

# Your Health in Harrow

## Your guide to local health services

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- Health and wellbeing tips
- Services near you
- Useful contact details



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# 1. Choosing the right NHS service for you

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- This booklet provides you with information on NHS services in Harrow.
- It explains the different local services, what they do and what you should use them for.
- We want you to be able to quickly access the right service so you and your family get the best care.
- We hope the information in this booklet helps you make the best use of the services the NHS has available in your local area.



## NHS 111

- ✓ Unwell
- ✓ Unsure
- ✓ Need advice



**Call NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not of a life threatening nature. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.**



**Call 111...**  
you can access more help and advice than you think.

Call 111 if:

- you need medical help fast but it doesn't classify as a 999 emergency;
- you think you may need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service;
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call;
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

The 111 adviser will be able to:

- Decide what medical help you need
- Tell you where you need to go to get this medical help
- Transfer your call to the service you need
- Book an out of hours GP appointment for you if possible

**There is also a confidential interpreter service, which is available in many languages. Simply mention the language you wish to use when the NHS 111 operator answers your call.**

### **NHS 111 is now available online.**

NHS 111 online uses the same clinical algorithms as the 111 phone service, taking you through questions about your symptoms to receive tailored advice on what to do next and where to go. You can access NHS 111 online on a smartphone, tablet or computer – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – and if needed you will be connected to a nurse, emergency dentist or GP.

This new way to access NHS 111 provides you with another convenient way to get the right help or advice when you need it. Whether over the phone or online, NHS 111 will ensure that you get the right care, from the right person, as quickly as possible.

So, if you think you need urgent medical help, call NHS 111 or visit [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk)

## GPs



- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Painful cough
- ✓ High temperature

Some patients with these symptoms may be better off seeing a pharmacist first. Find out more about what the pharmacist can do for you on pages 7 and 8.

GPs (General Practitioners) look after the health of people in their local community and deal with a whole range of health problems. To see a GP at your doctor's surgery you will need to be registered and make an appointment.

Your local GP surgery provides a wide range of family health services, including:

- General health advice
- Contraception and maternity services (patients can also self-refer to maternity services without seeing the GP)
- Referrals to other health services
- Vaccinations
- Prescriptions and management of long term conditions
- Concerns about your own, or your children's health.

**Did you know?  
Patients can refer themselves to social services without needing to visit the GP**

If you need to see a GP outside of normal surgery hours you can still phone your GP surgery – you'll be transferred (or directed) to the GP out-of-hours service.

You can register with a GP surgery of your choice, so long as you live within its catchment area. Visits to the surgery are free.

**It is important to be registered with a GP as they refer you for specialist hospital and community treatment services if needed.**

**Some GPs speak other languages as well as English. An interpreter can be arranged when you go to see a GP and most practices have access to telephone interpreting services. Make sure you inform your GP practice beforehand.**

## Evening and weekend GP opening in Harrow

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If you need a weekend or evening appointment you can see a GP at a local GP Access Centre. Speak with your GP Practice or phone NHS 111 to book an appointment.

You must be registered with a practice in Harrow. You can visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for more information on GP services and how to register.

## Urgent Care

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- ✓ Sprain & strains
- ✓ Minor burns
- ✓ Cuts
- ✓ Minor broken bones
- ✓ Minor infections

Urgent Care Centres (UCCs) are for minor illnesses and injuries that are urgent but not life threatening. They are often located at a hospital and you can just walk in. You do not need an appointment.

UCCs are staffed by GPs and nurses with specialist skills in urgent care. UCCs are for patients whose conditions are urgent enough that they cannot wait for a GP appointment, but who do not need emergency treatment at A&E.

Adults and children can use UCCs for:

- Sprains and strains of ankles, wrists and knees
- Minor burns (small area)
- Cuts, including those that need stitches
- Infections that GPs commonly treat e.g. sore throats and earache
- Minor broken bones such as toes, fingers and collarbone
- X-rays where needed

If your condition gets worse, the doctors and nurses at the UCC will quickly get you to the best place for your care. The UCC may also refer you back to your GP for an appointment if that is best for you.

