

What to do if your child is unwell



We know it's worrying when your child is unwell

Fortunately, you can treat most illnesses at home with expert advice from this booklet and your home health kit essentials.



Dr. Sooraj Natarajan,
Clinical Director for Children
and Young People in Mid
and South Essex.



Sign up for our **FREE** newsletter to get the latest information on services and tools to support family health and wellbeing in Essex.

Your home health kit essentials

Thermometer
to check
temperatures



Child's paracetamol
for headaches and
temperatures



Antiseptic cream
to keep germs
out of cuts



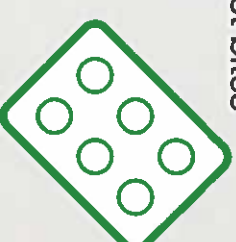
Plasters
to protect cuts and
scratches



Olive oil
to use as ear drops
for ear ache



Antihistamines
for hayfever, allergies
and insect bites



The **Boloh Helpline** offers free, confidential advice in multiple languages to help support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children, young people and their families. Go to helpline.barnardos.org.uk or call 0800 151 2605






What to do if your child has a cough, cold or virus

Coughs, colds, or viruses are common among young children and may result in your child experiencing breathing difficulties.





Treat at home

Don't worry; it can take 2-3 weeks for children to get better. Treat your child at home if they are:

-  Taking in more than half of normal feeds
- &**  Making wet nappies
- or**  Their high temperature improves with Paracetamol and lasts less than 5 days.

Call 111

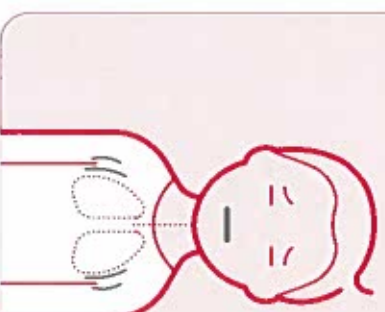
If symptoms get worse, then it's time to ask for help. Call 111 as your first point of contact if your child is:

-  Taking in less than half of normal feeds
- or**  Their temperature is higher than 38 °C and lasts more than 5 days.

Visit A&E

The Emergency Department is for life-threatening symptoms. Call 999 or go to Accident & Emergency when your child has:

- Long pauses between breathing
- or** Severe difficulties or is gasping for breath
- or** Their tongue or lips go blue on white skin, or grey or white on brown or black skin.



If you're worried your child has coronavirus, visit the NHS website for advice: [nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/)

What to do if your child has a fever



Children often get fevers when their bodies are fighting infections. If they are not upset, there is no need to worry.

Treat at home

Treat them at home with paracetamol if:



Your child is older than 3 months (following the age recommended dose on the packaging)

&



Their high temperature improves with paracetamol and lasts less than 5 days.

Call 111

If symptoms get worse, then it's time to ask for help. Call 111 as your first point of contact if:



Your child is less than 3 months old

or



Their temperature is higher than 38 °C and lasts more than 5 days.

Visit A&E

The Emergency Department is for life-threatening symptoms. Only call 999 or go to Accident & Emergency if your child's fever also includes:



Blue or blotchy skin

or

Very fast breathing

or

A rash that doesn't disappear when pressed

or

A fit or seizure

or

They are very sleepy and difficult to wake up.

What to do if your child has vomiting and/or diarrhoea



These symptoms are very common in children and are usually because of a 'tummy bug'. Vomiting will normally stop in 1-2 days and diarrhoea in 5-7 days.

Treat at home

Keep your child at home and encourage:



Regular small sips of drink



Eating when they can
Smaller amounts of food more often or using a different feeding position, if needed.

Call 111

If symptoms get worse or last longer than expected, then it's time to ask for help. Call 111 as your first point of contact if your child has:



Not passed urine in 12-18 hours

OR



Blood in their diarrhoea or it lasts 7+ days

OR



Been vomiting for more than 2 days.

