



# Getting your health checked

## Easy read newsletter



# Hello!



There is lots of information in this newsletter.

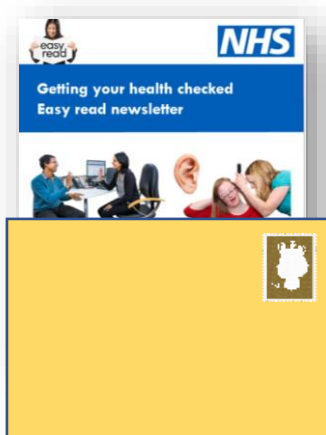
We have tried to make it easy to read.

## Hard words

We put hard words in **purple**. We explain the hard words.



Sometimes you will see blue web links and emails to find out more. You can click these on your computer.



Or if you have a paper copy you can type them into a computer to go to the website.



In this newsletter we talk about using your local health services.



There have been lots of changes to health services because of coronavirus.



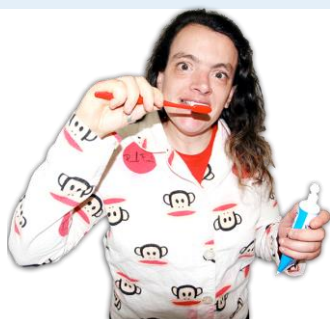
But it is important for you to keep using health services when you need them.

# In this newsletter...



## Getting your health checked out

Page 5



## Is it time to go to the dentist?

Page 25



## Getting your eyes checked

Page 30



## Getting your ears checked

Page 33



## If you have problems with your local health service

Page 35

# Getting your health checked out



If you are feeling poorly, or something has changed or hurts in your body, make sure you get yourself checked by a health professional.



This will help you get the care you need.



There are lots of ways to get help.

- 1. You can contact your doctors practice (GP) to get an appointment.**

Check how you can do this with your doctors practice.



Your appointment may be on the phone, or a video call or in person.

## 2. You can go to your local pharmacy (chemist) for advice.



- Pharmacists can help with some health problems that might be sorted out without needing to see a doctor.



- They can help with illnesses such as coughs, headaches and hay fever.



- You do not need an appointment to go to the pharmacy.

You can go at any time that they are open.



Read an easy read leaflet about using your pharmacy.

<https://tinyurl.com/UsingYourPharmacy>



- You might still need to see your doctor.



### 3. You can ring NHS 111

- NHS 111 will help you and they may be able to book an appointment for you to see a doctor.



- You can ring at any time day or night. You can ask someone to help you call.



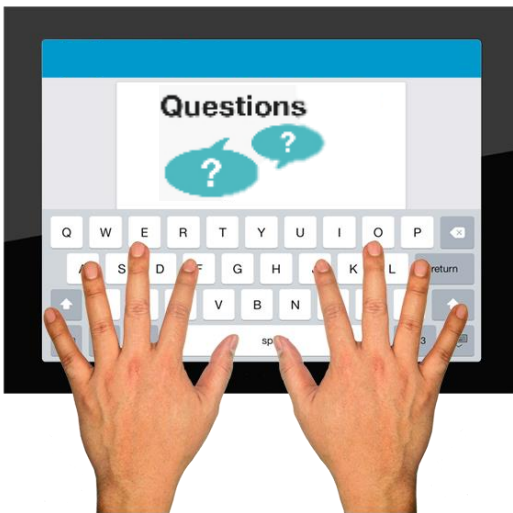
- Watch a video about phoning 111

<https://tinyurl.com/NHSVideo111>



- Read an easy newsletter about 111 (page 12)

<https://tinyurl.com/Newsletter111ER>



#### 4. You can go to 111 online

- You will need to write in the answers to the questions to get the help you need.

<https://tinyurl.com/NHS-111-online>



- The website is not in easy read and you might need someone to help you answer the questions.





## 5. You can go to an NHS walk-in centre

A **walk-in centre** is somewhere you can see a doctor or a nurse without an appointment.



You might have to wait to see a doctor or nurse.



You can find your closest walk-in centre on this website (this is not in easy read)

<https://tinyurl.com/Find-Walk-in-centre>



6. In an emergency you should phone 999

# Getting help with your thoughts and feelings



**If you are having problems with your thoughts and feelings, please make sure you get help.**

Everyone has feelings. Sometimes they may be difficult.

