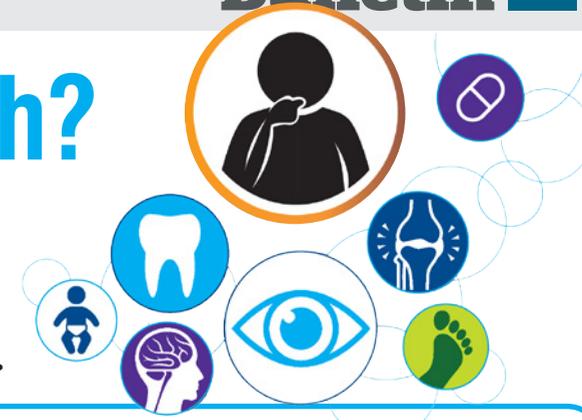


Who do I need an appointment with?

Your handy guide to community health services in West Lothian. There are lots of services that can help you if you are unwell. This guide gives information and advice about how and when to use services in the best way.



Self care

The most important type of care is selfcare. Selfcare is about looking after ourselves so that we stay healthy. It's also about taking care of ourselves when we are ill. Before asking for an NHS appointment, why not think about how you can help yourself? You might find the following websites and phone numbers useful:

- ➔ **NHS Inform:** www.nhsinform.scot or **0800 224 488** Information about healthy living, illnesses or health conditions, injuries, how to look after yourself and when to seek advice
- ➔ **NHS24 helpline:** **111** Advice 24 hours a day on health problems
- ➔ **Treat yourself better:** www.treatyourselfbetter.co.uk Advice on what to do if you have cold or flu symptoms
- ➔ **Self Care Forum:** www.selfcareforum.org/resources/patient-portal Includes fact sheets about looking after yourself when you are ill

Healthy living

- ➔ For advice on healthy eating, exercise and stopping smoking: www.nhs.uk/livewell or www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living
- ➔ For help to stop smoking, ask your pharmacist or contact: **West Lothian Stop Smoking Service:** **01506 651 829**
- ➔ If you are interested in exercise and being more active visit: www.activewestlothian.com
- ➔ If you are over 50 and want to be more active: **Ageing well – for people aged 50+ :** **01506 237 953**
- ➔ For information about local activities and support to get out and about: **British Red Cross Community Co-ordinators:** **0131 654 0340** **British Cross Patient Transport Service:** **01506 654 652**

Common illnesses or advice on medicines

Community pharmacist

Your community pharmacist can give you advice or treatment for many minor illnesses such as:

- Acne
- Athlete's Foot
- Backache
- Cold Sores
- Conjunctivitis
- Constipation
- Cough
- Diarrhoea
- Dry Eyes
- Earache and Ear Wax
- Eczema and Allergies
- Emergency Contraception
- Haemorrhoids (piles)
- Headache
- Indigestion
- Mouth Ulcers
- Nasal Congestion
- Pain and period pain
- Sinusitis
- Sore Throat
- Thrush
- Threadworms
- Warts and Verrucae

NHS Minor Ailment Service

If you are over 65, under 16, or receive certain benefits, you can use the NHS Minor Ailment Service. This means you can receive advice and **free treatment** from your community pharmacist for minor illnesses and conditions. Ask at your local pharmacy.

Your Practice Nurse

Practice nurses are experienced in dealing with many conditions such as high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes and a range of minor illnesses such as chest, urine and ear infections, as well as skin conditions. Many can prescribe medications and arrange investigations. Ask your GP practice receptionist for advice on whether the nurse might be able to deal with your problem.

Dental and mouth problems

If you have a problem with your teeth, gums or mouth, contact your dentist. If you don't have a dentist and you want to find one near you:

- ➔ **0131 537 8444** or go to www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/Services/Dentists

If you don't have a dentist and need urgent treatment, you can go to a walk-in centre in Edinburgh:

- ➔ **0131 536 4800** for more information

Muscle and joint problems

You can contact the physiotherapy service directly for muscle and joint problems such as back, neck, hip or knee pain. They can give advice and an appointment if necessary.

- ➔ **0800 917 9390** or go to www.nhsinform.scot/msk

Foot problems

If you have a foot problem you can go to:

- ➔ www.nhsinform.scot/msk and search for **'foot injuries'**

Or, if you think you need an appointment with a Podiatrist, you can refer yourself - ask for a referral form at your GP practice.

Hearing problems

Many high street opticians also offer hearing tests and help with existing hearing aids.

Eye problems

For problems like red eyes, painful eyes and visual problems such as floaters, cataracts and other changes in your vision, you can make an appointment at any **high street optician**. Opticians are trained to recognise common eye problems. They can also provide treatment or refer you to specialist services if needed.

Infants and toddlers

For advice and treatment for children and babies:

- ➔ Ask your GP practice for your **Health Visitor's phone number**
- ➔ Ask your local **Pharmacist**
- ➔ For advice on common infant and toddler illnesses go to www.whenshouldiworry.com

Young people

Telephone for mental health and relationship concerns. Someone to talk to:

- ➔ **Childline** **0800 1111**
- ➔ **Relationship Helpline** **0808 802 2088**
- ➔ **NSPCC Helpline** **0808 800 5000**
- ➔ **Get Connected Helpline** **0808 808 4994**
- ➔ **Hope Line UK** **0800 068 4141**
- ➔ **Anxiety UK** **0844 477 5774**
- ➔ **Parentline** **08000 28 22 33**
- ➔ **Young Minds Parents Helpline** **0808 802 5544**
- ➔ **Child Bereavement UK** **0800 02 888 40**

Social work support

You can access help and obtain advice about benefits, care at home or difficulty with daily task (such as washing, dressing, food preparation or getting about the home).

- ➔ **01506 775 666** Broxburn under 16 only
- ➔ **01506 282 252** Livingston anyone under 65
- ➔ **01506 776 700** Bathgate under 16 and over 65

Alcohol and drug problems

- ➔ **Breakaway Recovery Clinics:** **01506 282845** for more information.

These are drop in clinics for anyone looking for help with a drug or alcohol problem. Please phone to check times and venues across West Lothian.

Carers

If you care for a family member or friend and would like some advice, information or support contact **Carers of West Lothian**. Carers of West Lothian's young carer support service is also here to support young people aged 8 to 18 years who are in a caring role.

- ➔ **01506 448000** or email: office@carers-westlothian.com or go to www.carers-westlothian.com

Depression, anxiety and mental wellbeing

- ➔ **Westspace:** Provides an overview of all local mental health services www.westspace.org.uk
- ➔ **Breathing Space:** Offers someone to talk to if your feelings are overwhelming **0800 838 587** or www.breathingspace.scot
- ➔ **Samaritans:** The Samaritans can help you understand your problems better, or just be there to listen. It is not just for people who feel suicidal. **116 123** National Freecall number. **0131 221 9999** Edinburgh branch

If you do need advice from a doctor...

Phone appointments

Most GP practices offer phone appointments as well as practice appointments. If you don't need to be examined, a phone appointment can be quicker and easier. If the doctor feels they need to see you, they will ask you to come in.

If the receptionist asks what is wrong with you, please tell them. They are asking so they can find the best appointment for you. Reception staff are bound by the same confidentiality rules as doctors and nurses. They are not allowed to tell people outside the practice anything about you.

And if you are unable to attend your GP appointment please phone and cancel

This means that your appointment can be offered to another patient.