

## Calling all parents: Choose well for you and your children

Dear parent,

This letter is to help you choose the right services for you and your family. Research indicates that up to 40% of people that go to Accident and Emergency (A&E) don't need to be there, and that parents of young children are among the most frequent users of A&E.

There are some circumstances when you will definitely need A&E, but did you know about the alternative local NHS services where you may be seen more quickly and appropriately?

For example, did you know:

- Pharmacists can advise you on a range of childhood illnesses and medicines?
- That Milton Keynes Urgent Care Centre (located near the hospital) is equipped to treat minor injuries and illnesses quickly, open 24/7
- You can get professional and confidential health advice over the telephone from NHS 111

You can also find more information on our Choose Well campaign at

[www.miltonkeynesccg.nhs.uk/choosewell](http://www.miltonkeynesccg.nhs.uk/choosewell)

### Self care

**Grazed knee.**

**Sore throat.**

**Runny nose.**



There are a range of minor illnesses and injuries that in many circumstances you can deal with at home if you have the right things in your medicine cabinet. A well stocked medicine cabinet should include the following items:

- **Children's paracetamol** – This can be given to children over two months for pain and fever. Make sure you've got the right strength for your child. Overdosing is dangerous. Check with your pharmacist when you buy it, and read the label carefully.
- plasters, triangular bandage and two sterile eye dressings
- small, medium and large sterile gauze dressings
- safety pins
- **Children's ibuprofen** – This can be given to children over three months for pain and fever if they weigh more than 5kg (11lbs). Check the correct dose for your child's age, and avoid ibuprofen if your child has asthma, unless advised by your GP
- Tweezers, scissors and stick tape
- alcohol-free cleansing wipes
- thermometer, preferably digital
- disposable sterile gloves

**Important:** Keep your medicines safe from little ones at all times by locking your medicine cabinet. Always read the label and check that you are giving the correct dosage. Do not give aspirin to children under 16 unless prescribed by a doctor, and if you are breastfeeding, ask a GP, midwife or health visitor for advice before taking aspirin.

More information on children's medicines is available on NHS Choices at

[www.nhs.uk/planners/birthtofive/pages/childrensmedicines.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/planners/birthtofive/pages/childrensmedicines.aspx)

## Pharmacy

**Diarrhoea,  
Head lice,  
Painful cough.  
Headache.**



Your local pharmacist or chemist can provide confidential, expert advice for a range of common illnesses and complaints, and the medicines you need to treat them.

- Make sure you know how much and how often to give a medicine. Write it down in your child's Personal Child Health Record (red book) to help you remember. If in doubt, check with your pharmacist or GP.
- When buying medicines at a pharmacy, always tell the pharmacist how old your child is, follow the instructions, and look for the out of date stamp.
- Text 'pharmacy' to 64746 to receive three free texts with details of your nearest pharmacies.
- Never give the medicine more frequently than your pharmacist or GP advises.
- With liquids, always measure out the right dose for your child's age. Always read instructions on the bottle and use the spoon provided for accuracy.
- Do not use out of date medicines, and only give your child medicine given to you by pharmacist or other health professional.
- Thermometer – normal temperature for an adult is 37 degrees Celsius; a fever in an adult is 38 degrees and above and children over five 37.5 degrees.

## GP Surgery

**Persistent cough.  
Ear pain.  
General concerns.  
Backache.**

Your local GP is the first point of contact for many people if you can't treat yourself or your child or you have a medical issue that needs attention but isn't urgent. This could include vomiting, ear pain, sore belly or back ache.

In Milton Keynes, you can access a GP 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This may be at the practice, by phone or at a local 'out of hours' centre.

## 111

**Unwell?  
Unsure?  
Confused?  
Need help?  
Injury?  
Illness?**

111 is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and should be your first point of contact if you have an urgent illness or injury that is not life threatening. The 111 service will assess your condition and then refer you to one of the following services:

- Milton Keynes Urgent Care Centre
- GP Out of Hours
- Other NHS Services

## Accident and Emergency

A&E is only for emergency is critical or **life-threatening** situations. This can include:

- unconsciousness
- a suspected stroke
- heavy blood loss
- severe burns
- chest pains
- a deep wound such as a stab wound
- a suspected heart attack
- difficulty in breathing

Accident and Emergency departments are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Milton Keynes Hospital, Standing May, Eaglestone, MK6 5LD**

Tel: 01908 660033 [www.mkhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.mkhospital.nhs.uk)