

Repeat prescriptions?



Only order what you need

Are your medicines stacking up?
Don't let medicines go to waste.



Stay Well



Stay Safe



Stay Green

If you have enough medicines at home,
there's no need to order now
– you can request more in the future.

Scan to find out
more information

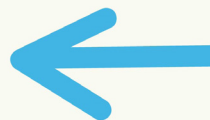


www.hertsandwestessex.ics.nhs.uk/meds

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Did you know...



that **1 in 10** medicines given out
aren't needed or used?

In Hertfordshire and west Essex, £7.5 million is wasted every year on unused medicines like inhalers, painkillers, and creams. By only ordering what you really need, you can help the NHS spend money where it's needed most.



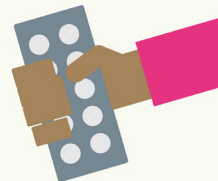
What you should do:

- Check what you already have at home. Do not order your medicines if you have enough at home.
- On your repeat prescription form, only tick the medicines you actually need.
- Consider using the NHS App to order your repeat medicines so that you can ensure that you are only ordering what you need.
- Tell your healthcare professional if you've stopped taking any medicines or have concerns about them.
- If you go into hospital, bring all your medicines in a labelled bag, and include a list if you can.
- Store medicines safely, away from children and pets.
- Keep medicines at the right temperature, especially in hot weather.
- Return unused or expired medicines to your pharmacy—don't throw them away.

What you shouldn't do:

- Don't put medicines in the bin or flush them - it harms the environment.
- Don't share your medicines - they're meant just for you.





Need help with your medicines?

We want you to get the best results from your treatment. Take your medicines exactly as prescribed and follow the label instructions.

If you're thinking of stopping a medicine, or have already done so, talk to a healthcare professional. They can help you decide what's best and may offer a different treatment if needed.

You should be offered a medication review at least once a year. If you haven't had one in a while then contact your GP practice.

It's OK to ask

If you're not sure what all your medicines are for, it's important to talk to your healthcare professional to find out.

It's OK to ask if you have questions or worries about any of the medicines you've been prescribed. Your GP practice might invite you to

discuss your medicines, and this is a great opportunity to raise any concerns you might have.

Buying medicines without a prescription

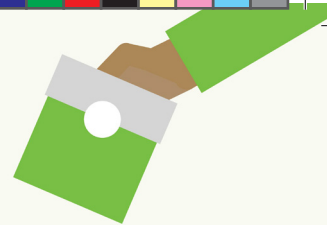
For many minor health problems you can buy over-the-counter medicines at your local pharmacy or shop.

Your local pharmacy team can give you advice and treatment for conditions such as urinary tract infections or sore throats. If the pharmacy team is unable to help you they will direct you to your GP practice or another service as appropriate.

What about vitamins and supplements?

The NHS doesn't usually prescribe probiotics or vitamins anymore. You can get what you need from a healthy, balanced diet, or buy them from a pharmacy or shop.





Why is this important?

The local NHS spends around **£10 million every year** on medicines that people could buy themselves - like paracetamol.

By cutting back on these prescriptions, the NHS can focus on investing in other services.

What you can do

Keep a few basic medicines at home so you can treat common problems quickly. These might include:

- Painkillers (for pain, discomfort or fever)
- Indigestion remedies, oral rehydration salts, and treatments for constipation or diarrhoea
- Cold and hay fever treatments
- Sunblock and after-sun lotion
- First aid items like plasters or antiseptic cream

If you have children, make sure you have child-friendly products too.

Top tips



- Find out what your medicines are for and what are the risks and benefits of taking them. You can do this by visiting the NHS website or speaking to a healthcare professional
- Check what medicines you already have at home before you order more
- Tell your healthcare professional if you stop taking your medication or you are receiving medicines you don't use
- Order your repeat medicines in good time. GP practices and pharmacies need up to a week to process requests
- If you have a smartphone, you can request a prescription on the NHS app

Need advice? Speak to your pharmacy team about what medicines to keep at home, how to use them and how to store them safely.

