

Keep well...

Look after yourself and stay healthy

One of the best ways to stay out of hospital is to look after your health and wellbeing.

By taking good care of yourself you can greatly reduce the chances of becoming ill.



Be prepared!

- Keep a list of emergency contacts by your phone and make sure you know where your nearest Minor Injury Unit or First Aid Unit is located.
- Write down the addresses of useful websites for NHS health promotion such as the NHS Choices website (*see the back of this leaflet for a list of relevant website addresses*).
- Did you know your pharmacist can give you good advice over the counter? You can also set up a repeat prescription service with your local pharmacist who can obtain your regular prescriptions, so you don't need to visit your GP every time.
- Keep a well-stocked first aid cabinet with a variety of dressings and over-the-counter medicines for coughs, colds and sore throats, headaches and allergies.
- Make sure you are having your medications reviewed regularly especially if you take four or more. This can be done by your GP, or your pharmacist can give you detailed advice on your medicine, provide treatment for common health problems and give healthy lifestyle advice.
- Ask a friend or neighbour to collect essentials such as prescriptions on your behalf if you do become ill.
- Take regular exercise. Even if you can't get to a gym or are not able to do anything too energetic there are still lots of ways you can improve your fitness – walk to the shops instead of taking the car if you are able (*see useful websites overleaf*).

Don't forget...

You can ask your pharmacist for advice on treating minor injuries and ailments.

Staying healthy in winter

Have a flu jab – flu is not just like a bad cold, it can cause serious illness such as pneumonia or bronchitis, and in the worst cases can result in a stay in hospital, or even death.

The flu vaccination is free if you have a long-term condition, are pregnant, or are aged 65 or over. Contact your GP or talk to your pharmacist if you think you might qualify for a free flu vaccination.

Be a good neighbour – Check on your neighbours and others in your local community who you think might need a little extra help, especially older people and vulnerable people – drop in more often if the weather turns very cold.

If you notice anything unusual or are worried about someone, talk to them about contacting their GP or family members (*see details of NHS Winter Friends campaign overleaf*).

Keep warm – Check your home is warm enough. The main living area should be around 21°C (70°F) and bedrooms should be 18°C (65°F). If you are worried about the costs of heating, you may be eligible to receive heating bill benefits, such as winter fuel payments (*see useful websites overleaf*).

Dress for the weather – Wear lots of thin layers – clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are particularly good and help to maintain body heat.

Wear shoes with a good grip to prevent slips and falls when walking outside in icy weather.

Don't forget...

You may be eligible for a free flu jab.

What you can do to help yourself

There are many occasions when you can easily treat yourself – which is why it is important to have a well-stocked first aid kit.

From minor cuts and stings to hangovers and upset stomachs, you can buy effective remedies over the counter at your local chemist or supermarket.

For concerns you can't address yourself:

- Make an appointment to see your GP. If your surgery is closed, they will have an answer-phone message directing you to the out-of-hours service.
- If you feel you need immediate advice you can dial **NHS 111** – calls from landlines and mobiles are free.
- There are a number of Minor Injury Units and First Aid Units in towns across Oxfordshire. These services are run on a drop-in basis and patients are seen in order of clinical priority (*see web addresses overleaf for where to find your nearest unit*).

Remember:

- If you smoke, cut down or STOP! Smoking can cause cancer, contribute to heart disease, breathing difficulties and a range of other complaints including high blood pressure, looking older, and not being able to smell or taste.
- Drink less alcohol – don't 'binge drink'. Eat a meal before drinking, and pace alcoholic drinks with water or soft drinks (*see useful websites overleaf*).
- Eat well to keep well – have regular hot meals and plenty of drinks. Aim to include to include your daily five portions of fruit and vegetables.

Useful websites and contacts:

Visit the **Live Well** section on the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk for:

- Advice on stopping smoking:
www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Smoking/
- Advice on alcohol: www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Alcohol/
- Advice on exercise: www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/
- Advice on healthy eating:
www.nhs.uk/healthy-eating/

For advice on common complaints see:

The **Self Care** forum fact sheets
www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets
Tel: 020 7421 9318

For immediate advice on urgent health issues:

Call **NHS 111**– calls from landlines and mobiles are free

For advice on smoking:

Oxfordshire Smoking Advice Service:
Tel: 0845 40 80 300

For details on local Minor Injury Units and First Aid Units see:

www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/your-health/choose-well

Age UK Helpline:

Tel: 0800 169 6565

For details on Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment:

www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment
www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

NHS Winter Friends campaign:

www.nhs.uk/WinterFriends



For advice on social and health care:

Oxfordshire County Council has a range of adult social care service.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

See also *Carers Oxfordshire*:

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

Call Carers Oxfordshire and/or the County Council's Social and Health Care Team: Tel: 0845 050 7666

For advice on hospital-based services:

Oxford University Hospitals' Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors

John Radcliffe: 01865 221473

Churchill Hospitals: 01865 740868

Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre: 01865 738126

Horton General Hospital: 01295 229259

email: PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk

**Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

Tel: 0800 328 7971

email: PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, easy read, Braille or audio version, please call 01865 221473 or email PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk