

# Winter Wellness

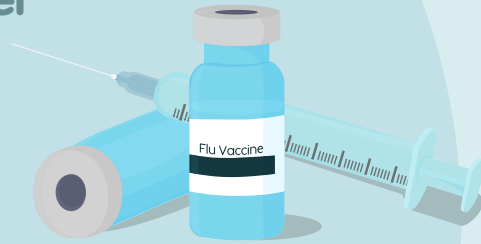
The winter months bring with them a range of health issues. The weather is colder, the days are shorter, and there is also a higher chance you may catch a cold, or other winter bug.



Your guide to  
staying warm  
and well this  
winter

## COVID-19, flu, and other respiratory infections

Respiratory infections, such as colds, flu, and COVID-19, are common at this time of year. Here's how you can keep safe.



### Winter jabs

Vaccines offer the best defence against flu and COVID-19. The vaccines won't stop you catching the viruses, but they make you much less ill, and reduce the spread.

NHS COVID-19 boosters are now available for people over 50 and those at higher risk. It's also not too late to get your first or second dose if you haven't had them.

If you are eligible for a booster, you will be contacted by the NHS when it is your turn to make an appointment.

Please get your flu jab if you are eligible. They are available at your GP practice and community pharmacies.

It is safe to have the COVID-19 and flu vaccinations at the same time, but this may not always be possible. You can book each jab as soon as you are invited.

### Hygiene

Wash your hands, and clean the surfaces in your home or office regularly.

### Feeling unwell?

Stay at home where possible or keep your distance from others if you feel unwell, to stop the spread of germs.

### Fresh air

If meeting indoors, a supply of fresh air can help to stop the spread of respiratory infections. However, this may not always be possible in winter, as it may be too cold to open a window or door.

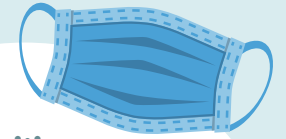


## Choosing the right care this winter

Hospitals, GP practices, and other healthcare services can get very busy in winter. Getting the right care at the right time is important to keep well. Here is a guide to what services can help you, and when you should use them.

Only call 999 or go to A&E in serious or life-threatening situations.

If you need health advice quickly, but it's not an emergency, you can speak to a pharmacist. They can help with advice, and over the counter remedies if possible.



### Visiting healthcare appointments and hospitals

You must wear a face covering if you attend a healthcare appointment or if you are visiting someone in hospital.

You must not visit someone in hospital if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a cough, cold, or sore throat.

When GP practices are closed, support for urgent same day health requirements can be accessed through GP Care Wakefield:

- **Monday to Friday 5pm – 9.30pm**
- **Saturdays 9am - 5pm**
- **Sundays 9am - 3pm**

Please call your usual practice number and you will be redirected to the service.

For urgent, non-life-threatening illnesses or injuries, King Street Walk In Centre in Wakefield is open from 10am to 10pm every day including bank holidays. You can call them on **01924 882350**.

Pontefract Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) is available and open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. To book an appointment, please ring NHS **111**.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can help if you have an urgent medical problem and are unsure of where to get help. Go to **111.nhs.uk** (for people aged 5 and over only) or call **111**.

## Keep warm, keep well

Living in a cold home can be very bad for your health. There are more colds and flu viruses circulating during the colder months and a cold home could make your symptoms worse. For some people, a cold home can increase the chances of having a heart attacks, stroke, pneumonia, depression or low moods.

### What temperature should my house be?

- **18 degrees** for healthy and active people under 65.
- **20 degrees** for people over 65, young children and babies or people with an existing illness.

## Top tips for keeping warm and well

- You can use a hot-water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm while you are in bed, but do NOT use both at the same time.
- Eat well. Food is energy, which helps to keep your body warm. Try to have hot meals and drinks.
- Wrap up warm. A few thin layers of clothing will keep you warmer than one thick layer. Shawls or blankets will help when sitting.
- If you can, keep active round the house. This will help to keep your joints moving and keep you warm.
- Check in on your friends, family and neighbours to make sure they are keeping warm and well.

## Warm spaces

Warm Spaces are places in your local community where people can gather for free in a warm, safe, welcoming place and enjoy a hot drink or food and some company.

Everyone has a right to be warm, so expect a warm welcome from the staff and volunteers when you visit.

To find your local Warm Space and the opening times visit [www.wakefield.gov.uk/more-money-in-my-pocket/warm-spaces](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/more-money-in-my-pocket/warm-spaces)

## Worried about the cost of bills or being able to keep your home warm?

You can find local support and advice on housing, energy bills and insulation, health, money and benefits by visiting [www.wakefieldcouncil.com/costofliving](http://www.wakefieldcouncil.com/costofliving)

You might be eligible for the Healthy Housing scheme if you privately rent or own your home and need support with cold and damp, high fuel bills, a broken heating or hot water system or poor and hazardous housing conditions. Visit [www.wakefield.gov.uk/housing/healthy-housing](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/housing/healthy-housing) for more information.



