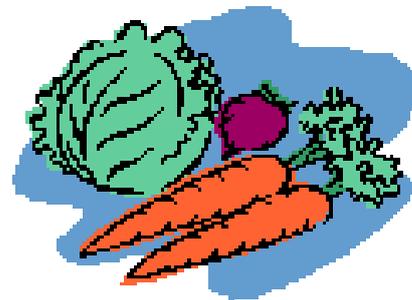


ASD Family Help

Your local Autism Support Charity



General Health



TREATING MINOR ILLNESSES

NHS
Berkshire West

SORE THROAT?
CHOOSE SELF CARE

DEEP CUT?
CHOOSE THE MINOR INJURIES UNIT

FEVERISH CHILD?
CHOOSE YOUR GP SURGERY

COUGH OR COLD?
CHOOSE A PHARMACIST

HEALTH ADVICE RIGHT NOW?
CHOOSE NHS DIRECT

NO GP?
CHOOSE THE WALK IN CENTRE

SEVERE CHEST PAIN?
CHOOSE 999 OR COUNTY A&E

Choose well.

For more information go to www.berkshirewest-pct.nhs.uk or call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47

Self-care	Hangover Grazed knee Sore throat Cough	Keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet
NHS Direct	Unwell Unsure? Confused? Need help?	Tel: 0845 4647 www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
Pharmacist	Diarrhoea Minor infections Headache Bites and stings	Your local pharmacist can help with lots of everyday ailments and offer good advice
GP Surgery	Feverish children Vomiting Ear Pain Feeling ill	If you need to contact a GP out of hours, call Westcall on 0118 978 7811
Walk-in Health Centre	Feel ill No GP	Reading Walk-in Health Centre Broad Street Mall 8am-8pm everyday
Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)	Deep cuts Sprains Burns or Scalds Eye Injuries	Go to the MIU West Berkshire Community Hospital, Thatcham. 8am-10pm every day / 10am-6pm Christmas Day
Accident and Emergency (A & E) or 999	Choking Chest pain Suspected stroke Blacking out Blood loss	Call 999 for an Ambulance or go to A&E at the Royal Berkshire Hospital

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pharmacy/Pages/Commonconditions.aspx>

Every year, millions of us visit our GP with minor health problems that our local pharmacist could resolve.

It is estimated that every year, 50 million visits to the GP are made for minor ailments such as coughs and colds, mild eczema, and athlete's foot. But by visiting your pharmacy instead, you could save yourself time and trouble.

Instead of booking and waiting for a GP appointment, you can visit your local pharmacist any time: just walk in.

All pharmacists can recognise many common health complaints. They can give advice or, where appropriate, medicines that will help to clear up the problem. If your problem is more serious and needs the attention of a GP, your pharmacist will recognise this and advise you to see your GP.

What's more, many pharmacies are open in the evenings and on the weekends.

If everybody went to a pharmacist with common health problems, more time would be freed for our GPs. This might make it easier to get a convenient appointment with your GP next time you need one.

So if you have a common health problem, a trip to your pharmacy is an option.

Your pharmacist may be able to help with:

- skin conditions, such as mild acne and mild eczema
- coughs and colds, including nasal congestion and sore throat
- minor cuts and bruises
- constipation and haemorrhoids (piles)
- hay fever and allergies
- aches and pains, such as headaches, earache and backache
- indigestion, diarrhoea and threadworms
- period pain and thrush
- warts and verrucas, mouth ulcers and cold sores
- athlete's foot
- nappy rash and teething
- Some pharmacies can provide truss fittings, stoma products and incontinence supplies.

Go to your GP, a walk-in centre or accident and emergency for:

- suturing or wound and dressing care
- muscle and joint injuries, including strains and sprains
- lacerations, cuts, fractures, severe sprains and strains
- infected wounds and foreign bodies
- head injuries or loss of consciousness
- suspected broken bones or heavy blood loss
- persistent chest pain or difficulty breathing
- overdose or poisoning

Minor ailment services

Some pharmacies run a minor ailment service, which means that they can supply medicines for certain specific conditions on the NHS. It's up to local primary care trusts (PCTs) to decide whether pharmacies in your area provide these services.

If your pharmacy runs a minor ailment service for eczema, for example, it means that your pharmacist can supply medicines for this condition, and you'll only pay the standard prescription charge. Or if you're exempt from paying prescription charges, for example because you're over 60, you won't pay for the medicine.

Use our [Service search](#) to look for pharmacies in your area. Each pharmacy listing on NHS Choices comes with a 'Services' tab which should list the minor ailment service if the pharmacy has one. Or simply ask at your local pharmacy.

