

Choosing the right care



Self-care

Many illnesses and symptoms can be treated at home. It's also important to have a stocked up first-aid kit for minor injuries such as cuts and burns.



Pharmacy

Pharmacists are qualified experts who provide advice and information on medicines and your health.



healthdirect

The healthdirect helpline 1800 022 222 can assist you 24/7 with free health advice from a registered nurse.



GP (doctor)

When you feel unwell, your GP can help you - with a broad range of health issues and throughout your life.



Emergency (000)

If you are seriously sick or injured, call an ambulance on **triple zero (000)** or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

For health advice 24 hours a day, call **1800 022 222** or visit **healthdirect.gov.au**

If you need assistance in another language, call **131 450**

Need health advice?
Make the call

 **1800 022 222**

You can get more health
information from our website
healthdirect.gov.au

healthdirect
Australia

Funded by Australian government
health departments

healthdirect

What care do I need?



It's important to know how to find the
right health service at the right time

There are many types of healthcare service and information available in Australia. It's important to know how to find the right service at the right time.



Online health information

If you need information about a health problem, you can find high quality information online. Make sure you only use information from well-known organisations, such as charities or government departments. Always check with your GP if you're not sure about something.

healthdirect is a government-owned health advice and information service. It provides safe and relevant Australian health information and links to other sources that you can trust. Visit our website healthdirect.gov.au.



Calling the healthdirect helpline

If you or a family member have a health concern and don't know what to do, you can call the free healthdirect helpline on 1800 022 222 to speak to a registered nurse. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you need assistance in another language, call 131 450.



When to see your GP

A general practitioner (GP) is the first person you usually go to if you have a health problem. They will coordinate your healthcare and may refer you to other doctors or health professionals if necessary. In Australia, your family doctor is called your GP.



When to see your pharmacist

Pharmacists are qualified experts who provide advice and information on medicines and your health. Visit your pharmacist for advice about minor illnesses or injuries.

If your doctor gives you a prescription (sometimes called a script) for medicine, you can buy it from a pharmacist.

Pharmacists also sell over the counter medicines and provide a range of services including advice, health checks and some vaccinations.



Calling an ambulance

If your injury or illness is serious and urgent, call an ambulance on triple zero (000).



Visiting an emergency department

Many hospitals in Australia have emergency departments. These are open 24 hours a day and provide emergency treatment for people who have serious illnesses or injuries that need to be treated quickly. If you have a minor illness or injury, it is better to see your GP or visit a pharmacist.

Help and resources for using health services

How to find health services

You can find local GPs and other health services using healthdirect's service finder on healthdirect.gov.au or download healthdirect's app.

You can also ask your GP or pharmacist for advice on finding health services in your area.

Need an interpreter?

If English is not your first language, you can find an interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National). You can speak to an interpreter immediately by calling 131 450. The service is free and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If it is an emergency, always call triple zero (000) first. The 000 operator will call TIS National and connect you with an interpreter.

Your doctor, pharmacist or hospital can also arrange an interpreter for you.



GP after-hours services

After-hours services provide care if you need to see someone after your GP or pharmacist has closed. Ask your regular GP if they offer after-hours services, and what you should do if you get sick after they have closed.

You can call healthdirect's after hours GP helpline and a registered nurse will assess you. The nurse may offer you a call back from a GP. They can also help you find after-hours services in your area. Call 1800 022 222.