How to keep your information safe when managing your health online.
- How to identify other quality online health resources.



If after searching for information online you are worried about your own or someone else's health, please seek medical guidance. Visit www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/ for further information.

The NHS website



The NHS website provides a wealth of information which is freely accessible. It allows you to get more details about health conditions and medicines, as well as advice and support.

Unlike the App, there's no need to register to use the NHS website, so you can browse anonymously. You can find the NHS website at www.nhs.uk.

The navigation bar at the top of each page gives you access to numerous fantastic resources. These include:

1. Health A-Z

The Health A-Z section contains comprehensive guides to conditions and their symptoms, including what to do and when to get help.

Everything is arranged alphabetically. Click on the first letter of the condition you're interested in and then scroll down the list to find the one you want more information about. Alternatively, you can type the name of the condition in the search field at the top of the page.

For example, if you wanted to know more about flu:

1. Click on the letter F at the top of the page.
2. Scroll down until you find flu in the list.
3. Click on the word to be taken to the page which will give you details about the symptoms of flu, how you can treat it at home and how to know when to seek medical help.

You can access this section directly by going to www.nhs.uk/conditions/

As well as learning more about health conditions, you can also [find out more information about various medicines](#).

Follow the same process for finding information about different medicines – click on the letter the medication starts with and then scroll down the list to find the right one.

2. Live Well

The Live Well section of the NHS site www.nhs.uk/live-well/ contains lots of information, advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing. On this page, you'll find several subsections:

- **Eat well** – information about the different food groups and how to eat a balanced, healthy diet.
- **Healthy weight** – including a BMI calculator to discover if you're a healthy weight.
- **Exercise** – programmes, workouts and ideas to get you moving and improve your fitness levels.
- **Sleep and tiredness** – information about how to get better sleep.
- **Sexual health** – information about all aspects of sexual health, including contraception, and STIs.
- **Alcohol support** – why reducing your alcohol intake is good for your health and support on cutting down.
- **Quit smoking** – how quitting smoking can have a positive impact on your health.
- **Healthy body** – practical information and advice on staying in good health.
- **Moodzone** – Advice, tools and audio guides to improve your mental and emotional wellbeing. This section is also useful if you know someone who may be struggling with their mental health and needs support dealing with stress, anxiety and/or depression.

There is also a section about children's health: www.nhs.uk/change4life

This area features fun ideas to help kids stay healthy, including information about nutrition, healthy recipes, a guide to your child's weight and activities to improve children's fitness and wellbeing.

3. Services Near You

You can find a summary of all the services offered by the NHS by going to www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/

You can also use the search function to find specific services near you by visiting www.nhs.uk/service-search

For example, let's say you've just moved to a new area and you want to find a GP. Write the name of the service you're looking for in the 'find' box, which will be 'GP' in this case. Then put your post code in the 'location' box.

Click on the 'Search' button and you'll be shown the results. You'll have the option to save your postcode so you won't have to input it for future searches. You can also sort the results by topics such as quality of service and use of hospital and order them e.g. nearest, rating, etc.

4. Social care and support

If you or someone you know needs help with day-to-day living due to illness or disability, you can find information about your options and where to get support here:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/

This section of the site includes details on:

- **What is social care and support.**
- What **help** is available from social services and charities.
- What you can get in terms of care services, equipment and care homes.
- **How to pay** for care and support and where you can get help with costs.
- **Care following a hospital stay.**
- **Support and benefits for carers.**
- **Practical advice** for carers.
- Help for those caring for **children and young people.**
- What to do if you need to make decisions for others, including **power of attorney.**

5. Mental health support and services

If you need information about mental health support and services available on the NHS, go to www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/

This section gives information about:

- How to **access mental health** services.
- How to deal with a **mental health crisis** or emergency.
- What happens during a **mental health assessment** and how to get a second opinion.
- Your rights under the **Mental Health Act.**
- Child and adolescent mental health services (**CAMHS**).
- Information about CAMHS written for children and young people.
- Child and adolescent mental health services information for parents and carers.
- **An easy read guide to your rights under the Mental Health Act.**
- A search engine to help you **find a psychological therapy.**

If you need help or support with your mental or emotional wellbeing, you might also find the Moodzone NHS self-help service useful:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/

The NHS app

The NHS app gives you the ability to get access to advice, support and information to help you manage your health.



You will need to create an NHS login to use the app which allows you to perform personal tasks such as booking a GP appointment or accessing your medical records. You need a smartphone or tablet computer to use the NHS app. The NHS app is constantly evolving, so what you can do on the app may change over time.