**This will allow A&E staff to concentrate on people with serious, life-threatening conditions and it will also save you a potentially longer wait.**

- Northwick Park Hospital Urgent Care Centre  
Watford Road  
Harrow  
HA1 3UJ

Opening times: 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Tel: **020 8864 3232**

## Pharmacy

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- ✓ Mild diarrhoea
- ✓ Cold symptoms
- ✓ Mild fever
- ✓ Mild skin irritations

Your local pharmacist, or chemist, is highly trained to offer help and advice.

You can speak to your pharmacist about your health and wellbeing; minor conditions can often be dealt with by a pharmacist and without the need to see a doctor.

They can offer advice and suggest medicines or treatments for a range of common problems such as coughs, colds, upset stomachs, aches and pains.



**You don't need to make an appointment to see the pharmacist and you also have the option of talking to them in confidence, even about symptoms that are of a personal nature. Many pharmacies now have a consultation room, or an area, where you can have a conversation in private.**

All pharmacies will provide the following services:

- Repeat prescriptions
- Dispensing
- Disposal of unwanted or out-of-date medicines
- Advice on treatment of minor conditions and healthy living

Other services available from your local pharmacist include:

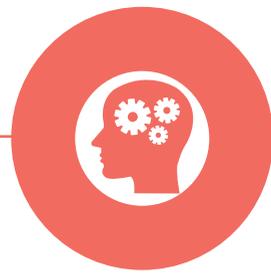
- Emergency contraception, pregnancy testing, and other sexual health services
- Pregnancy testing
- Chlamydia screening and treatment
- Flu vaccine
- Stop smoking services
- Supervised drug administration and needle exchange

To find your nearest pharmacist, call 111 or visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



## Mental health services

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We all need to take care of our mental wellbeing. As many as one in four people will experience some form of mental ill health at some point in their lives. It might come as a one-off reaction to a life event – for example grief, after bereavement – it might come as a common mental illness like anxiety or depression, or it could be a more complex condition.

GPs don't just prescribe medicines for mental health conditions; they can also help you to access talking therapies and point you towards specialist help.

**24 hour mental health support helpline: 0800 0234 650**

### Harrow IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies)

Harrow IAPT provide free talking therapy and employment support for people aged 18 years and older who are registered with a GP in the London Borough of Harrow.

If you ask your GP to refer you to the service, he or she will be able to complete their referral form if appropriate. Alternatively, you may prefer to self-refer by completing the self-referral form on

[www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-talking-therapies/](http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-talking-therapies/)

If the service is unable to provide you with a therapist who speaks your language, they will organise for an interpreter to be present for the therapy sessions. For more information visit

[www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-talking-therapies/](http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-talking-therapies/)

### What to do in an emergency

If you are already using the trust services and your condition gets worse or you have any concerns, contact your care co-ordinator or the person you normally speak to. You can also call the **24 hour mental health support helpline** for advice and support from trained advisers.

## CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)

The child and adolescent mental health service provides mental health assessment and treatment for children, young people and their families, who are living within the borough of Harrow, up to the time that they turn 18 years old. The CAMHS service telephone number for Harrow residents is **020 8869 4500**. For more information, visit [www.camhs.cnwl.nhs.uk](http://www.camhs.cnwl.nhs.uk).

## Other support services

Samaritans are available 24 hours a day. They provide confidential and non-judgemental emotional support whenever you need someone to talk to. You can call them on **08457 90 90 90**.

FRANK helpline are available 24 hours a day. They provide information and advice about drugs and information on local services. The service can take calls in over 120 languages via a three way call with a translator. You can call them on **0800 77 6600**.



