



British Healthcare

Healthcare in the United Kingdom is both public and private. Every British citizen has access to the public healthcare service, called the National Health Service (NHS). A few people choose private healthcare, but most Brits choose free public healthcare instead.

Brits are very proud of their free healthcare and the service is generally very good. If you feel ill and want to see a doctor, you can easily book an appointment. Every Brit must register with their local doctor. Each city and town has many different doctor's but small villages only have one doctor's. All your healthcare details will be stored with your doctor. Each person has a specific doctor called a general practitioner (GP), so when you book an appointment you will always see the same doctor. If you have any minor problems, you can book your appointment and your doctor will provide you with treatment.

If you receive treatment at the doctor's, this is free. For example, a bandage, a plaster or painkillers. If you need additional medication this is free if you are; under 16 years old, 16-18 years and in full-time education, older than 60 years old, pregnant or are receiving financial support from the government. If you do not fit these categories, you must pay £9.00 for each prescription. Some general medications, such as contraceptives, are always free for everybody.

If you have a medical emergency, you can go to the hospital and this is free. Any treatment and medication inside a hospital is free.

Dentist's are also on the NHS. Dentist's are free if you receive free medication on the NHS. If not, you pay around £20.00 for an appointment with your dentist. If you need medication or special treatments from your dentist, this costs extra.

ACTIVITY

Answer these reading comprehension questions with as much detail as possible.

- 1) Who has access to the free NHS in the UK?
- 2) How can Brits get an appointment with their local doctor?
- 3) What is a GP?
- 4) Who receives free medication/treatment?
- 5) How much does the hospital cost in the UK?
- 6) In which situations do you need to pay to see a dentist?