

HOW TO ACCESS MEDICAL HELP

ACCESSING HELP URGENTLY

At some point, people may need to get help because of an accident or a medical emergency. Understanding what your options are will help you get the best care as quickly as possible.

Your options in an emergency include:

Calling 999

Only dial 999 in critical or possibly life-threatening situations, for example if someone has:

- lost consciousness;
- become suddenly confused and has fits that are not stopping;
- persistent, severe chest pain;
- breathing difficulties;
- severe bleeding that can't be stopped.

If you or someone else is having a heart attack or stroke, call 999 immediately. Every second counts with these conditions.

Calling 111

The 111 service helps people access the most appropriate health service when they have an urgent (but not critical or life-threatening) need and they are not sure where they need to go.

This service is run by the South West Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT). It is available 24hrs a day, 365 days a year. Calls to the 111 number from landlines and mobile phones are free (although you will need 1p credit on your mobile phone).

If you call 111 you are assessed by trained call handlers supported by clinical staff where necessary, advice may be given or you may be directed to a local service that can help you e.g. A&E, a Minor Injury Unit or an out of hours doctor. If it is decided that an ambulance is in fact required, this will be arranged or they may recommend you go to.

Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments – Musgrove Park Hospital or the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital

A&E Departments are for serious emergencies or accidents only

A&E departments are usually open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. A&E departments have access to specialists and specialist investigations. When you go to A&E, a doctor or nurse will assess your condition and decide what action to take. Your condition may need to be investigated further, for example you may need to have an X-ray or you may need to be admitted into hospital for a longer stay or receive long-term treatment. The treatment you receive will depend on your clinical need.

Musgrove Park Hospital Parkfield Drive, Taunton, Somerset TA1 5DA Tel: 01823 333444	The Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital Barrack Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 5DW Tel: 01392 411 611
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ACCESSING HELP IN NON-URGENT SITUATIONS

In non-urgent situations, your options include:

Your usual surgery

Between 8:30am and 6:00pm Monday to Friday - For illnesses and injuries that are not life-threatening, you can contact us at the surgery. Please remember to telephone first because we cover three sites; this means at certain times of the day there may not be a doctor or nurse at your nearest surgery who will be able to treat you. The two branch surgeries are not open all the time during these hours, although our main site at Hemyock is.

Saturday mornings between 8:00am and 11:00am – we do have a number of appointments to see people who feel they need to see a doctor before Monday morning. Please note this is by appointment only so you need to telephone Hemyock Surgery first on 01823 680206. If the answer phone message directs you to the out of hours service it means all the appointments are full and you will need to call 111.

If the two branch surgeries and the main Hemyock site is closed

Calling 111

The 111 service helps people access the most appropriate healthcare service when they:

- have a non-urgent medical need, but their surgery is closed and they are not sure who to ask for help;
- need to find an emergency dentist;
- need to find a late opening/weekend pharmacy for over the counter medicines and advice;
- need information about a health issue.

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Calling a Minor Injury Unit

If your injury is not serious and the surgery is closed you can attend a minor injury unit. Again it is better to telephone first because the opening hours can vary and the type of injuries they are able to treat can vary. The nearest minor injury units are:

Honiton Hospital Marlpits Road Honiton Devon EX14 2DE Telephone: 01404 540540	Tiverton and District Hospital Kennedy Way Tiverton EX16 6NT Telephone: 01884 235400
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