You may feel sad, angry, confused or worried.

When we have these thoughts and feelings a lot it can be a mental health issue and it is important to talk to someone you trust.



You can read more about things that can help with difficult feelings in this easy read newsletter on page 5

<https://tinyurl.com/ERNewsletterMentalHealth>

**Getting help with difficult feelings**



Everyone has feelings. Sometimes our feelings can be difficult.

These feelings might be:

-  Feeling upset
-  Feeling angry



If the way you are feeling is making you ill, it is a good idea to talk to your doctor (GP).



If you are **very** ill with difficult feelings you can get some help on a mental health phonenumber.



You can find your local mental health phonenumber on this webpage

<https://tinyurl.com/MentalHealthphonenumber>

**LS2 7PD**



It is not an easy read website. You need to put your **postcode** in.



A postcode is numbers and letters that can tell people where you live.

You might want to ask someone to help you with it.

# Being careful because of coronavirus



Things might be a bit different because of coronavirus.



Health staff will be wearing face masks.



Health staff may want to help you by talking to you on the telephone or on a video call.



If you need more help you can ask for an appointment in person.

If you have any signs of coronavirus do not go to any health appointments in person.



If you need help phone 111 or your doctor (GP).



You will need to stay at home (**isolate**) if you are feeling very unwell.



If you are not able to breathe or need emergency care ring 999.



Read an easy read newsletter about coronavirus

<https://tinyurl.com/ERNewsletterCoronaVirus>

# Getting help for your appointments



When you speak to health staff you can tell them you have a learning disability or are autistic and that you need some help.

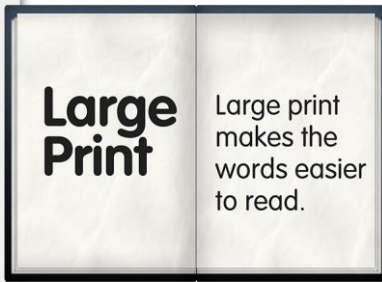


When someone makes changes so health services work better for you we call this a **reasonable adjustment**.



Some examples of reasonable adjustments are:

- Having two appointments together. This is called a double appointment. It will give you more time to explain how you feel and ask questions.



- Getting information in a way you can understand, for example in easy read, large print and in another language.



- Seeing a doctor or nurse you already know.



- Waiting in a quiet space.



- You can ask for your name to be called out if you cannot see the screen.



- When you have an appointment, you can ask if you can have someone with you. This is a reasonable adjustment even in the coronavirus pandemic.



Staff at your doctors can write the support you need on their computer system to remind them of what you need when you have other appointments.



Ask them to add this to your online records and get this updated if things change.

This is called a **summary care record**



Watch this video to find out how this might help you-  
<https://tinyurl.com/SummaryCareRecord>

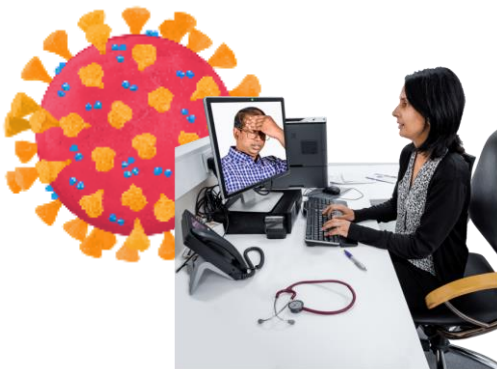


Here is a video that tells you more about reasonable adjustments.

<https://tinyurl.com/VideoReasonableAdjustments>



# Annual Health Checks for people with a learning disability



Every year you will be invited to have an **Annual Health Check** by your doctor (GP), if they know you have a learning disability and you are 14 years old or older.

It is important to go to your Annual Health Check as it will help keep you healthy and stop any problems you have getting worse.

Annual Health Checks are a bit different because of coronavirus.

- You might have the check over the phone or on a videocall.



- If you go into the doctors practice, people will be wearing masks.

