

## Am I sick, Dr Google?

### Dr Morton's® reveals the UK's Top 10 medical searches *Googled* before we call the GP

- ***Fibromyalgia* is the UK's most searched condition with two million searches in 2015**
- ***Chickenpox* and *Shingles*, both viruses, are amongst the most common words searched**
- **Mental health worries such as *Depression* and *Anxiety* feature in the top 10**
- **Worried women Google most, with *Women's Health* highest sought group category**

Fibromyalgia is 2015's top trending condition which people in the UK *Googled* before calling a GP, according to a study carried out by [Dr Morton's – the medical helpline®](#).

In a surprise result, fibromyalgia has been typed on average 165,000 times a month in the UK during 2015. It is a long term condition that causes pain all over the body and many people are unaware they have it as it is difficult to diagnose. Symptoms including pain and tenderness often with severe tiredness and problems with sleep are most common in women particularly. The NHS estimates that up to one in 20 of us may have the condition to some degree. With two million UK searches a year, it is a big topic.

Closely following fibromyalgia are the common viruses chickenpox (at 2) and shingles (at 3). Chickenpox and shingles are both caused by the same virus: the varicella-zoster virus, which typically only strikes once in a lifetime. In some people who have had chickenpox, the virus can become active again later in life and cause shingles. Shingles cannot be caught from someone else. However, a person can catch chickenpox from someone with shingles.

Mental health awareness continues to rise and this is illustrated with depression (at 6) and anxiety (at 10) having a combined total of more than 200,000 UK searches each month.

**The results of a big data study by online doctor service [Dr Morton's – the medical helpline®](#), published today, reveal the Top 10 health searches in the UK over the last year were:**

1. **Fibromyalgia**
2. **Chicken pox**
3. **Shingles**
4. **Diarrhea**
5. **Pneumonia**
6. **Depression**
7. **Diabetes**
8. **Scarlet Fever**
9. **Tonsillitis**
10. **Anxiety**

The most searched group categories are as follows:

1. **Women's health**
2. **Stomach related problems – like diarrhoea**
3. **Skin rashes**
4. **Colds coughs and flu**
5. **Anxiety, stress and emotional health issues**

Women's Health topping the group category will not come as a surprise to many doctors because it is recognised that more than 70 per cent of patients who walk through the door of GP surgeries are women. Dr Morton's will be releasing the list of the most googled women's health issues in 2015 on 30 December 2015.

Dr Karen Morton, Founder and Medical Director of [Dr Morton's – the medical helpline](#)<sup>®</sup> and one of the UK's leading gynaecologists says:

*"A medical search on the internet imparts a sense of empowerment and worry in equal measure. We learn from our symptom searches about the conditions we may have but often can't be sure until we have consulted a doctor.*

*"We fear the worst when we Google. This is proven in our data which show that we type pneumonia instead of chest infection and tonsillitis instead of sore throat. I believe this is one of the reasons why NHS GP surgeries are increasingly overrun.*

*"I set up the medical helpline because I wanted to help people. More than 70 per cent of patients in a GP's surgery don't really need to be there because they could have been dealt with by phone or email. Our many doctors believe that there is a better way to deliver their advice and want to take some of the stress out of the NHS," added Dr Morton.*

When [Dr Morton's – the medical helpline](#)<sup>®</sup> first started to compile data two years ago, more than 10 million searches a month could be accounted for. That figure now exceeds 16 million searches a month which equates to almost 200 million searches a year in the UK alone.

[Dr Morton's – the medical helpline](#)<sup>®</sup> is a service for busy people wanting speedy access to an experienced doctor for confidential reassurance or advice by phone or email. When needed, Dr Morton's doctors are able to prescribe for a wide variety of medical issues and arrange for medication to be sent to the customer's door.

Dr Morton's is positioning itself as an alternative to NHS111 or the GP's surgery. Dr Morton's GP's work seven days a week, 365 days a year including Christmas and public holidays. The service launches fully on Christmas Eve.

**Ends**

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**Notes for editors on compilation:**

Google makes available through its web site, data from billions of global and region specific searches that is referred to in the press release as 'Big Data'. Whilst this information is available for public consumption, to collate data on medical health searches and determine what people actually search involves an iterative process that takes some months and is best undertaken with input from qualified doctors with the appropriate medical knowledge to be sure that it is comprehensive.

**Notes for editors on Dr Morton's<sup>®</sup>**

[Dr Morton's – the medical helpline](#)<sup>®</sup> is a service for busy people wanting speedy access to an experienced doctor for confidential reassurance or advice by phone or email.

All doctors are UK based and GMC registered. Dr Morton's Limited is regulated by the Care Quality Commission.

Because the customer's medical record is collected online before a consultation starts and pops up in front of the doctor when the call starts, no time is wasted and calls typically take less than 5 minutes.

Callers can discuss the health problems that arise in their everyday lives and in most cases avoid the need to join a surgery queue or take time off work.

It aims to take the stress out of the NHS.

When needed, Dr Morton's doctors are able to prescribe for a wide variety of medical issues and arrange for medication to be sent to the customer's door.

Over a million people a month seek medical advice by phone by calling the NHS111 helpline with an average call length of almost 15 minutes, but 63 per cent of callers are told that they need to speak to a doctor, which means another phone call and a queue. Dr Morton's is a web-based medical helpline which grants direct access to an experienced GP, by telephone or email, seven days a week. The customer pays only for the time they use and the cost of a first call is never more than £60 – a figure which happens to be pretty similar to the true cost of an NHS consultation that would have to be funded by the taxpayer.

This Christmas and New Year when NHS GP surgeries are closed, doctors from Dr Morton's® will be on duty at [www.drmortons.co.uk](http://www.drmortons.co.uk) and available by email, from your smart phone or otherwise directly at the end of the telephone on 012 123 123 123 from 7 to 11 every day and the price of the first call has been reduced to £25.