

## Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

## Take Your Medication

A better health outcome is the most significant benefit of using medication correctly as prescribed. Doctors prescribe medications to treat your symptoms and to help you manage or overcome certain health conditions. Failing to use medicines as prescribed can result in worsened health, longer recovery, unwanted side effects, substance use disorders, death, and other serious health conditions that require intensive treatment.

Before using a new medication, carefully read all the directions on the label and ask your doctor or pharmacist for help and clarification if you're confused or unsure about how to properly take the medication. This can prevent misunderstandings that could lead to accidentally doubling up on doses or using less than intended.

Your doctor or pharmacist can also explain possible side effects you may face when misusing the medication or combining it with certain other substances. For instance, benzodiazepines should never be mixed with opioids, since this combination can result in overdose or death. Here are some additional tips for taking your medications as prescribed:

- Use your medication at the same time every day to prevent the overlapping of doses.
- Keep an updated list of all the medications on hand, so every doctor and specialist you meet with can screen for potentially fatal drug interactions.
- Check to see whether your medications should be taken on an empty or full stomach.
- Build medication into your daily routine so you never forget to take it, such as before brushing your teeth at night or after eating breakfast.
- Use daily pill containers to help you keep track of whether you've taken your daily doses.
- Refill your daily pill container on the same day every week to avoid doubling up on doses.
- Buy timer caps for all your pill bottles to keep track of when you last took your medications.
- Don't share or give away medications. This practice is illegal and dangerous and can harm those who take your medications without a valid prescription.
- Bring extra medication with you when traveling in case you stay longer than planned.

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- When traveling by airplane, always pack medication in your carry-on bag to prevent damage from changes in temperature and air pressure. Also, you'll have it on hand if your luggage is lost or damaged.
- Don't stop using your medication unless directed to do so by your doctor, since abruptly stopping some medicines can lead to severe side effects.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/medicines/>

### Finding a Pharmacy

You can find a pharmacy near you by searching on NHS Choices.

## Keep Moving and Improve Your Health

St Helens Wellbeing Service

**Call:** 01744 371111

**Email:** [chcp.sthelens@nhs.net](mailto:chcp.sthelens@nhs.net)

**Website:** [www.sthelenswellbeing.org.uk](http://www.sthelenswellbeing.org.uk)

St Helens Wellbeing service makes it easier to access a wide range of healthy living and wellbeing support through a 'one stop shop'. The service provides local residents with advice and help with healthy eating, exercise, weight management, stopping smoking, breastfeeding, emotional and social wellbeing, oral health and volunteering.

### Find out your BMI

You can get help to lead a healthier lifestyle if you're an adult (18 years or over) living in St Helens and your body mass index (BMI) is above average. St Helens Wellbeing service are offering a free weight loss programme with personalised ongoing support if your BMI is between 30-39.9, to help you get fitter and healthier. Use the below tool to calculate your BMI.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator>

### Criteria to access the service

- Registered with a St Helens GP
- Adults aged 16+ with BMI 40+
- Adults aged 16+ with BMI 35+ with one or more co-morbidities (including gestational diabetes)
- Pregnant women aged 16+ with BMI 35+ at the time of booking.
- Adults aged 16+ with a BMI 30+ with a diagnosis of diabetes
- Have not been discharged from the service within the last 12 months.
- Referral form received from GP or health professional complete with blood tests within the last 3 months.

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The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by a Senior Clinical Sub Group of the Document Control Group of STHK on 17-03 -22.

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- Must be committed to receiving and complying with the service for a minimum of 12 months.
- Willing to consider holistic change including: physiological, psychological, social, nutritional, and physical activity aspects.

Better Health Let's Do This – Lose Weight website provides online support to help you lose weight and includes access to the NHS 12 week weight loss plan.

The NHS 12 week fitness plan will support your weight loss plan as well as improve your health. This is aimed at beginners and will help get you into the habit of regular exercise over the course of the programme. It is structured but flexible enough to allow you to fit the exercise sessions around your other weekly commitments.

### Healthy eating and being active



Information and advice on healthy eating and becoming more active is available from:

- One You Eat Better (website) - includes Easy Meals app for healthy meals and the Change4Life Food Scanner to help reduce levels of sugar in your diet
- Better Health - Get Active (website) - includes tips on getting active for all, including the downloadable Active 10 app, as well as tailored advice for those living with a long term condition

### Time to quit

St Helens Wellbeing will help you to change your smoking habits and will offer a variety of proven stop smoking therapies to help you to achieve your goal. They are e cig friendly and support anyone who is using a vape to quit.

Quit smoking today and you will see immediate health benefits. You will also be protecting those around you from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke including children and those who are vulnerable.

	<b>One to one telephone support 01744 371 111</b>
	<b>Text support - text QUIT to 61825</b>

### Walking in St Helens

St Helens Wellbeing Team are proud to be an accredited Walking for Health scheme. We provide FREE walks throughout the Borough that are suitable for people who have not walked much before, are looking to be more active or are returning from injury or illness. The health walks usually last between 30 minutes and 90 minutes.

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Why is walking good for your health?

Walking Boosts Vitamin D

Walking gives you energy

Walking can help lower your blood pressure

Walking makes you happy

## Good Mental Health

We have brought together a wide range of resources to signpost you to the support you need to help you manage your mental health. With information about self-help tools including links to apps, videos and workshops, advice and information sources, helpline numbers and local support services and groups it will help you find the help you need in a way that works for you.

<https://www.sthelenswellbeing.org.uk/services/mental-wellbeing>

## Children & young people

- St Helens Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- **BOSS** free, safe and confidential website for 11-19 year old young people in St Helens  
<https://www.boss-sthelens.co.uk/>
- **Childline** <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/mental-health/>
- **Youngminds help for parents** Support for Parent <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline-and-webchat>
- **Young Minds** support and empowerment for children and young people  
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>
- Young Minds **Crisis Messenger**: text YM to 85258. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL to EE, O2, Three and Vodafone. These include BT Mobile, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Mobile, iD Mobile, Sky, Telecom Plus, Lebara and GiffGaff
- The Listening Service, run by YMCA offer 1 to 1 support for ages 12 to 18. Call 01744 415260, email [ListeningService@ymcasthelens.org.uk](mailto:ListeningService@ymcasthelens.org.uk)

## Crisis & Suicide prevention

Mersey care 24/7 Crisis Line - free to call from mobile and landlines (the service is available for all ages incl. Children and Young People)

<https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/urgent-help>

**0800 051 1508** for people living in Halton, Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington

**0800 051 3253** for people living in Wigan

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- **HOPELINEUK** If you are a young person (under 35) at risk of suicide or are worried about a young person at risk of suicide run by Papyrus
- **Samaritans** 24 hr support for anyone struggling to cope
- For Mersey Care **SHOUT Text service** text **REACH to 85258** - for adults, Children and Young People, providing free 24/7 access to Mental Health Support and Advice

## General Mental Health

<https://www.kindtoyourmind.org/alma/>

<https://calmharm.co.uk/>

				
<i>Connect</i>	<i>Give</i>	<i>Keep Learning</i>	<i>Be Active</i>	<i>Take Notice</i>
Spending time with the people around us improves our sense of belonging and makes us feel good.	Doing something for someone else gives us a lift. Helping a friend or a stranger could make their day.	Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence.	Being active isn't all about looking good; it helps us feel good too.	It's not often we stop to take notice of the world around us, think about how we are feeling or try to live in the moment.

## Bereavement

For NHS information and support on bereavement visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stressanxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/>

- The Good Grief Trust - National COVID19 Free Helpline: 0800 2600 400 - 8am - 8pm  
[www.thegoodgrieftrust.org](http://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org)
- For a step-by-step guide after a bereavement visit: <https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death>
- Cruse Bereavement Care has online resources on how bereavement and grief may be affected by this pandemic: <https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirusdealingbereavement-and-grief>

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Local Counselling Telephone numbers:

- Think Wellbeing - telephone assessment: 01744 647100, signposting to Silvercloud.
- 24/7 helpline via Northwest Boroughs Crisis line:
- St Joseph's Warrington - telephone counselling: 01925 635448
- Philipi Trust - St Helens telephone counselling: 01744 679001 £15.00 donation per session
- St Helens MIND - admin@sthelensmind.org.uk - 01744 647089 - befriending support
- Whiston and St Helens Hospital Bereavement office: 0151 430 1336 0151 430 1412