Visit A&E

The Emergency Department is for life-threatening symptoms. Only call 999 or go to Accident & Emergency if your child has:



Bright yellow, green or brown vomit

OR

Blood in their vomit

OR

Swallowed something poisonous

OR

A stiff neck and pain when looking at a bright light

OR

A sudden severe headache or stomach pain.

What to do if your child has a head injury



Children often bump their heads. Afterwards, it is normal for them to have a slight headache, feel sick for a couple of days, or be a little sleepy.

Treat at home

Monitor your child at home for 24 hours for any change in symptoms. Treat with:



An ice-pack on the injury for short intervals (e.g. 10 minutes, once an hour)



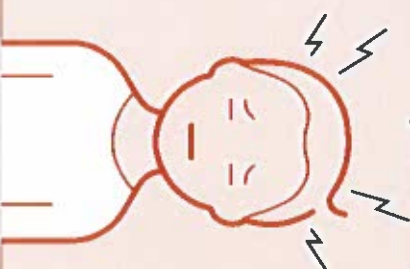
Paracetamol (following the age recommended dose on the packaging)



Rest and avoid rough play and sports.

Call 111

If symptoms get worse or last longer than two weeks, then it's time to ask for help. Call 111 as your first point of contact if your child has:



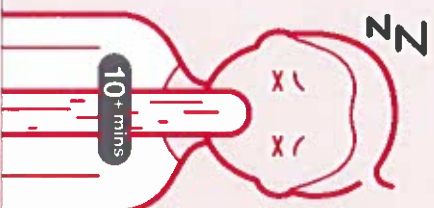
Developed a persistent headache that doesn't go away (despite being given paracetamol)

or

Developed a worsening headache.

Visit A&E

The Emergency Department is for life-threatening symptoms. Only call 999 or go to Accident & Emergency if your child:



Was knocked unconscious

or

Vomits repeatedly i.e. more than twice (within 10 minutes between each vomit)

or

Shows a significant change in behaviour, for example, restlessness or memory problems.

What to do if you are worried about your child's wellbeing

It's normal for children to sometimes feel low, angry or anxious. As a parent or carer, you're likely to spot any significant or long-lasting changes in your child's emotions or behaviour.

Things to look out for include:

