

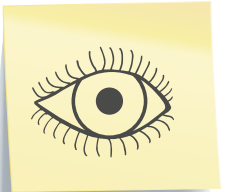
# Common childhood health issues



## Head lice

Head lice are tiny insects that live in hair. They are a common problem. The only

way to be sure someone has head lice is by finding live lice or eggs. You can do this by combing their hair with a special detection comb, which can be purchased at a pharmacy. Although largely harmless, they can be irritating and live in the hair for a long time. You don't need to see your GP. Your pharmacist will be able to recommend treatment or you can remove them with a special fine-toothed comb.



## Conjunctivitis

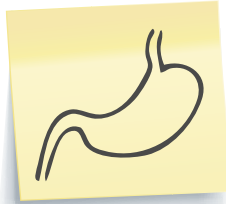
Treatment isn't usually needed for conjunctivitis, because the symptoms often

clear up within a couple of weeks. Washing your hands regularly and not sharing pillows or towels will help prevent it spreading.

Public Health England advises that children don't need to stay away from school if they have conjunctivitis, unless they are feeling particularly unwell.

## Be Antibiotic Aware

Antibiotics will have no effect on viruses such as colds and flu, most sore throats, and may do more harm than good. Taking antibiotics when they are not needed increases the risk of getting an infection later that resists antibiotic treatment.



## Upset tummy

A stomach ache, including stomach cramps or abdominal pain, doesn't usually last long and isn't

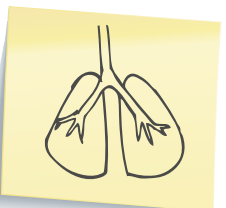
usually caused by anything serious. Your pharmacist can give advice and suggest any medication which may be required, such as oral rehydration. If your child has diarrhoea, most cases will clear up after a few days without treatment, and you may not need to take them to the GP. They should drink plenty of fluids – frequent small sips of water – until it passes.



## Threadworm

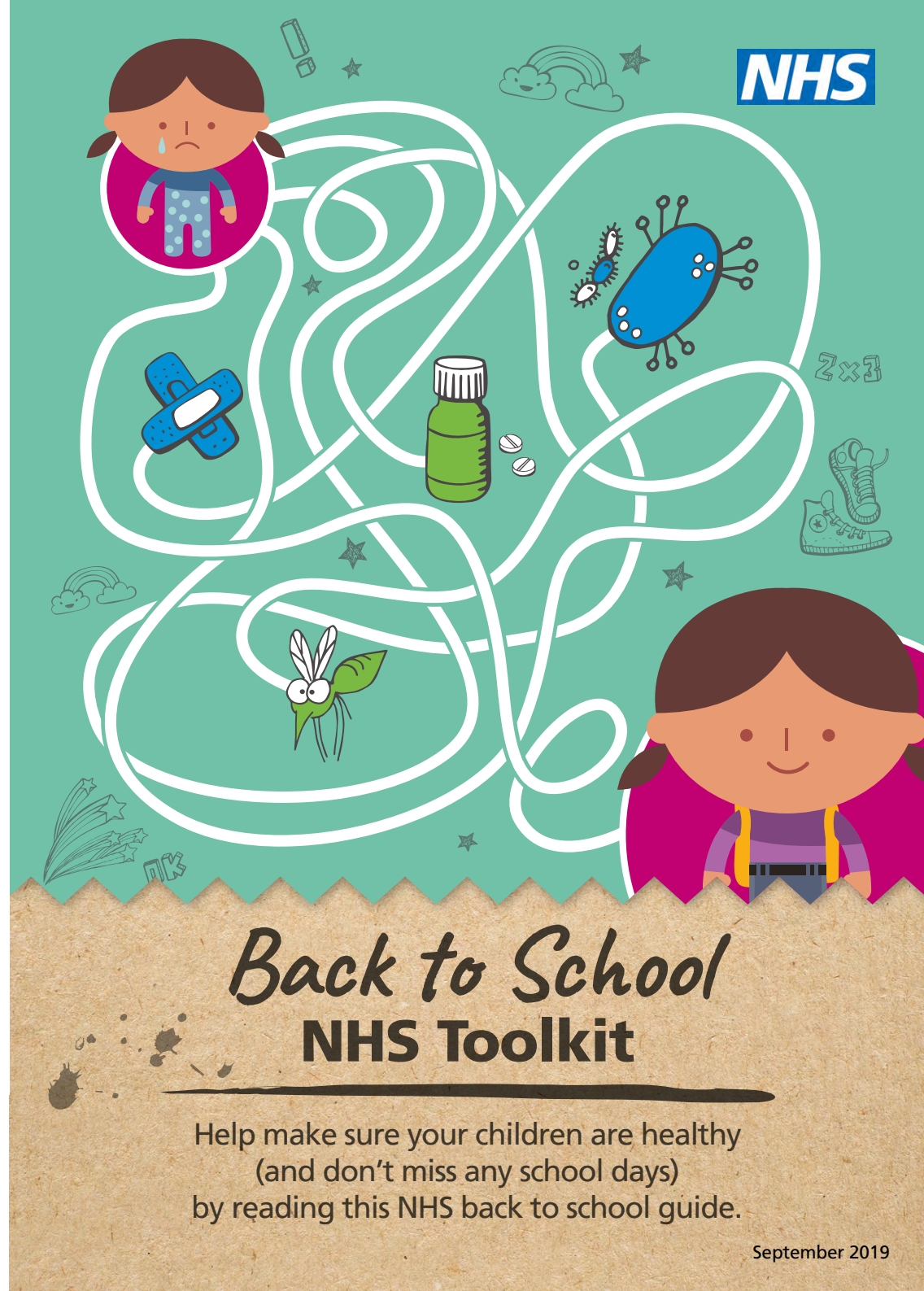
Threadworms, also known as pinworms, are tiny parasitic worms that infect the large intestine

or numans. They are common in children under the age of 10. If you think you or your child may have threadworms, you can usually treat the infection yourself with medication available at pharmacies without a prescription. However, pregnant women must not buy medication from a pharmacy. They should speak to their GP or call NHS 111.



## Asthma?

Make sure your child has an inhaler, knows where it is, and knows how and when to use it.



**NHS**

# Back to School NHS Toolkit

Help make sure your children are healthy  
(and don't miss any school days)  
by reading this NHS back to school guide.

September 2019

# Things you should have at home

Your GP, nurse or pharmacist will not generally give you a prescription for medicines for a range of common childhood illnesses.

Instead, these 'over the counter' medicines are available to buy in a pharmacy or supermarket in your local community. The team of health professionals at your local pharmacy can offer help and clinical advice to manage minor health concerns and if your symptoms suggest it's more serious, they'll ensure you get the care you need.

School staff don't need a prescription for over the counter medication to be given to your child while at school – they only need parental agreement.



## What to do when the little ones are ill

**Many minor health issues can be dealt with at home or by seeing a pharmacist.**

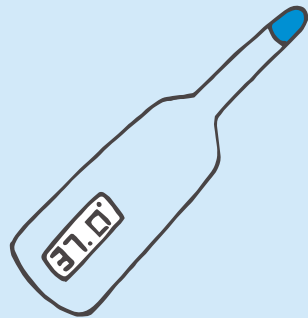
The local NHS has a website and app which helps people find the right place to go for treatment. It also has a lot of useful advice and will tell you where the nearest pharmacy is and whether it is open.

Visit [www.healthhelpnow.nhs.uk](http://www.healthhelpnow.nhs.uk) or download it to your phone.



## Life-threatening emergency?

If the illness or injury is life-threatening, including a rash that doesn't go away when pressed with a glass, don't hesitate to call 999 straight away.



### Thermometer – for fevers

Digital and forehead thermometers are available for checking your child's temperature. As a general rule, in children, a temperature of over 37.5C (99.5F) is a fever. If your child does have a fever there are various things that you can do to bring it down: Give children's paracetamol (for children three months and over), encourage your child to drink extra fluids, use their favourite cool drink, or ice lollies. Make sure your child is not wearing too many clothes – a vest and nappy or pants is enough if the house is at a normal temperature. Reduce the night-time bedding to a light cotton sheet only. Make sure your child is up to date with immunisations.

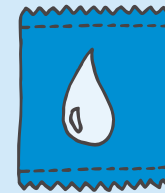


### Simple pain killers

Ask your pharmacist for advice. Paracetamol suitable for children can be bought from a supermarket or pharmacist. There is no need to ask your GP for a prescription.

### Antihistamines

These are medicines often used to relieve symptoms of allergies, such as hay fever. Speak to your pharmacist about what is suitable for your child. You do not need a prescription.



### Oral rehydration sachets

For diarrhoea. Ones that can be dissolved in water are the most suitable products for children. These replace the salt and water lost in the diarrhoea.

### Plasters for cuts and grazes

Most cuts and grazes are minor and can be easily treated at home. When the wound has stopped bleeding, wash it under tap water. Avoid using antiseptic as it may damage the skin and slow healing. Pat it dry and apply a plaster. Minor wounds should start to heal within a few days. Use Health Help Now or call NHS 111 if you need further advice.