## Accident and Emergency (A&E)



- ✓ Loss of consciousness
- ✓ Chest pain
- ✓ Breathing difficulties
- ✓ Bleeding that won't stop

In A&E you will be seen by specialist doctors and nurses ready to treat those with life-threatening injuries and illnesses.

The A&E department at the hospital is for people with major, life-threatening illnesses and injuries, which can include:

- Loss of consciousness
- Fits that are not stopping
- Persistent, severe chest pains
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- Severe allergic reactions
- Severe burns or scalds.



### **In an emergency, dial 999**

An ambulance crew will start treating you as soon as they arrive and they will then take you to the right hospital for your condition, to ensure you get the best possible treatment.

## NHS Health Checks and screening

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The NHS Health Check programme aims to help prevent:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Certain types of dementia

Everyone between the ages of 40 and 74, who have not already been diagnosed with one of these conditions or have certain risk factors will be invited (once every five years) to have a check to assess their risk, as well as receive support and advice to help reduce or manage that risk.

You do not need to do anything as your GP will contact you to arrange your NHS Health Check, but if you think you are eligible and have not yet been invited for an NHS Health Check, you can contact your GP. Visit [www.healthcheck.nhs.uk](http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk) for more information.

Did you know that screening is also available on the NHS to help prevent and detect several different health conditions? This includes:

**Cervical screening** – a method of detecting abnormal cells on the cervix. The cervix is the entrance to the womb from the vagina. More information can be found at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening)

**Breast cancer screening** – Breast screening aims to find breast cancers early. It uses an X-ray test called a mammogram that can spot cancers when they're too small to see or feel. More information can be found at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer-screening](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer-screening)

**Bowel cancer screening** – Screening can help detect bowel cancer at an early stage, when it's easier to treat. It can also be used to help check for and remove small growths in the bowel called polyps, which can turn into cancer over time. More information can be found at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening)

# Have you...



- Come to the UK in the last 5 years?

# Are you...

- Aged between 16-35?

# Did you...

- Move to the UK from one of the following countries?



If so, go to your local GP for a **FREE** latent TB screening or visit [thetruthabouttb.org](http://thetruthabouttb.org) for more information.

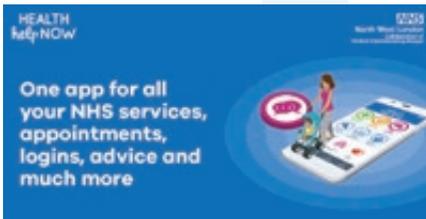




In addition to the usual face-to-face services, GPs in North West London now provide their patients with online access to the following services:

- Booking appointments
- Repeat prescriptions
- Access to GP records (currently summary information only)

To use this service you need to request a registration letter from your GP. The registration letter contains the details you can enter into the secure online interface to create an account. For further information about GP online services go to [www.england.nhs.uk/gp-online-services](http://www.england.nhs.uk/gp-online-services)



The NHS has launched Health Help Now in Harrow, a digital app to help residents and patients to manage their GP and hospital appointments, access the right local services and to find health advice in a hurry. To find out more, download it for free from the app store. Search 'Health Help Now'.

## 2. Self-care and prevention



Self-care is all about giving you the tools you need to manage your own health and wellbeing.

### **Self-care...**

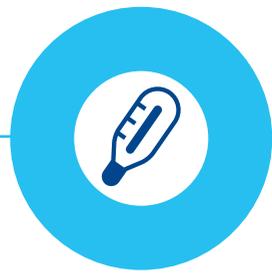
how you can look after yourself. Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for support and advice.

**Self-care does not mean that you need to manage on your own without any help from a health professional.**

There are lots of benefits to self-care:

- Knowing what signs and symptoms to look for will mean that you recognise when you might not be feeling at your best and take action quicker,
- Greater self-confidence and control over your condition,
- Reduced number of visits to NHS services, especially A&E departments
- Improved quality of life
- Better planned and more convenient care,
- Saving time and money with less travel and less time off work for appointments.

## Keep warm, keep well



In the cold weather it is important to keep your home heated to at least 18 degrees Celsius if you or anyone staying with you is over 65. Keeping warm helps reduce risk of cold and flu, heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and even depression.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/winterhealth](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/winterhealth) for more information about keeping warm.

## Self-care at home



- ✓ Grazed knee
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Cough

A lot of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home with medicines you can buy at a pharmacist. Make sure you get plenty of rest too.

Useful medicines include:

- Paracetamol and aspirin – for pain relief
- Decongestants – for stuffy noses
- Indigestion remedies – tablets or liquids to help with heartburn
- Antiseptic creams – for cuts and grazes



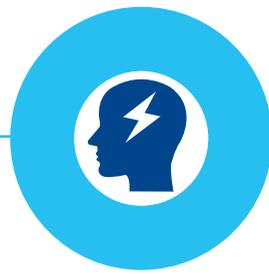
**Never give aspirin to children under 16. Always follow the instructions on the pack. Keep medicines out of the reach of children.**

You can also be prepared by keeping a first aid kit at home. Useful items include: bandages, plasters, thermometer, sterile dressings, medical tape and tweezers.



**Children can recover from illness quickly but can also become poorly quickly. It is important to seek further advice if a child's condition gets worse.**

# Stroke



If you suspect someone may have had a stroke, don't panic, but do act **F.A.S.T.** The acronym **F.A.S.T.** will help you remember how to tell if someone has had a stroke and what steps to take if so.

- **Face** – Has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile and control facial muscles?
- **Arms** – Can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- **Speech** – Is their speech slurred?
- **Time** – Time to call 999 if you spot any of these warning signs.

Visit the NHS Act Fast – Stroke website for more information  
[www.nhs.uk/actfast/Pages/stroke.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/actfast/Pages/stroke.aspx)

**F** **ACE**  
HAS THEIR FACE  
FALLEN ON ONE SIDE?  
CAN THEY SMILE?

**A** **ARMS**  
CAN THEY RAISE  
BOTH ARMS AND  
KEEP THEM THERE?

**S** **PEECH**  
IS THEIR SPEECH  
SLURRED?

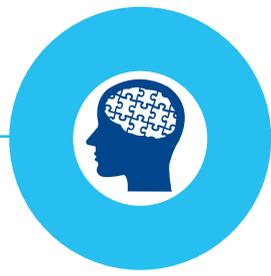
**T** **IME TO  
CALL 999**  
IF YOU SEE ANY SINGLE  
ONE OF THESE SIGNS

**WHEN STROKE STRIKES, ACT F.A.S.T.**

nhs.uk/actfast **NHS**

## Dementia

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The early signs of dementia can seem very much like ordinary behaviour at first, as it can begin with very mild symptoms that are easily overlooked. However, getting help early on makes a huge difference to care and treatment options for dementia. If you are worried about yourself or someone else, make an appointment with your GP straight away. The main symptoms of dementia are issues with:

- Memory loss
- Thinking speed
- Mental agility
- Language
- Understanding
- Judgement

If you are caring for someone who has already been diagnosed with dementia, it is important to pay even more attention than usual to their environment, as they may become less aware of things like temperature, hygiene, and safety. Make sure:

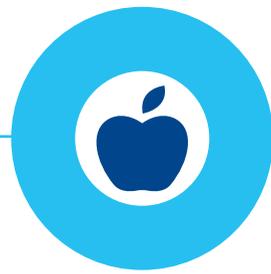
- Their home is heated to 19 degrees Celsius
- They can easily access the toilet
- They have comfortable warm clothes which do not present the potential for confusion such as complicated buttons, ties, or zips.

There is lots of useful information about dementia online.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia-guide](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia-guide) or contact your GP.

## Stay well, eat well

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### Food and drink

Give yourself the best chance of fighting off illness by eating plenty of fruit and vegetables, and drinking lots of water.

Caffeinated drinks, sugary drinks (including fruit juices and smoothies), and alcoholic drinks can all have a severe negative impact on your physical and mental health.

One You is a ground-breaking campaign from Public Health England to help adults across Harrow avoid future diseases caused by lifestyle. One You offers lots of great advice on how to eat better.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/oneyou](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou) for more information.

### Alcohol

Women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units of alcohol a day and men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day.

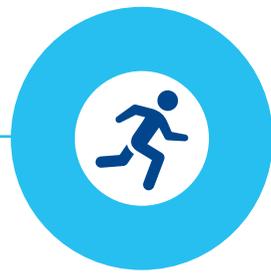
If alcohol is having a negative impact on your life or the life of somebody you know, there is lots of support available. If you are unsure whether your drinking is harmful, ask yourself:

- **Do you always feel the need to have a drink?**
- **Do you often end up drinking more than you planned?**
- **Do you ever get into trouble as a result of your alcohol use?**
- **Do people warn you about the amount of alcohol you drink?**

If you answer yes to any of these questions it is a good idea to speak to your GP. If you would prefer to speak to somebody else, in confidence, you can phone the national alcohol helpline **Drinkline** on **0300 123 1110** weekdays 9am - 8pm, weekends 11am - 4pm.

## Fresh air and exercise is vital

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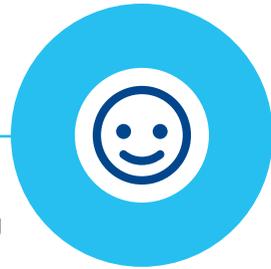
Exercise is important for making your muscles and bones stronger, for keeping your heart healthy, for staying warm, and for reducing stress or low moods.

- Adults need to be active for at least 150 minutes each week (just over 20 minutes a day)
- Children aged 5 - 16 need to be active for at least 60 minutes each day
- Children under 5 need 3 hours of activity a day

For suggestions about fun ways to get active, visit the NHS Change4Life website: [www.nhs.uk/change4life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life)

## Your mental wellbeing

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Your mental wellbeing is important and you deserve support in staying well. Here are some ways to take care of your wellbeing – whether you have a diagnosed mental illness or not.

- Keep active – but relax! Make time regularly to play sport, jog or walk, learn a language, play an instrument, practice yoga, read a book, or spend time with a pet.
- Take a break! If you are overwhelmed by tasks, chores, or social contact, allow yourself some time out to slow the pace.
- Express yourself! Keeping a journal and talking out loud to people you trust will help to stop unwanted thoughts and feelings from building up inside you.
- If you do experience mental illness, try to recognise patterns and make a note of early signs that you may be becoming unwell, such as difficulty sleeping, or feeling more irritable than usual.

## Common colds and flu

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Mild viral infections can cause symptoms of a cold, including a blocked and then runny nose, sneezing, cough, a sore throat, a slightly raised body temperature (fever) up to 39°C and feeling generally unwell.

You can take simple measures:

- Get some rest until you feel better – we usually know when we're well enough to return to normal activities.
- Eat healthily, including at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. Drink plenty of fluids to replace those lost from sweating and a runny nose.
- Paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin can help reduce the symptoms of a cold. **Avoid giving aspirin to children under the age of 16 and follow the manufacturer's instructions.**

You are eligible for a free vaccination if you are:

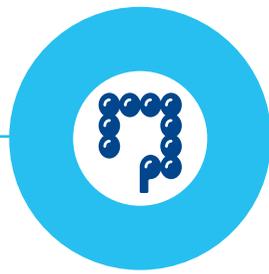
- Over 65
- Pregnant
- Living with an underlying health condition (such as long-term heart or lung disease)
- Living with a weakened immune system
- A carer for someone with an underlying health condition or a frontline health and social care worker
- Children can receive their vaccination from the GP as a nasal spray instead of a needle injection. The nasal spray is quick, painless and effective.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Cold-common/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Cold-common/Pages/Introduction.aspx) for more information on what you can do if you suffer from a cold.

