

think!

right treatment
right place



The top 10 minor illnesses which can be treated at home are:

- **Constipation** - if it is uncomplicated, you have had it for less than seven days and haven't yet tried over the counter remedies to treat it
- **Lower back pain** - which can be treated with painkillers available from the chemist
- **Eczema** - which is mild to moderate (in patients over 12 years old) and can be managed with remedies available at the chemist
- **Sore throat** - which is likely to be caused by a virus and has lasted for less than two weeks
- **Fever** - in children over six months old, without serious underlying causes. If the fever lasts for more than five days or if more serious symptoms develop, see a GP
- **Heartburn and indigestion** - if Minor. If your symptoms do not clear up within two weeks or get a lot worse, you should see your GP
- **Coughs** - which are uncomplicated and probably caused by a virus
- **Simple strains or sprains** - which can be managed by over the counter painkillers
- **Headaches** - which are uncomplicated and have lasted less than three days - try medicines available from the pharmacy first
- **Acne** - mild to moderate, which can be managed by over the counter products

Constipation

Many minor illnesses can be treated at home without the need to visit your GP.

Please **THINK** - get the right treatment in the right place and make sure we keep GP appointments and urgent care services for those who really need them. Unnecessary GP appointments for minor illnesses cost the NHS £2 billion a year.

Your local pharmacy can give help and advice and many products available there can ease your symptoms and support your recovery. If you are unsure call 111 for immediate advice.

You can also check your symptoms at www.nhs.uk/symptomchecker

Here is some advice on how to treat your current condition now and in the future.

How should I treat constipation?

- Eat a healthy diet which includes fruit, vegetables, seeds, pulses and cereals or oats
- Drink plenty of water and avoid getting dehydrated
- Try to exercise more, which helps your bowels to digest food
- Do not delay going to the toilet when you need to go
- Simple painkillers such as paracetamol can help to relieve pain



Many over the counter remedies can help with constipation - speak to your pharmacist for advice. This can include stool softeners such as lactulose, bowel stimulants and suppositories for insertion into the back passage. You can also check online at www.medicinechestonline.com.



When should I seek medical help?

- If you have been constipated or have a feeling of not being able to empty your bowel completely that doesn't go away within six weeks
- Your tummy becomes increasingly swollen and/ or you start vomiting which could suggest that your bowels are blocked
- You are over 50 years old and haven't suffered from constipation before
- You think that it is your medication which is making you constipated
- You notice blood in your stools, particularly if you don't have any pain or discomfort around the opening of your back passage
- You have been losing weight for no apparent reason, you feel tired all the time or 'not quite right', sweaty or feverish or you find that these symptoms don't go away within four-six weeks

Ask your pharmacist for advice or find some more information here:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/constipation