

# West Somerset Healthwise



## *Which NHS service to choose when you're ill*

*Choosing well ensures you receive the right care at the right time and that emergency medical care is available to those people who need it the most.*

## Keep well by choosing well

If you become ill or injured and need medical help or advice, choose well by using the right NHS service for your needs.

The options open to you are given on the right.

Examples are:

- **A&E or 999:** choking, chest pain or blacking out
- **Minor Injuries Unit:** cuts and strains
- **GP (including GP doctors, dentists, opticians):** ongoing vomiting, backache, long term problems
- **Pharmacist:** diarrhoea, painful cough, headache
- **NHS 111:** unsure or unwell?
- **Self-care:** hangover, sore throat, cough



## West Somerset GP Federation

All the practices which make up west Somerset have come together to improve health services locally.

The practices are: **Dunster Surgery**, **Exmoor Medical Centre** (Dulverton), **Harley House Surgery** (Minehead), **Irnham Lodge Surgery** (Minehead), **Porlock Medical Centre** and **West Somerset Healthcare** (Williton and Watchet).



## Minor Injury Units



The minor injuries service runs across the county in many of the local community hospitals. If you have an injury, if you think something is broken and may need an xray, or your GP advises you to attend then an MIU (Minor Injury Unit) is for you.

There are MIUs at Minehead, and at Tiverton (and Bridgwater, Burnham on Sea, Frome, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet and Chard too!). They are all run by Emergency Nurse Practitioners (ENPs) with Staff Nurses and Health Care Assistants in support.

### What we do

We see everyone who attends with whatever they attend with – we hope to be able to do everything needed in one go and discharge you home – however if we are not able to do this we will refer you on to the right service for definitive care.

MIU staff can:

- stitch cuts
- remove things from ears, noses etc
- remove splinters
- dress minor wounds, cuts and grazes
- apply plaster casts
- provide screening and treatment for Chlamydia
- and treat:
  - sprains and strains
  - minor broken bones
  - minor burns and scalds
  - minor head injuries
  - insect and animal bites
  - minor eye injuries
  - other minor injuries



## What do I do if I need a GP when my surgery is closed?

In Somerset an out-of-hours service provides GPs for medical care needed before your GP surgery is next open, **6.30pm to 08.00am weekdays and all day weekends and bank holidays.**

It is not intended to provide

routine care that should be accessed during normal surgery hours.

If you need some advice but your problem or query is not serious you can also call NHS 111 or log on to [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk).

### Annual Flu Jabs

Flu can be really unpleasant, but if you are otherwise healthy it will usually clear up on its own within a week or two. However, flu can be more severe in certain people, such as:

- anyone aged 65 and over
- pregnant women
- anyone with an underlying health condition
- people with weakened immune systems

These risk groups are more likely to develop potentially serious complications of flu, such as pneumonia (a lung infection), so it's recommended that they have a flu vaccine every year to protect them.

**Your GP surgery will identify everyone in these groups, and will offer everyone eligible a free annual flu injection.**

## Get confident in self care

Self  
care

It will help to keep a basic stock of medicines at home such as:

- Paracetamol or aspirin
- Antidiarrhoeal medicine and a rehydration mixture
- Indigestion remedy
- Plasters and a thermometer

Also, you could try using [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) online or NHS 111 on the phone - they have symptom checkers and comprehensive information to help.



### When should I visit A&E?

A&E departments assess and treat patients with serious injuries or illnesses.

A & E  
999

You should only visit A&E or call 999 for life threatening emergencies such as:

- Loss of consciousness
- Acute confused state
- Fits that are not stopping
- Persistent, severe chest pain
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding that can't be stopped

If an ambulance is needed, call 999.

Our local 24 hour A&E service is **Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton.**

Please remember, if you use A&E for illnesses or injuries that are not severe, this may mean a long wait for you as well as keeping the doctors and nurses away from the more severe cases that really do need their help.



Dental  
Emergency



The **dental helpline** is a service designed to offer dental advice and/or appointments for either emergency or urgent dental treatment, such as;

- Severe dental and facial pain not controlled by over-the-counter pain killers
- Significant dental and soft tissue acute infection
- Injuries to the teeth or jaw
- Rapidly increasing swelling around the throat or eye
- Uncontrollable bleeding after an extraction

The helpline number is **0300 123 7691** or email [dentist4u@somerset.nhs.uk](mailto:dentist4u@somerset.nhs.uk)

## Red eye? Double vision? Painful eyes? Recent reduction in vision?



The **Acute Community Eyecare Service (ACES)** is a FREE eye service for people with a new eye problem who are registered with a Somerset GP practice.

Local opticians and optometrists offering the service in **Minehead** are:

- BR James Opticians: 01643 702983
- Cranmers Optometrists: 01643 702204

Also Max Davison Opticians in **Dulverton**, who visit Exmoor Medical Centre every Wednesday, also provide the ACES service.

So if you have a new eye problem, please call one of these numbers.

### Cut out and keep

#### Useful phone numbers

NHS 111	111
Dental Emergencies	0300 123 7691
Carer Support	0845 3459133
Fresh Steps Health Trainers	0800 412 5502
Stop Smoking Service	0303 033 9840
Somerset Podiatry Service	0303033 3003
Minehead Hospital	01643 701701
Musgrove Park Hospital	01823 333444
The Samaritans	01823 288998
Age Concern	01823 822113
Relate	01823 275983
Childline	0800 1111
Dunster Surgery	01643 821244
Exmoor Medical Centre	01398 323333
Harley House Surgery	01643 703441
Irnham Lodge Surgery	01643 703289
Porlock Medical Centre	01643 862575
West Somerset Healthcare	01984 632701



### Your GP surgery: did you know?

- All patients in the NHS have a named GP looking after them (though you may not always be able to see them at a particular moment)
- Each surgery in west Somerset offers online access to making appointments and ordering repeat prescriptions.