## Get ready for winter

To prepare for winter it's a good idea to:

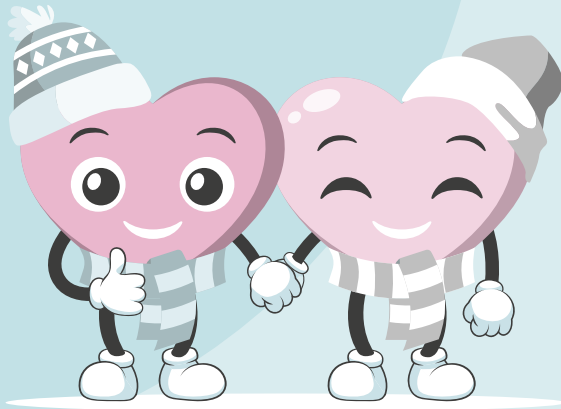
- Stock up your cupboards with tinned goods and household items, so that you are not caught out by bad weather.
- Top up your credit and pre-payment meters. If you are worried about the cost of your energy bills, please visit [www.wakefield.gov.uk/more-money-in-my-pocket](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/more-money-in-my-pocket)
- If you take regular medication, order more from your GP when you are down to your last seven days' supply. Many pharmacies can deliver to your home – why not give your local pharmacy a call to check? Please remember when taking any medicines to follow the advice of the doctor, nurse or pharmacist. When using medicine bought over the counter, always read the instructions and never go over the suggested dose.

## Mental health support

One in four adults experience at least one mental health problem in any one year. If you, or a loved one, is experiencing mental health problems, getting help and support is essential.

Signs to look out for if you think someone may be struggling with low mood or anxiety:

- continuous low mood or sadness
- feeling hopeless and helpless
- feeling bad about yourself
- feeling tearful
- feeling guilt-ridden
- feeling irritable
- having no interest in things
- finding it difficult to make decisions
- not getting any enjoyment out of life
- feeling anxious or worried
- having thoughts of harming yourself



By taking a few simple steps we can all improve our mental wellbeing:

**Connect** - spending time with others can improve your wellbeing; in person, virtually or through a call or text.

**Take notice** - being aware of the present moment, your body, and your surroundings is part of a technique called mindfulness, which can boost your mood.

**Be active** - take part in activities including crafts, talking about memories, and physical activity such as walking.

If you give them a try, you may feel happier, more positive and able to get the most from life.

There is lots to do across the district, you can find out more here [www.wakefield.gov.uk/health-care-and-advice/public-health/winter-wellness-out-and-about](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/health-care-and-advice/public-health/winter-wellness-out-and-about)

## How to help

Please check in on family, neighbours and friends to make sure they are feeling happy and well and have everything they need. A friendly face could make a difference to their day. Please help them to find support if you are worried about them.

If your life  
or another's is  
in immediate  
danger call 999

## Mental Health Services

- If you feel that you are struggling, you can speak to your GP.
- **Live Well Wakefield** provides information, advice and support in coping with everyday life: **01924 255363**.
- **Age UK's** Wraparound service helps older people living with anxiety, depression, or social anxiety connect with someone who they can talk to for low level support: **01977 552114**.
- **Spectrum People** support any individual of any age experiencing mental health issues: **07720 899781**.
- **Carers Wakefield and District** support unpaid adult carers who give their time and energy to look after a family member or friend who needs support due to illness or a disability: **01924 305544**.
- **Turning Point Talking Therapies Wakefield** have a wide range of services you can access, including webinars and therapy: **01924 234860**.
- **Wakefield Safe Space** helps people who are experiencing a mental health crisis to find support and help. Please note you must be registered with a Wakefield GP to access the service: **07776 962815**.
- **Samaritans** can offer support and advice if you or a loved one is feeling low. Call **116 123** to speak to one of their fully trained volunteers.

For more winter wellness help and advice please visit [www.wakefieldcouncil.com/winter-wellness](http://www.wakefieldcouncil.com/winter-wellness)

## Useful winter contacts

King Street  
Walk-in Centre **01924 882350**

NHS non-emergency help **111**

Samaritans **116 123**

Snowbell Severe  
Weather Responders **01977 552114**

A service which is activated during severe winter weather to support older people and their carers

Wakefield Council  
Home Energy team **01924 305887**

Short-term Emergency  
Financial Help **0345 8 506 506**

Wakefield Council  
Customer Services **0345 8 506 506**

Wakefield Council  
Social Care Direct **0345 8 503 503**

