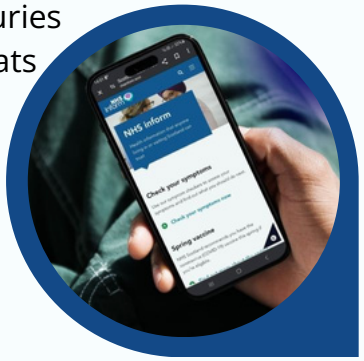
Winter Information and Advice

Get the right care in the right place this winter

NHS Forth Valley

Visit NHSinform.scot



- For health information and advice on a wide range of illnesses and injuries
- Symptom checkers and self-help guides for flu-like illnesses, sore throats and stomach pain, vomiting and headaches
- Support for mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression and panic attacks
- Details of how to access medication if your supplies have run out

You can also phone the NHS Inform helpline for advice on 0800 22 44 88 (Monday – Friday from 09.00 to 17.00).

Urgent Health Care



Call **NHS 24** first on **111** if you:

- Think you need to attend A&E but it is not something life threatening
- Have a minor injury such as a suspected broken bone, a sprain, a cut that needs stitches or a minor burn
- Need urgent care, and your GP, pharmacy or dental practice is closed, and you are too ill to wait until it reopens
- Need support with mental health distress

NHS 24 staff will help you get the right care in the right place, often closer to home and without the need to go to A&E. This may include a phone or video consultation with a healthcare professional or an appointment at a local healthcare facility, so you don't have to wait to be seen.

Pharmacy Services – expert advice and medication

All local pharmacies across Forth Valley offer health consultations and can provide free medication for many common health conditions under the Pharmacy First service. These include coughs, urine infections, conjunctivitis, diarrhoea, indigestion and emergency contraception.



A number of local pharmacists are also able to prescribe free medication, including antibiotics, for a wider range of more complex clinical conditions including chest infections, ear infections, tonsillitis, sinusitis and many other conditions which could avoid the need to visit your GP Practice under the Pharmacy First Plus service.

Visit www.nhsforthvalley.com/winter for more information and details of local pharmacy opening times over the winter period, including on certain Sundays and the Christmas and New Year public holidays.

Dental Problems



If you're experiencing dental problems such as tooth pain, swollen or bleeding gums, or an injury to your mouth contact your local dental practice for advice.

If you're not registered with a dentist, contact the NHS Forth Valley Dental Helpline on 01324 614670 (Monday to Friday, 08.00-16.30), visit NHS inform or for dental emergencies call NHS 24 on 111.

Eye Problems



If you're experiencing eye problems such as a red or sticky eye, blurred vision, or flashes and floaters, please contact your local optometrist.

They have the training and specialist equipment to assess and treat a wide range of eye problems and can refer you direct to hospital if the problem is more serious.

Your GP Practice Team



GP Practices across Scotland are dealing with very high levels of demand and are working hard to prioritise appointments for patients who need to be seen urgently. However, you can also see a wider range of healthcare professionals at your GP Practice, including physiotherapists, mental health workers and Advanced Nurse Practitioners so you might not always need to see a GP.

Emergency Department



Only go to A&E if you need urgent medical care for a critical emergency such as a suspected heart attack, stroke or excessive bleeding. If your condition isn't life-threatening, you should call NHS 24 free on 111, day or night, to access the right care.

If it's a life-threatening emergency, you should phone 999 or go directly to A&E.

Winter Vaccinations – protect yourself and your family



Experts are predicting the worst flu season in a decade with earlier and unusually high levels of flu activity, particularly among children and older people. Getting vaccinated is the most effective way to protect yourself, your family and friends this winter. Details of local vaccination clinics and pharmacies offering winter vaccinations, including the flu vaccine, can be found at nhsforthvalley.com/vaccinations or call NHS Forth Valley's vaccination team on 0800 130 3120.

Visit our Winter Zone at www.nhsforthvalley.com/winter for more health information, advice and useful links