

# Why are GP practices still working differently?

**The pandemic is not over.** GP practices worked hard to provide a service throughout lockdown and continue to do so. To protect everyone, we must maintain safe infection control and minimise unnecessary physical contact.

## How are practices working now?

Your appointment may be triaged, meaning we'll assess the urgency of your healthcare need. This helps keep you safe and makes sure the people with the greatest need are seen first. Everyone who needs to be seen in person will be offered a face-to-face appointment.

## Why do receptionists ask personal questions?

GP reception staff are a vital part of the practice and ask questions to direct you to the best professional support. They have been trained to ask you the right questions, and treat all your information confidentially.

## What is triage?

You will be assessed to decide who needs:

- to be seen in person
- a phone consultation
- a video consultation
- help from a community pharmacy

You could be signposted to other help and support. If you need a face-to-face appointment you will be offered one after triage. If you have any concerns please speak to the receptionist.

## I wanted to see my GP, so why am I seeing someone else?

Many GP practices now include a range of professionals (e.g. advanced nurse practitioners) who can diagnose and treat health conditions. This ensures that you see the right person, at the right time, more quickly.

## What about emergencies?

Always dial 999 in a life-threatening emergency. If you need help with minor injuries at any time, or urgent care when your GP practice or community pharmacy is closed, visit **111.nhs.uk** or dial **111** if you do not have internet access.

## Where else can I get help?

Visit **nhs.uk** for advice on common symptoms and a list of local services, or speak to your community pharmacist first for advice on minor illnesses.

Find your nearest:

**[nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy/](https://nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy/)**

## Thank you for your patience

Our health services are under enormous pressure, but we are open and here if needed. You can help us and help yourself by making sure you get the right care, in the right place, at the right time. Please continue to be kind to our staff, socially distance where possible and wear a face covering in healthcare settings.

The NHS has a zero-tolerance approach to protect our doctors, nurses and staff against deliberate violence and aggression from patients, their families and the public, and to ensure offenders are dealt with quickly and effectively.