



Parkside Medical Practice

NHS WALSALL

APRIL 2019

Issue 63

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What is the minor ailment scheme?

The minor ailment scheme is designed to enable people with minor health conditions to access medicines and advice they would otherwise visit their doctor for.

It allows patients to see a qualified health professional at a convenient and accessible location within their community, and means patients do not need to wait for a GP appointment or queue up for a valuable A&E slot with a non-urgent condition.

Childhood ailments that may be treated under the scheme include:

[colds/coughs](#)

[diarrhoea](#)

[earache](#)

[hay fever](#)

[head lice](#)

[nappy rash](#)

[sore throat](#)

[teething](#)

If the patient being treated is exempt from paying prescription charges – because they're under 16 or over 60, for example, or they have a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC) – you don't have to pay for the medicine.

Important points about the minor ailment scheme

There are a number of important points that have not been made clear by the media:

- The minor ailment scheme is not a national scheme. It is not possible to say exactly which medical conditions are covered because this will vary depending on the location and the particular service.
- The scheme is designed to offer medication to meet an acute need. It is not an opportunity for parents to stock up on free children's medications – if a pharmacist thinks someone is trying to abuse the system, they can refuse any request for treatment at their discretion.
- The pharmacist has no obligation to provide branded medication such as Calpol. If there is a cheaper generic version available that is known to be equally effective, it is likely that will be provided instead.