For more information about the prevention, symptoms and treatment of flu please visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu)

## Constipation

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Constipation is when your stools become hard and you find it more difficult than usual, or even painful, to pass them when going to the toilet. You may also have a feeling of being unable to completely empty your bowel. You can do the following to decrease your chances of constipation:

- Increasing your daily fibre intake by eating a higher proportion of fruit, vegetables, seeds, pulses and cereals, or by taking soluble fibre in the form of oats, can help to alleviate symptoms and prevent symptoms from recurring.
- Avoid dehydration and drink plenty of water.
- Try to exercise more, which helps your bowels digest food.
- Respond to your bowel's natural pattern and do not delay going to the toilet when you feel the urge to go.
- Simple pain killers such as paracetamol can help to relieve pain.
- Many preparations are available over the counter to help you open your bowels.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Constipation/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Constipation/Pages/Introduction.aspx) for more information.

## Headache and migraine

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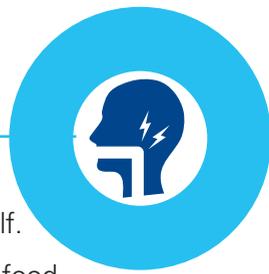
The most common headache is a tension-type headache – the one we think of as 'ordinary' or 'everyday' headache. Tension headache tends to be mild to moderately severe and affects both sides of the head. It usually feels 'pressing' or 'tightening' and is not affected by routine daily activities. Migraine is a moderate or severe throbbing headache affecting one or both sides of the head and made worse by ordinary daily activities.

- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of fluid (ideally water) a day. Avoid alcohol and take regular meals.
- Various pain killers are available without prescription from your pharmacist. Special migraine medications are available for treating migraine attacks. Avoid taking painkillers for headaches for more than 10 to 15 days per month.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/headache/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/headache/Pages/Introduction.aspx) for more information.

## Sore throat

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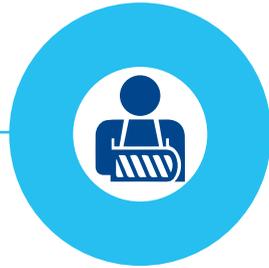
Sore throats are extremely common. Sore throat is usually caused by a harmless viral throat infection that gets better by itself.

- You can relieve symptoms of sore throat by eating cool, soft food and drinking cool or warm drinks, as well as sucking lozenges, ice cubes, ice lollies or hard sweets. Gargling with warm, salty water may also help reduce swelling and pain.
- Avoid smoking and smoky environments as much as you can.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of fluid (preferably water) every day, particularly if you also have a fever.
- Painkillers help to relieve symptoms of sore throat, fever, and headaches in adults.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/Pages/Introduction.aspx) for further information and advice.

## Sprains and strains

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Sprains are due to injured ligaments and often affect the thumb, wrist, ankle and knee. Typical symptoms of a sprain include pain around a joint, swelling, tenderness, and an inability to use the joint normally.

- Protecting the affected limb, resting it, and using ice, compression bandages and elevation are useful for treating injuries initially.
- Avoid heat, alcohol, running (or any other form of exercise) and massage in the first 72 hours after an injury.
- In strains, however, it's beneficial if you keep the affected muscle still for a few days after the injury before starting to move it again.
- Painkillers and ointments are widely available over the counter (OTC) and can be used to relieve pain and reduce swelling.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/sprains/pages/introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sprains/pages/introduction.aspx) for further information on how to treat and prevent sprains and strains.

# 3. Get involved

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Want to get involved in shaping local health services with Harrow CCG?



020 8422 6644



[www.harrowccg.nhs.uk](http://www.harrowccg.nhs.uk)



@NHSHarrowCCG



@staywellnwl

NHS Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
The Heights  
59-65 Lowlands Road  
Harrow on the Hill  
HA1 3AW