

Compliments, comments & complaints

If you'd like to compliment, comment or complain about our service please contact our Customer Services Department:

Customer Services Department

Livewell Southwest
Room AF3, Local Care Centre
200 Mount Gould Road
Plymouth
PL4 7PY

Tel: 01752 435201

Email: customerservicespch@nhs.net

Contact details

The Minor Injuries Units are open every day of the year, including Bank Holidays.

Minor Injuries Unit Cumberland Centre

Damerel Close
Plymouth
PL1 4JZ

Tel: 01752 434390

Opening times: 8:30am - 9pm

Minor Injuries Unit South Hams Hospital

Plymouth Road
Kingsbridge
TQ7 1AT

Tel: 01548 852349

Opening times: 9am - 5pm

Minor Injuries Unit Tavistock Hospital

Spring Hill
Tavistock
PL19 8LD

Tel: 01822 612233

Opening times: 8am - 10pm

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 Livewell Southwest

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Asthma Information & Advice



Minor Injuries Unit

Cumberland Centre
South Hams Hospital
Tavistock Hospital

What is asthma?

Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It is one of the most common long-term diseases in adults and children.

Asthma causes wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing at night or early in the morning. If you have asthma, you have it all the time, but you will have asthma attacks only when something bothers your lungs.

In most cases we don't know what causes asthma, but we know that if someone in your family has asthma, you are more likely to have it.

What is an asthma attack?

An attack may include coughing, chest tightness, wheezing, and trouble breathing. The attack happens in your body's airways, which are the paths that carry air to your lungs. As the air moves through your lungs, the airways become smaller, like the branches of a tree are smaller than the trunk.

During an asthma attack, the sides of the airways in your lungs swell and the airways shrink. Less air gets in and out and mucus that your body makes clogs up the airways even more.

What causes an asthma attack?

An asthma attack can happen when you are exposed to 'asthma triggers'. Your triggers can be very different from those of someone else with asthma. Know your triggers and learn to avoid them. Watch out for an attack when you can't avoid the triggers. Some of the most common triggers are:

Smoke or smoking - especially in adolescents

Dust mites

Air pollution / mould

Pets / cockroach allergen

Other triggers such as colds / physical exercise.

Can I control my asthma?

Yes, you can - by knowing the warning signs of an asthma attack, staying away from things that cause an attack, and following your GP's advice.

When you control your asthma:

- You won't have symptoms such as wheezing or coughing
- You'll sleep better
- You won't miss work or school
- You can take part in all physical activities
- You won't have to go to hospital

How is asthma treated?

Everyone with asthma does not take the same medicine. Some people have inhalers - quick relief (control of the symptoms asthma) and long-term control that are prescribed by your doctor.

Sometimes these are not enough to manage your attack. If you need your quick relief inhaler more and more, and it is not helping your asthma, you will need to go to your local hospital.

Go to your local hospital's Emergency Department if you are unable to manage your wheezing, coughing, chest tightness or difficulty in breathing.