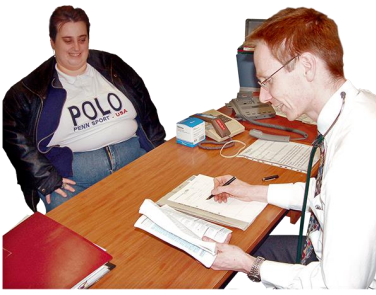


In your Annual Health Check, you will talk about

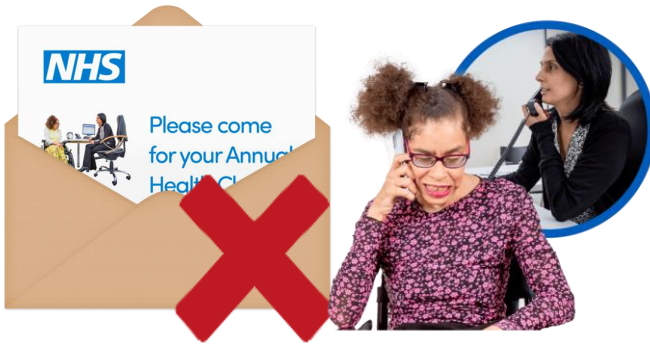
- how you are feeling
- the medicines you might be taking to see if they are still helping you
- things you could do to keep you healthy and well, such as taking regular exercise
- They can make a plan for your health



This is called a **health action plan**.



You can ask for this to be written down for you to keep as a reminder.



If you have a learning disability and have not been invited for an Annual Health Check talk to your doctors practice about this.



You can ask to be added to a list of people with a learning disability at your doctors practice.

This is called the **learning disability register**



Find out more about Annual Health Checks in this easy read leaflet

<https://tinyurl.com/AnnualHealthChecksER>



You can watch a short video on Annual Health Checks

<https://tinyurl.com/Annual-Health-ChecksVideo>

# Finding out about health problems early- screening



Doctors can check to see if you have problems with your body, even before you feel poorly.

This is called **screening**.



You will be invited by the NHS to get parts of your body checked.



This will happen every few years



It is important to go to these screening appointments when you are invited.



They can find early signs of a health problem so you get the treatment you need as soon as possible.



**If you are worried about being checked or need a bit of help**



If you are not sure about having the screening check or are worried talk to your doctor or nurse.



Tell the person you make the appointment with if you are feeling worried so they can help you.



There are lots of things that can be done to make your appointment easier, such as-



- You can ask them to explain what will happen at the appointment.



- You could ask to visit the room before your appointment so you know what it will look like.



- You could ask to take someone with you to the appointment.



Remember it is important to have screening checks you are offered. Talking to someone you trust can help you feel better.

# What to do if you think you have a problem that needs to be checked



You can also ask to be checked if you notice any changes to your body.



If you find any new lumps in your body tell someone you trust and your doctor (GP) or nurse.



Testicles



Breasts



Lumps could be anywhere, like in your breasts, your testicles (balls) or on your skin.



It is important to do this as soon as possible.



A friend, family member or carer could help you talk to the doctor if you are worried.

### More information

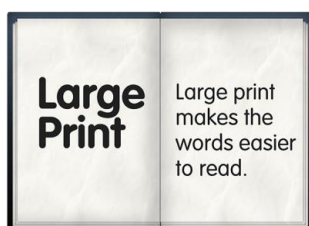
This is a link to the government webpages about screening. The webpage is not in easy read but it has links to easy read guides, you may need some help to read it.

<https://tinyurl.com/ScreeningGuides>



These are easy read guides about screening using pictures

<https://tinyurl.com/ScreeningEasyRead>



You can ask your doctor or nurse to send you information about your screening appointment in a way that you can understand.

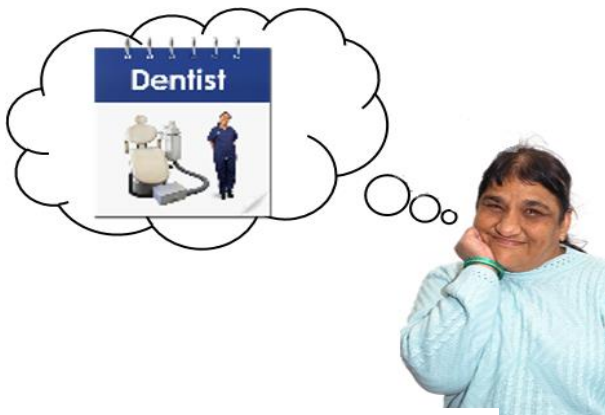


# Is it time to go to the dentist?



Dentists help keep your mouth, teeth and gums healthy.