Frequent difficulty in sleeping

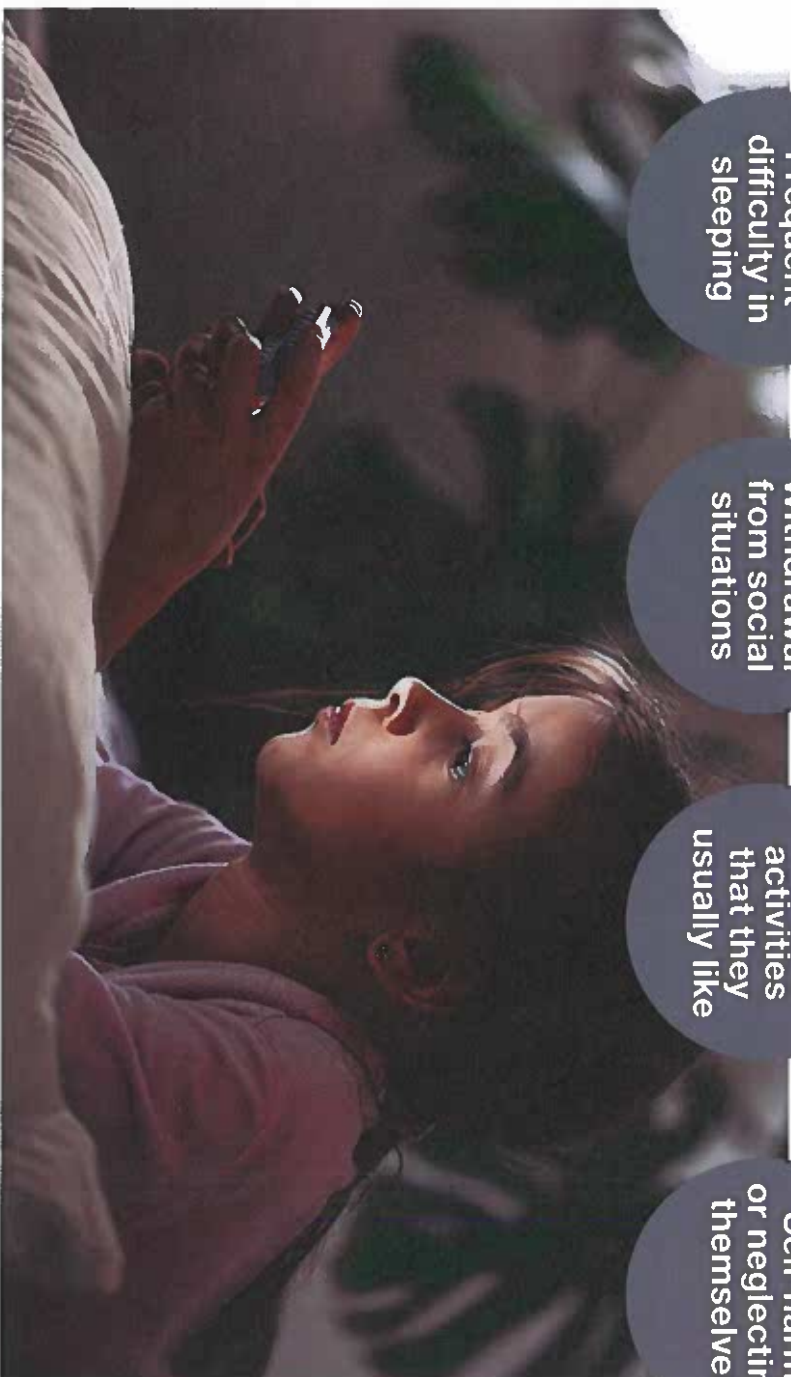
Withdrawal from social situations

Avoiding activities that they usually like

Self-harm or neglecting themselves

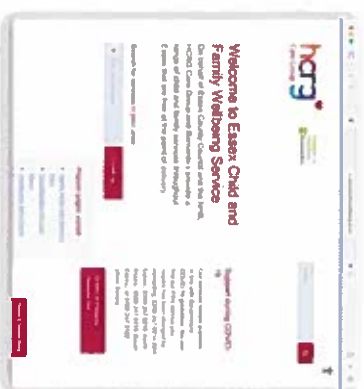


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Further information

Use the links below from the Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership to access further advice on child health:



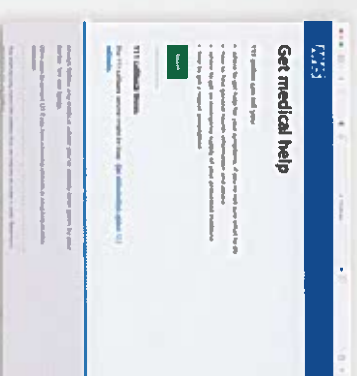
Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/



Southend Health Visitors and School Nurses Service
southend.gov.uk/homepage/391/health-visitors-and-school-nurses



Thurrock 0-19 Brighter Futures Healthy Families service & Children's Centres
nelft.nhs.uk/services-thurrock-brighter-futures-healthy-families/



For urgent or long-lasting medical problems, the NHS 111 service provides:

- Access to local healthcare services
- Medication options
- Scheduling of face-to-face appointments
- Guidance on when to access the emergency services.

Their online services also provide advice for children over 5. Go to 111.nhs.uk

CHILDREN'S HEALTH MATTERS



Mid and South Essex
Health and Care
Partnership

The Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership (HCP) is a partnership of local health and care services across mid and south Essex.

msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk

