

# Why are GP practices still working differently?

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over. Our GP practices have worked hard to ensure their patients have been able to get the medical support they need throughout the pandemic and continue to do so. It is vital, to keep both patients and staff safe, we maintain safe infection control and minimise unnecessary physical contact.

## Are practices open?

Yes, practices are open for business, but all appointments are being triaged first. This helps to keep you safe and means those with the greatest medical need are seen first. If you need to be seen in person, you will be offered an in person appointment.

## What is triage?

Triage is how we find out more about the support you need, including if you need to be seen in person, via a phone consultation, via a video consultation, or could get help from a community pharmacy.

## Why are receptionists asking me personal questions?

Receptionists are trained to triage patients effectively and will always treat all the information they are given confidentially. They are a vital part of our health teams and will only ask the questions they need to connect you to the right support.

## Why am I being offered an appointment with someone who isn't my GP?

We will make sure you see the right person as soon as possible. This could include an advanced nurse practitioner or community pharmacist, who are trained to diagnose and treat a range of health conditions.

## I have an emergency – what do I do?

If it is a life-threatening emergency call 999 immediately. If you need help with minor injuries or urgent care when your GP practice or pharmacy is closed then visit [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or call 111.

## Where else can I get help?

The NHS website – [www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) – offers advice on a range of common conditions. You can also speak to your local pharmacist for advice on minor illnesses, such as colds, allergies, skin conditions and more. You can find your nearest pharmacy here: [nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy/](https://nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy/)



## Please be kind

We're here to help all of our patients. You don't always need a face-to-face appointment – telephone and video consultations provide the same standard of advice you need and can often be made sooner. Please #BeKind and continue to wear a face mask when visiting any GP or pharmacy.