What is NHS Direct Online?

NHS Direct Online is a website providing high quality health information and advice for the people of England. It is unique in being supported by a 24 hour nurse advice and information helpline. If you use NHS Direct Online and are in any doubt about what action you should take, you can call NHS Direct on 0845 4647.

The following services are available for Wales and Scotland:

NHS Direct Wales has its own website.

NHS24 is Scotland's equivalent of NHS Direct (call 08454 24 24 24 for NHS24).

If I'm feeling unwell, where can I find advice on NHS Direct Online about what to do?

The NHS Direct Online's self-help guide is an easy to use guide to treating common health problems at home. Using a Body Key, you can identify your symptoms and by answering simple step by step questions, work out the course of action that is best for you. The self-help guide is also available in the back of all new Thomson Local directories.

Where on the website can I find information about a particular health condition or type of treatment?

The website's health encyclopedia contains over 700 topics covering illnesses and conditions, tests, treatments and operations. Many topics are supported by illustrations or photographs. Information on illnesses or conditions includes sections covering diagnosis, prevention, complications and treatment.

Information about tests, treatments and operations explain why they are necessary, when they can be done, why they should be done, when they should be done, how they are performed, results, recovery and future prospects.

Can I find out where my nearest GP surgery is on NHS Direct Online?

Yes, NHS Direct Online provides a searchable database of hospitals and community health services, GPs dentists, opticians and pharmacies.

What is the online enquiry service?

The online enquiry service is there to help you if you can’t find the health information you need on NHS Direct Online.
If, having searched the website, you haven’t found what you’re looking for; you can complete and submit an online form detailing what you want to know. Your enquiry will be researched by health information professional and an individual response provided within up to five working days. The service will only handle requests for health information. For example, if you have a diagnosed condition and want to find out more about it. If you are feeling unwell and want immediate advice on what to do, you are advised to contact the NHS Direct telephone service to speak to a nurse.

**Main menu**

Our [health encyclopaedia](#) allows you to access information on a range of medical conditions, symptoms, types of surgery, medicines, and health and lifestyle advice.

Some of the most popular health encyclopaedia topics have been translated other languages. You can access these topics by clicking on the image in the bottom left hand corner of every page on the website.

The [common health questions](#) provide useful information, based on the questions often asked by the public when they use NHS Direct call centres, the online enquiry service and online feedback forms.

Try our [self-help guide](#) to find out whether your symptoms can be managed at home, if you need advice from an NHS Direct nurse, or whether you need to call for an ambulance.

[Mind and body magazine](#) will fill you in on all the latest health news and keep you informed about health-related issues that affect you and your family.

Our online services allow you to [send a health enquiry](#) to our team of health professionals, and [find a local health service](#) using your postcode.

**Useful functions**

Use the [search](#) box in the top left hand corner of every page to type in a keyword and search the whole website for the information you want.

Our glossary can help you understand complicated words as you read through our health information. Each word that is highlighted in blue has a glossary definition - read the definition by clicking on the word with your cursor.

The NHS Direct website is now speech enabled. This means that all of our content is now available in audio form.

All you have to do is to download the [free software](#) from the Browsealoud website. Then you can hear the words on the screen by hovering your mouse cursor over the text you want to hear.
The software is easy to install, and there's lots of different ways of customising the software to suit you.

Once you have it, it's easy to use and will really help you get the most out of the NHS Direct website.

**Accessibility**

There's also lots of further ways you can customise the NHS Direct website.

For example, you can change colours and the sizes of fonts to make it easier to read. And use access keys to take you to key sections of the website at the touch of a button.

You can also access NHS Direct over the phone on 0845 46 47, and on Freeview and Sky Digital. The service on Sky also includes videos on subjects such as pregnancy, talking to children about sex, and healthy eating.