Current functions include:

- Checking your symptoms.
- What to do when you need help urgently.
- Booking and managing appointments at your GP surgery.
- Ordering repeat prescriptions.
- Securely viewing your GP medical records.

- Registering to be an organ donor.
- Selecting how the NHS uses your data.

Registering for the NHS app

If you would like to use the NHS App you will need to create an NHS login, you can do this in one of two ways:

- Take a photo of your ID and record a short video of yourself reciting four numbers.
- Use registration details from your GP surgery.

Downloading the app

You will need a smartphone to download the NHS app. You can download the app from Google play or the iTunes store.

Creating an NHS login

In order to start using the app, you will need to register for an NHS login. This enables you to securely access digital health and care services with one username and password.

You will be prompted to set up your NHS login once you have downloaded and opened the app. The app will guide you through the process but there are a couple of things to note as part of this:-

- You will need to prove your identity during this and can do so with either your passport or UK driving licence.
- You will need to take a photo of your ID and make a short video of your face during the set-up. Don't worry, the app will tell you exactly what to do.

If you'd like more information about the NHS login, visit [these NHS login pages](#) on the NHS website.

Using the app

For further help with using the app, the NHS has created [these really useful help pages](#).

Support with using a smartphone

If you need help with using a smartphone and downloading an app, Digital Unite has a number of informative guides which will take you through the process step-by-step.

- *If you have an iPhone, you'll find the iPhone guide [here](#).*
- *If you use an android phone, you'll find the right guide [here](#).*

GP online services and how to register

If you are registered with a GP surgery, you can access several different services online. These vary depending on the surgery, but can include:

- Booking, checking or cancelling appointments with a GP, nurse or other healthcare professionals
- Ordering repeat prescriptions
- View parts of your medical records, including details about medicines, vaccinations and test results
- Access communications between your GP surgery and other services, e.g. hospitals.

To find out which of these services your GP offers, check their website or visit www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/ to find out which providers are available to you.

You may also find these guides useful:

www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/gps/gp-online-services/

www.england.nhs.uk/publication/gp-online-services-easy-read-guides/

Registering for GP services online

Before you can use GP services online, you need to register and prove your identity. You can only sign up with details from your GP surgery.

To sign up using registration details from your GP surgery, you will need to:

- Tell your surgery you want to sign up for their online services. You may be able to do this over the phone or you may have to go to your surgery in person. If they require you to go to your surgery, take a form of photo ID, such as a passport or driving license, and proof of address, such as a utility bill.
- Fill in the registration form they provide you with.
- They will then give you your registration details and instructions on how to login.

The NHS e-Referral Service (e-RS)

The NHS e-Referral Service gives you an easy way to select and book your first hospital or clinic appointment with a specialist. To book an appointment online, you will need:

- Your booking reference number, which you'll find on your booking letter
- The password or access code provided by the person or organization who referred you, e.g. GP.

For further support or to access the e-Referral Service, visit

www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/hospitals/nhs-e-referral-service/

Protecting Your Personal Information Online

It is important to take care of your personal information when managing your health online. Here are a number of points to consider when using NHS online services.

Do

- **Set a secure password.** Three random words and a mix of upper and lower case and numbers and symbols can work well
- **Protect the computer or device** you use to access your medical records e.g. by using a PIN or password and installing anti-virus software
- **Change passwords regularly.**
- If you think someone has seen your medical records without your permission, **change your password immediately and notify your GP surgery.**
- Be particularly careful about security if you're using a shared or public device. **Make sure you log out when you've finished looking at your records.**
- **Give someone you trust access to your records if you feel you need help and support.** This can be a carer, partner, parent, or other family member. You will need to give them permission to do this and you can change your mind at any time.

Don't

- **Write your password down.** You might want to consider using a password vault if you're worried about remembering it. Alternatively, write down a prompt which will help you remember the password, not the password itself.
- **Use a shared device if you are concerned someone else can read the screen.**
- **Share your records with anyone you do not want to.** If you feel pressured to show someone your records, tell your health or social care professional.

The NHS is the best and most reliable source for you to get information about health conditions and healthcare services, but there are plenty of other excellent websites out there which can give further support and guidance on specific health conditions.

This guide provides you with advice on what to look for when searching for further health information:

www.ruh.nhs.uk/library/documents/Finding_Good_Quality_Health_Information_Online_Information_Leaflet_for_Patients.pdf

Next steps

[How to create your NHS login](#)

[Introduction to the NHS app](#)

[Best ... medical websites](#)

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