It might be a long time since you have been to the dentist.



Even if you do not have problems with your teeth it is important to see the dentist.

This is called a **check up**.



Your dentist will tell you how often you need to get your teeth checked, it will be between every 3 months and every 2 years.



If you have problems with your mouth and teeth you will need to have a check up more often.



This is so your dentist can find little problems before they get worse.



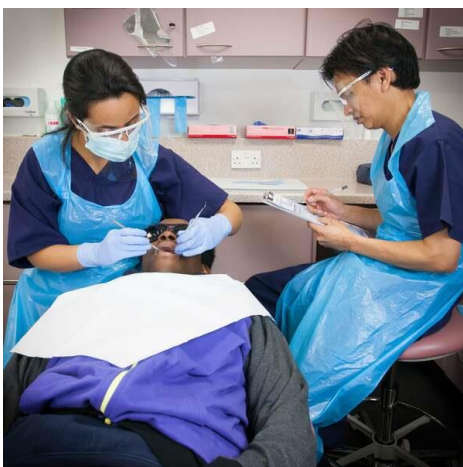
If you have toothache or pain in your mouth you will need to see a dentist to get the right treatment.



Phone your dentist as soon as you can so the problem doesn't get worse.



They will give you an appointment as soon as possible.



If you are in a lot of pain and cannot wait to be seen, you should tell them you need “emergency dental care”.

# Things may be a bit different at your dentist



You can still ring the dentist for an appointment, but you might not get an appointment right away.



Dentists are very busy at the moment, because of coronavirus.

It is a good idea to get on the dentist waiting list for an appointment.



The dental practice might look a bit different to usual.

Staff will be wearing protective equipment like masks.



This is because your dental practice will have to make sure that everyone stays safe.



## What to do if you do not have a dentist.

If you do not have a dentist, you can find one near you on the NHS website-

<https://tinyurl.com/Find-A-Dentist>



This is not in easy read. You need to write in your postcode. You might want to ask someone for help.



If this is difficult and you are in pain, you can phone 111 to ask for help to find a dentist.



## If you are worried about going to the dentist.

You can speak to staff at your dental practice and they will be able to help you.

You can also speak to someone you trust and they can come to your appointment if that would help you.



## More information

There are lots of helpful easy read leaflets

<https://tinyurl.com/LeafletsGoingToTheDentist>



See Katrina's photo story about going to the dentist

<https://tinyurl.com/StoryGoingToTheDentist>



Read a bit more about keeping your teeth healthy in this easy read newsletter- page 5

<https://tinyurl.com/KeepTeethHealthy>

# Getting your eyes checked



If you have problems with your eyes you should talk to someone who knows about eye health.

They are called an **optician**.



You should go to the optician as soon as possible if -

- your eyes look or feel different than normal
- your eyesight has got worse and you are not able to see as you usually do
- you get headaches and your doctor thinks it could be to do with your eyes





Even if you do not have problems with your eyes it is important to see the optician for a check up.



You should get a check up at least every 2 years.



Some people might be told to go more often if they wear glasses or have certain conditions like diabetes.



### **What happens at the opticians?**

The optician will do some tests to check your eyes.



These tests are to check to see if your eyes are healthy and if you need glasses.



Because of coronavirus your optician may be wearing a mask. This is to protect you.



You might be asked to wear a mask but if you cannot wear one let them know.



You can take someone with you to support you.



If you are worried or find bright lights difficult make sure you tell them so they can support you.



To find out more about what might happen when you get an eye test you can read this easy read leaflet-  
<https://tinyurl.com/HavingAnEyeTest>



# Getting your ears checked



If you are having problems with your ears you can go to your local **pharmacy** for help.



This might be because you are in pain or your ears are blocked from ear wax.



The pharmacist might give you ear drops. They will tell you how to use them.



You might also be told by the pharmacist that you need to see the doctor (GP).



