

Harleston Medical Practice

Guide to Appointments

To ensure you are able to get the most out of our services please take note of the following information regarding our appointment system.

**** Please note, should you experience difficulty obtaining an appointment due to specific work/travel/other circumstances please make reception aware and we will endeavour to meet your needs.**

To meet your routine needs:

Access to GP advice

Please call us between 8.30 and 10 am if you require the attention of a GP. The GPs ask that you kindly provide our trained medical receptionists with a brief indication of the nature of the problem. This helps to ensure that you are directed to the most appropriate clinician to meet your needs.

The GP will initially contact you by telephone the same day. The GP will carry out an initial telephone consultation and will arrange to see you if necessary. They will also arrange any prescriptions that are required. If the GP needs to see you, they will book you an appointment to complete the consultation.

Please note, patients calling after 10am, will be added to the next working days list. The GP will deal with the issue the next working day as set out above.

Patients calling after 10am, with an urgent need that cannot wait until the next working day, will be asked to provide the receptionist with details about the nature of the problem. The receptionist will liaise with the Duty GP regarding a plan to meet any immediate needs.

Alternatively, please visit our website www.harlestonsurgery.co.uk between 8.30 and 10am and select the appointments option on the home screen and following the instructions on the 'Get help for any health problem' tab. You will be asked to fill in a brief form with the details of your concern and we will get back to you in the same way described above.

Please remember, we do not offer a "walk in" service. You must have an appointment to be seen.

GP follow-up appointments.

If following your consultation your clinician feels they would like to see you again to follow up your condition they will make you an appointment at their follow up clinic. This helps ensure continuity of care for our patients.

Evening and weekend appointments

Our Practice is engaging in a pilot scheme providing improved access for patients to a range of healthcare professionals. Working within a group of eight local Practices, we will be offering a range of appointments each weekday evening between 6.30pm and 8pm and during selected times at weekends, to registered patients, in at least one of the participating Practices. Please contact reception to find out when our next clinic is.

Patients arranging community transport

Please make reception aware if you are arranging community transport for an appointment.

Being on time for your appointment

Please arrive **before** your appointment time to ensure you don't lose your place. This ensures that our clinicians have time to provide patients with the quality of service that they deserve and ensures that other patients are not kept waiting unnecessarily. If you arrive outside of your appointment time you will be asked to rebook.

Online appointment booking and cancellation

We offer the ability to book and cancel online GP appointments via our website www.harlestoneurgery.co.uk. If you are already registered to use our online prescription service you may use the same log in details. If you are not yet registered for online services you will need to come to the surgery in person with photo-ID or a recent utility bill. Ask the receptionist for details of how to register for SystmOnline. We will then supply you with a username and first password.

If you are unable to obtain an appropriate appointment online please contact the surgery to enquire about further availability.

Try the NHS App

If you're a patient at our practice, you can use the NHS App to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

It doesn't replace existing services. You can still contact us in the usual ways.

But, once you have verified your identity in the app, you will have easy, 24/7 access to a growing range of health services and information. You can:

- order repeat prescriptions
- access NHS 111 online
- find NHS services
- view your health records
- book appointments
- and much more...

If you have any problems using the NHS App, you can select 'help' in the top right-hand corner of the app or visit www.nhs.uk/helpmeapp

Nursing team appointments

There are many things that our nursing team are able to help you with. Please telephone reception after 10 am to obtain a routine nursing, health care assistant or phlebotomy appointment.

Alternatives to an appointment with the doctor- Get the Right Treatment

Every year, millions of us visit our GP with minor health problems that can be easily resolved without a doctor's appointment.

It is estimated that every year, 50 million visits to the GP are made for minor ailments such as coughs and colds, mild eczema, and athlete's foot. By visiting your pharmacy instead, you could save yourself time and trouble.

Self-care

Keeping a well stocked medicine cabinet at home can help you treat many minor ailments. Colds, coughs, indigestion and many other minor complaints can all be treated with medicines that are available over the counter.

Your pharmacist can advise on what you might find useful to keep in your medicine cabinet. Always follow the instructions on the medicine label and consult your doctor if the illness continues or becomes more severe.

Your Local Pharmacist

Pharmacists offer professional free health advice at any time - you don't need an appointment. From coughs and colds to aches and pains, they can give you expert help on everyday illnesses. They can answer questions about prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. Your local Pharmacist can also advise on healthy eating.

Pharmacists can also advise on health eating, obesity and giving up smoking. Some pharmacists have private areas where you can talk in confidence. They may suggest you visit your GP for more serious symptoms. It is possible to purchase many medicines from the chemist without a prescription.

Several pharmacies now open late regularly.

NHS Walk-In Centres

NHS Walk-In Centres offer convenient access to a range of NHS services. You can receive treatment for many ailments including:

- infection and rashes,
- fractures and lacerations,
- emergency contraception and advice,
- stomach upsets,
- cuts and bruises, or
- burns and strains.

NHS Walk-in Centres treat around 3m patients a year and have proved to be a successful complementary service to traditional GP and A&E services. Some centres offer access to doctors as well as nurses. However, they are not designed for treating long-term conditions or immediately life-threatening problems.

When we are closed

When the surgery is closed please call **NHS 111** direct.

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straight away to the local service that can help you best. That could be A&E, an out-of-hours doctor, a walk-in centre or urgent care centre, a community nurse, an emergency dentist or a late-opening chemist.

If a health professional has given you a specific phone number to call when you are concerned about your condition, continue to use that number.

When to use NHS111

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.

Call 111 if:

You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.

You think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service.

You don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call.

You need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

For less urgent health needs, contact your GP or local pharmacist in the usual way.

For immediate life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999 .

NHS Walk-in Centres

Walk In Centre
Rouen House
Rouen Road
Norwich
Tel : 01603 677500

Open 7am-9pm 7 days a week

In an emergency

Accident & Emergency (A&E)

Major A&E departments assess and treat patients who have serious injuries or illnesses. Generally, you should visit A&E or call 999 for emergencies, such as:

- loss of consciousness,
- pain that is not relieved by simple analgesia,
- acute confused state,
- persistent, severe chest pain, or
- breathing difficulties.

If you're injured or seriously ill, you should go, or be taken, to A&E. If an ambulance is needed you can call 999, the emergency phone number in the UK. You can also dial 112, which is the equivalent for the European Union.