Information for people with disabilities and those who care for them

The Trust is committed to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people. The Trust will work to ensure institutional systems do not discriminate, and that the day to day experience of disabled people entering the Trust as staff, patients, visitors or volunteers is positive.

The Trust also recognises that disability is extremely diverse and that no one disabled person's experience is exactly the same as another. Our Disability Equality Scheme seeks to ensure that the full spectrum of disability issues is represented in our actions to promote disability equality and remove the social and physical barriers faced by disabled people.

Access and facilities

 For information about disabled parking, access, toileting and changing facilities and to get a list of useful local contacts, download our leaflet Caring for disabled visitors and patients. All information on these pages can be made available in large print or Braille on request - telephone 0118 322 8338 or email: talktous@royalberkshire.nhsuk

Easy Read information

The Trust has also developed a range of Easy Read leaflets for patients with communication difficulties. These include:

-  Getting help: where to get help in hospital
-  Having a blood test in hospital
-  Having an X-ray: what will happen?
-  Having a scan: what happens when you are ill and need a scan
-  Going to A&E: what happens when you are ill and have to go to hospital
-  Going to CDU: what happens when you are ill and have to go to hospital
-  Coming in for checks: having a 'pre-operative assessment'
-  Going into hospital: what happens on admission
-  Having a general anaesthetic for an operation or investigation
-  Washing your hands: keeping away germs in hospital
-  Talk to us (easy read version)
-  PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service)

If you would like to receive easy read information on any test or treatment carried out at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, please contact the Learning Disability Co-ordinator.

Information about me

The hospital has put together a folder called 'Information about me'. It was designed to be completed by carers of people with learning disabilities or severe communication problems, i.e. people who cannot communicate their needs and problems. It is an A5 document that will stay with the patient or carer and will indicate to staff some key information about the

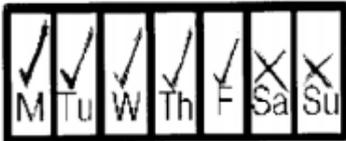
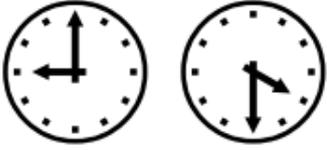
person you are caring for if they are unable to communicate this information themselves.

It includes information on communication, mobility, dietary and continence requirements. Please ask staff for a copy if you haven't got one – it is also available from PALS.

http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/PDF/LD_PALS_feb11.pdf

When is PALS open?

We are open between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. We are not open in the evening or on Saturday and Sunday.



Visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

PALS, August 2009. Reviewed February 2011
Review due February 2013

Royal Berkshire **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust



PALS

Patient Advice & Liaison Service
Easy Read leaflet

We can help you:

-  To find out about services run by the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
-  With any problems you have with services in the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
-  If you are worried about the care staff have given you
-  To find support groups to help you

Who can PALS help?

-  People who use or have used services run by the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
-  Their families and carers

How do I get help?

-  Call in person to the PALS office on Level 2 in the main entrance – ask a member of staff where it is.
-  Or you can telephone PALS for help. Our number is **0118 322 8338**
-  Or you can write to us at: PALS
Level 2 Main Entrance
Royal Berkshire Hospital
London Road
Reading RG1 5AN
-  Or you can send us an email. Our email address is: talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

**Use
the
bleep**

At the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, we have listened to people with learning/multiple disabilities and their carers, who say that waiting, even a short length of time, can be frustrating and make them even more anxious.

Because of this, we try to 'fast track' vulnerable people with outpatient appointments through the system. Normally, patients with learning/multiple disabilities will be seen at the beginning of clinics or shortly after they arrive.

However, this may not always be possible. Sometimes, the clinic may be unaware that the patient has learning/multiple disabilities. And, sometimes, delays are unavoidable, due to emergencies and staff being held up. When this happens, and a wait is inevitable, the patient and their parent or carer can pick up a bleep from the [PALS](#) Office (Level 2 behind Reception). The clinic reception will then make a note of the bleep number and will bleep you when the doctor or nurse is ready to see you.

This means you won't have to stay in the clinic area but can use the hospital facilities and other waiting areas (such as the courtyard gardens) – but please don't leave the hospital site.

If you would like to learn more about how the bleep system works, contact [PALS](#) or call the Learning Disabilities Co-ordinator on 0118 322 8159.



You can download this information in the form of a leaflet [Use the Bleep](#).

Adult changing facilities

There is an adult changing facility available in the Inpatient Therapies department on Level 1 Battle Block between 8.40am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday. At weekends, public holidays and evenings, access to the changing facility is available through Caversham Ward (also on Level 1, Battle Block).

Senior Nurse/Learning Disability Co-ordinator

The Trust has a senior nurse/learning disability co-ordinator who can help you:

- access the hospital's services
- ensure that any special needs are met
- by providing a point of contact for you within the hospital

Telephone 0118 322 8159 or ask a member of staff to page the learning disability co-ordinator on 40498.

Information for carers

By carer, we mean someone who cares for or takes responsibility for another person who needs help because of a disability, long term condition or the effects of old age. This can range from help for a few hours a week to around the clock caring.

Arranging for the person you care for to go into hospital may involve many practical arrangements. The leaflet [Information for carers of people coming into hospital](#) aims

to help you make sure that the person you care for receives the right level of care while they are in hospital. Information in the leaflet is given in a question and answer format to cover most of the common concerns raised by carers. If there is anything that you feel that is not covered in the leaflet, please speak to the ward sister or contact [PALS](#).

<http://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/quick-guide-to-caring/look-after-your-own-health>

Look after your own health

There is no doubt that without the right support caring can all too easily damage your health. You'll need to find the balance between caring and looking after your own health needs. It is not an easy balance to find, but remember – the better your physical and emotional wellbeing, the better you will be able to cope with the demands of caring. If you only do three things make sure you:

Tell your GP

Although there isn't a national register of carers, make sure you tell your GP that you are a carer. Ask them to write the details on your notes. Ask your GP for a regular health check and, if necessary, a flu jab.

If they know you are a carer, some GPs offer special flexibility with appointments, or are more willing to make home visits. Carers are usually busy and sometimes don't find time for their own health. A good GP who understands carers can be a gateway to getting all kinds of help, such as counselling, other medical services, and referrals to your local Social Services or Social Work Department.

Watch your stress levels

Stress is a fact of life for most carers. One carer put it like this: "When a dog goes to sleep, it's got one ear up. That's what it's like to care for someone." Not being able to relax has long-term detrimental effects on your health. It's easier said than done but it is vital that you learn to recognise the signs of stress and take action.

Look after your back

You may find that lifting the person you care for, helping them dress or move around places a strain on your back. It may be impossible to avoid lifting and handling the person you care for but you can get advice and guidelines that may reduce the risk of injury.

<http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/carerslives/gettinghelp/Pages/Gettingthemoostfromyourfamilydoctor.aspx>

Many of the six million carers in the UK are not known by their GP to be carers. It is important for family doctors to know who carers are in order to offer them access to health services and sources of information.

Kate Groucutt, previously the public affairs officer for Carers UK, says: "Given that often carers suffer ill health as a result of their caring responsibilities, it is important that carers let their GP know that they are looking after someone. GPs can be a valuable source of support for carers. They have a good knowledge of local services and support organisations, and may also provide other services such as regular health checks and free flu jabs."

Why should the GP know who is a carer?

One in five households contains a carer. This could be a child taking care of disabled parents or an older person taking care of a partner. If you are a carer you shouldn't assume that your GP automatically knows your situation or understands how the care you give affects your own life. But your GP can open up many doors once they do know.

Dr Helena McKeown, a GP and member of the Standing Commission on Carers, says the first thing a GP would do would be to refer you to social services for an assessment, which every carer is entitled to by law.

"Knowing you are a carer helps a doctor understand your health needs and may help you access GP services more easily," she says. "Many carers don't realise they are carers so the first thing to do is discuss your role," she says.

What help should you get from your GP?

"Once they know you are a carer, the GP surgery can make sure they consider your specific needs," says Dr Nigel Sparrow, the author of a national carers guide for doctors.

"You might have constraints on your time, for example, you might not be able to come in for an early morning appointment," he says. If you cannot leave the house, a home visit can be arranged.

"We would also make sure you have alternative arrangements in place for if you become ill. These will help protect the person you're caring for."

Carers are at a much higher risk of becoming ill themselves and may have chronic conditions that interfere with their ability to look after someone. Because of this, routine health checks for carers are being set up across England. In the meantime, all carers can try to stay healthy by getting a free annual flu jab.

The GP can help to keep carers fit and well. Dr Sparrow says: "There's no harm in coming in once or twice a year to talk about the role and how you're feeling."

“We can look at the effects caring can have on a person’s health, such as depression and back pain.”

You can ask your GP if you're unsure about aspects of a treatment or medical procedure planned for the person you look after, including a hospital appointment or surgery. GPs can also offer advice on the skills you need as a carer, perhaps showing you how to change a dressing or give medication.

Lastly, but importantly, GPs can direct you to local sources of information and support. This can be anything from leaflets in the practice to putting you in touch with carers networks.

“We have a patient participation group in my practice, where we run events such as healthy living evenings,” says Dr McKeown.

Your GP can also advise you on sorting out benefits and getting respite care from the local authority, issues which you needn't be afraid to ask about.

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autistic-spectrum-disorder/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Autism and Asperger syndrome are both part of a range of related developmental disorders known as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). They begin in childhood and last through adulthood.

ASD can cause a wide range of symptoms, which are grouped into three categories:

Problems and difficulties with social interaction – including lack of understanding and awareness of other people's emotions and feelings

Impaired language and communication skills – including delayed language development and an inability to start conversations or take part in them properly

Unusual patterns of thought and physical behaviour – including making repetitive physical movements, such as hand tapping or twisting (the child develops set routines of behaviour and can get upset if the routines are broken)

There is currently no cure for ASD. However, a wide range of treatments, including specialist education and behavioural programmes, can help improve symptoms.

In England, it is estimated that 1 in every 100 children has an ASD. The conditions are more common in boys than girls. Boys are three to four times more likely to develop an ASD than girls.

Types of ASD

The term "spectrum" is used because the symptoms of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) can vary from person to person and range from mild to severe.

It is also common for children with ASD to have symptoms or aspects of other conditions such as:

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Tourette's syndrome or other tic disorders

Epilepsy

Dyspraxia (developmental co-ordination disorder)

There are three main types of ASD:

Autistic disorder

Children with autistic disorder usually have significant problems with language, social interaction and behaviour. Many children with autistic disorder also have learning difficulties and below-average intelligence.

Asperger syndrome

Children with Asperger syndrome have milder symptoms that affect social interaction and behaviour. Their language development is usually not affected. However, they often have problems in certain areas of language, such as understanding humour or figures of speech ("It's raining cats and dogs", for example).

Children with Asperger syndrome usually have intelligence within the normal range. Some children have particular skills in areas that require logic, memory and creativity, such as maths, computer science and music.

Pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified

PDD-NOS is diagnosed in children who share some, but not all, of the traits of autistic disorder or Asperger syndrome.

Most children with PDD-NOS have milder symptoms than children with autistic disorder, but they do not share the language skills and normal range of intelligence associated with Asperger syndrome.

Autism in children

Autism can normally be diagnosed in children at around the age of two. However, it can be difficult to diagnose as the symptoms will often only become more noticeable as they get older.

See your GP if you notice any of the symptoms of ASD or if you're concerned about your child's development. You can discuss your concerns together in depth before deciding whether your child should be referred for a specialist assessment. Read more about diagnosing autism.

If your child is diagnosed with ASD, there will be many things to consider as a parent, including coping with daily life at home and choosing the right school. Read a parent's guide to autism for more information about coping with your child's diagnosis.

Autism in adults

Some people with ASD grow up without ever being diagnosed, sometimes through choice. However, getting a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) as an adult can often help people with ASD and their families understand the condition and work out what kind of support they need.

A range of autism-specific services is available to help adults with ASD find advice and support, get involved in leisure activities and find somewhere they are comfortable living.

Some adults with ASD may also have difficulty finding a job because of the social demands and changes in routine that working involves. However, they can get support to help them find a job that matches their abilities and skills.

Are rates of autism increasing?

The number of diagnosed cases of ASD has increased over the past 20 years, but this does not necessarily mean that the condition is becoming more widespread.

Some experts argue that the rise in diagnosed cases may be due to health professionals getting better at diagnosing cases correctly. In the past, many children with an ASD may have been incorrectly labelled as "slow", "difficult" or "painfully shy", and not given the treatment they needed.

Some campaigners believe that the rise in cases is due to the MMR (mumps, measles and rubella) vaccine.

The MMR vaccine has been investigated extensively in a number of major studies around the world, involving millions of children. Researchers have found no evidence of a link between MMR and ASD.

In 2009, one of the country's leading ASD charities, the National Autism Society, released a statement supporting the claim that there is no link between MMR and ASD.

In the US, a compound containing mercury called thiomersal, which is used as a preservative in some vaccines, has also been claimed to cause ASD.

Thiomersal has been extensively studied and no evidence of a link to ASD has been found. Furthermore, thiomersal was removed from vaccines in the US after 1999, yet the rates of ASD have continued to rise.

Outlook

Children with moderate symptoms who have average or above-average intelligence often grow up to be independent adults with jobs, long-term relationships and children.

Children with more severe symptoms who have below-average intelligence are likely to find it difficult to live independently as adults and may need additional care and assistance. However, there is no reason why they cannot enjoy a good quality of life.