

SMART TRIAGE

Patient FAQ

Common questions about requesting care online

Our practice uses **Smart Triage by Rapid Health** to help patients access the right care, from the right person, at the right time.

You can submit a medical request online without waiting on the phone. Smart Triage asks some questions about your problem and helps us understand **what care you need and how quickly you need it**.

Most patients can complete a medical request online in around **3–4 minutes**.

Why is the practice using Smart Triage?

We want to make it easier for patients to access care and make sure people are seen according to their clinical needs.

Smart Triage helps us understand what you need before deciding the most appropriate next step. This could be an appointment with a GP or another member of our healthcare team, or advice about another appropriate service.

It also means you don't have to wait on the phone just to request help.

How do I submit a medical request?

Visit our practice website and select the option to **Book an appointment / contact us online** or open the NHS App and go to **Book an appointment > Ask about a health problem** [if enabled by your practice].

You can complete the request on a smartphone, tablet or computer. You don't need to create a Rapid Health account. Most patients complete the online medical request in around **3–4 minutes**.

What happens when I submit my request?

Smart Triage will ask you questions about your symptoms to help determine what care you need and how quickly you need it.

Depending on your needs and the services available at the practice, you may:

- be offered a suitable appointment to book
- have your request sent to the practice team for review
- be directed to another appropriate service
- be advised to seek urgent or emergency care

You'll be told what happens next when you complete your request.

Will I always be offered an appointment?

Not necessarily. The appropriate next step depends on your clinical needs. If an appropriate appointment is available, you may be able to choose and book it straight away.

If a suitable appointment isn't available, or your request needs further review, it can be sent to the practice team instead.

Can I still see a GP?

Yes. Smart Triage isn't designed to stop patients seeing a GP. It helps us identify what care you need.

If a GP is the appropriate person to help you, you can still receive GP care. In other cases, another member of our healthcare team may be better placed to help with your problem.

Can I still telephone the practice?

Yes. If you're able to submit your request online, we'd encourage you to do so. It's usually quicker and means you don't need to wait on the phone.

If you can't use the online service or need additional help, please call us. A member of our reception team can help you and, where appropriate, complete the request with you over the phone.

Completing a request with reception usually takes around **5–10 minutes**, so submitting it yourself online will normally be quicker.

What if I'm not confident using the internet or don't have access to a smartphone or computer?

You won't be prevented from accessing care because you can't use Smart Triage online.

Please contact the practice and our reception team will help you.

Why does Smart Triage ask me questions about my symptoms?

Your answers help us understand your problem, how quickly you may need care and what type of healthcare professional may be appropriate.

The questions you see will depend on the problem you're experiencing. Some may be detailed or personal because they're important in helping determine the safest and most appropriate next step.

Please answer the questions as accurately as you can.

Does Smart Triage decide how urgently I need care?

Smart Triage uses the information you provide to assess how quickly you may need care.

This helps the practice prioritise patients according to their clinical needs, rather than simply according to who contacts the practice first.

Why haven't I been offered an appointment?

Being unable to book an appointment immediately doesn't mean your request has been ignored.

There may not currently be a suitable appointment available for your particular needs, or your request may need to be reviewed by the practice team first.

Where appropriate, your request will be sent to the practice so we can decide what should happen next.

Can I choose which appointment I want?

If Smart Triage can offer you an appointment, you'll be shown suitable appointments that are available for your particular needs.

The appointments you're offered will therefore depend on **what care you need, how quickly you need it and what is available at the practice.**

What happens if my problem is urgent?

Smart Triage uses your answers to help identify how urgently you may need care.

If you need urgent care from the practice, it will look for an appropriate appointment within the required timeframe, or your request may be sent to the practice team.

If your answers indicate that you may need emergency care instead, you'll be advised what to do next.

Can I use Smart Triage in an emergency?

No. Smart Triage is not an emergency service.

If you or someone else is seriously ill or in immediate danger, call **999** or attend **A&E**.

If the answers you provide indicate that you may need emergency care, Smart Triage will advise what to do.

Can I submit a request for my child?

Yes. A parent or guardian can submit a medical request for a child under 16.

Requests for children are handled differently from adult requests and will be reviewed by the practice before the appropriate next step is confirmed.

Can someone help me complete my request?

Yes. If you need help, someone you trust can assist you with completing the online request.

Please make sure the information provided about your symptoms is accurate.

If you don't have anyone who can help, contact the practice and our reception team can support you.

Can I use Smart Triage for a follow-up appointment?

The **Adult medical request** form is primarily designed for **new medical problems**.

If you've already spoken to a clinician and have been asked to arrange a follow-up, please follow the instructions they gave you or contact the practice.

What should I do about prescriptions, sick notes or other administrative requests?

You don't need to complete a medical request for an administrative query.

Please select the appropriate **Questions and admin** option for things such as sick notes, medication queries, updating your details and other administrative requests.

What shouldn't I use the medical request form for?

The medical request form is primarily for new medical problems. It isn't normally the right route for routine services such as:

- blood tests
- cervical screening
- vaccinations or injections
- dressings
- medication reviews
- long-term condition reviews
- postnatal appointments or baby checks
- other planned or routine nursing appointments

Please use the appropriate option on our website or contact the practice if you're unsure.

Why do you ask for my email address?

Your email address helps us communicate with you and may be needed if Smart Triage is able to offer you an appointment to book.

Please make sure the email address you provide is correct and check your inbox after submitting your request.

What if I don't have an email address?

You can still access care.

Please contact the practice if you don't have an email address or need help submitting your request.

Do I need to call after submitting my request?

No. Once you've successfully submitted your request, you don't need to telephone the practice to tell us you've submitted it.

If your request needs to be reviewed, the practice will contact you about the next step.

Is Smart Triage replacing doctors or receptionists?

No. Smart Triage helps us understand what you need and how quickly you need it. Our GPs, clinicians, receptionists and other members of the practice team remain responsible for providing and supporting your care.

The aim is to make it easier to get you to **the right care, from the right person, at the right time.**

If you're ever unsure what to do, please contact the practice — our team is happy to help.