



One in every five trips to the GP is for common conditions such as backache, headache or coughs and colds.

For most people, they are not a serious health problem - you just want to know how to relieve it and you want a treatment that acts fast. You also want to know how long you're going to suffer or what you should do if your symptoms change.

Your pharmacist can help

Your local pharmacist can give you friendly, expert advice on self-care and, where appropriate, over-the-counter medicines that can help with lots of common illnesses and minor ailments.

You can see your local pharmacist anytime: just walk in, you don't need an appointment.

It may mean you don't have to spend time waiting to see your GP but can get on and start tackling your symptoms. Self-care for common conditions can also help free up some of your GP's time, making it easier to get an appointment when you have a more serious condition.

You may not need a prescription from your GP

Your GP may ask you to buy some common medicines over-the-counter (rather than on prescription) for treating minor ailments such as:

- aches and pains
- coughs and colds
- sore throat
- upset stomach
- skin rashes
- heartburn and indigestion
- hay fever and allergies
- eczema
- athlete's foot
- headlice

Ask your local pharmacist for advice and over-the-counter remedies to help ease your symptoms.



Help make the most of your local NHS

The NHS in Bedfordshire spends an estimated £1.6 million every year on medicines that could be bought over-the-counter without a prescription.

This money would buy around:

- **431 hip replacements or**
- **62 community nurses or**
- **104 drug treatments for breast cancer**

Many over-the-counter medicines cost much less than a prescribed alternative

Save yourself time and money by picking up over-the-counter medicines from your local pharmacy and help us make more of your local NHS.

More information

To find out more ask at your local pharmacy. Further information is available at:

www.nhs.uk/livewell/pharmacy