It is important that you do not put anything inside your ears including cotton buds or fingers.

This is bad for your ears and could make things worse.



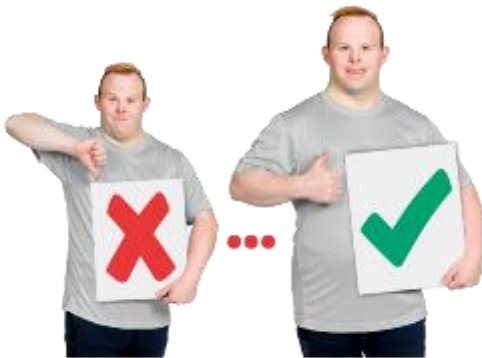
If you have some problems hearing, you can speak to your doctor (GP) about getting a hearing test.

# If you have problems with your local health services



If you have trouble getting an appointment or things have been difficult at your appointment you might want to tell the health service that there has been a problem.

This is called making a **complaint**.



This can help to make the problem better for you.

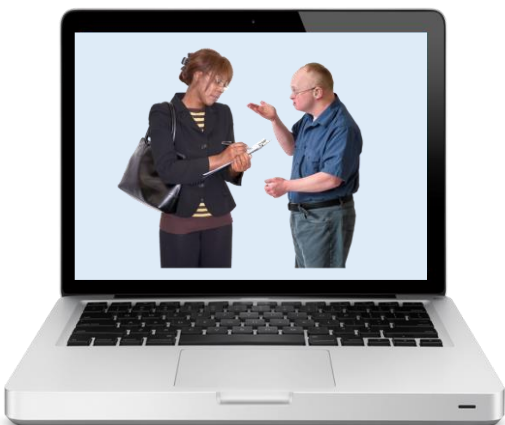


You can ask the service how to make a complaint.



There is an easy read leaflet that tells you more about how to make a complaint.

<https://tinyurl.com/How-To-Make-A-Complaint>





**healthwatch**

If you want to tell somebody about what it was like going to your doctor (GP), dentist, optician or other health professional you can contact your local Healthwatch who can help you.



You can find your local Healthwatch on this webpage. You need to put into the webpage the name of the area where you live.

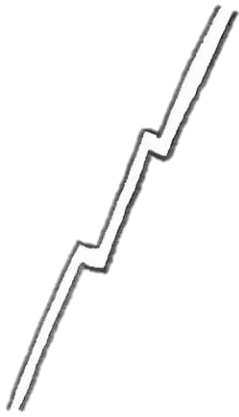


You may need support with this.

[www.healthwatch.co.uk/  
your-local-healthwatch/list](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/your-local-healthwatch/list)

# Colouring in page

## Talk to someone you trust



# Thank you



That's the end of our easy read newsletter.

Please get in touch if you would like a printed copy, or if you would like us to send you newsletters in the future.



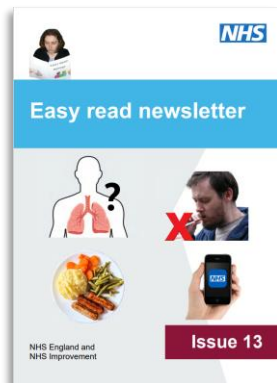
You can tell us if there is something you would like to see in future newsletters about health.

You can phone or email us using the details on page 40.



To read the newsletters we have done in the past you can look at them here

<https://tinyurl.com/NHSNewslettersER>



# Also thank you to...



Thanks to **Know Your Rights** - making easy read information advocates who checked this newsletter.



This newsletter has used Photosymbols, licenced to NHS England and NHS Improvement.



*David Gill*

Thank you to David Gill a learning disability and autism advisor who designed our colouring in page.



Thanks to the Health Improvement team for writing this newsletter with us.

# Contact us



## The Learning Disability and Autism Engagement Team



Web:

[tinyurl.com/NHSGetInvolved](https://tinyurl.com/NHSGetInvolved)



Phone: 0113 824 9686

Email: [engage@nhs.net](mailto:engage@nhs.net)



Facebook:

[NHS England learning disability and autism engagement](#)

Twitter: [@NHSability](#)



If you contact us about any of these articles, we will not share your details outside of NHS England and NHS Improvement.