



## Practice Newsletter & Patient Information



### Practice News

Here we are again, the Festive Season is almost upon us. Actually, if we go by the shops, it feels like its been here since **September!** We are all looking forward to having a few days off over the Christmas and New Year period as we've had a busy time during the peak of our **'Flu vaccination service'**. It has been much more pressurised for our practice team this year thanks to the changes implemented by NHS England and the introduction of a new vaccine months after we'd already ordered our supplies for this season! Despite this, we have already vaccinated hundreds of patients and had a very successful Saturday Flu clinic. **We do still have vaccine available if you've not had yours yet—just ask at reception.**

**DNA's:** Regrettably, patients have persisted in failing to attend for appointments. In the year to 1st November, we have had **329 wasted appointments and that's almost 55 hours of clinical time.** These appointments could have been given to other patients who needed them had they been cancelled by the patient who ended up wasting their appointment and our clinical teams time. If you do not need your appointment, please cancel it.

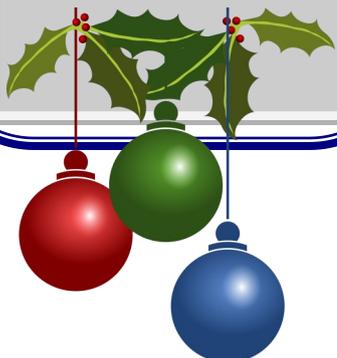
**Practice Developments:** We have put our internal refurbishment plans on hold whilst we investigate the potential for the practice to relocate to a new, modern and purpose built premises. We will not be leaving Whitwick and we are busy discussing plans with the relevant parties involved in such a big decision. There will be more news on this as we go into the new year.

**New staff:** We are pleased to have welcomed Ami to the practice in August. Ami works as one of our Admin & Reception team and has settled in really well.

**And finally: The Partners and all the Practice Team would like to wish all our patients a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.** We look forward to assisting you in the coming year.

#### Special points of interest:

- Helpful Tips
- News snippets
- Self Care— what is it & what can we all do?
- Your PPG
- Christmas Facts
- **Christmas & New Year opening times**



Helpful  
Tips

## Christmas is coming!! Some top tips

There's no escaping it, we all need to be getting ready for Christmas. Here are a few of our tips to make sure you are prepared from a health

point of view -:

**MEDICATION:** If you take medicine on a regular basis to help manage a long-term condition like high blood pressure, diabetes or asthma – or if you have any children or relatives who do – now is the time to check that you have enough medication left to last you through the Christmas and New Year period.

**ORDER IN GOOD TIME [minimum of 48 hours notice]** Don't risk being caught short over the Bank Holidays, when the GP practice will be closed. Make sure that you plan ahead, and leave enough time to order and collect repeat prescriptions before Christmas Eve. **OUR DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS IS THURSDAY 20th DECEMBER**

**WHEN WE ARE CLOSED:** Be aware of your options for accessing healthcare if you need to. **GP Out of Hours** - Even if your GP surgery is closed, you can still see a local GP out of opening hours by calling your usual practice number or dialling NHS 111. **Pharmacist** - Get professional health advice on common winter illnesses, and the best medicines to treat them, right on the high street. **NHS Walk-in Centres** - Access treatment 365 days of the year for every day illnesses and minor injuries you can't treat yourself at home. No need for an appointment – you can just walk in. **NHS 111** – Call if you need medical advice fast, but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles.

Please remember, we are only closed for an additional 3 days throughout the Festive period. We will open in-between Christmas and New Year, returning to the full range of services from the 2nd January. Our website has useful information and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. [Find us at www.whitwickhealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.whitwickhealthcentre.co.uk)



We are still offering the FREE vaccination for Flu. We also can give you the vaccination for Shingles and Pneumonia. Please ask your clinician or our reception team to check your eligibility. We'd be more than happy to help you Beat the Bug!!!!

## SELF CARE— WHAT IS IT & WHAT CAN WE ALL DO?

Whatever the time of year, **Self-care** is the best choice to treat minor illnesses and injuries. A large range of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply with over-the-counter medicines and plenty of rest.

### What can we all do?

1. **Be prepared** for most common ailments by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home.
2. **Stock up on medications/supplies for:**
  - Minor aches and pains,
  - Minor sprains, sports injuries, grazed knee and scars
  - Coughs, colds, blocked noses, fevers and sore throat
  - Hangover
3. Other self-care conditions and supplies include:
  - Athlete's foot ,
  - Constipation, diarrhoea and haemorrhoids (piles)
  - Hayfever and allergies
  - Head lice (wet combing is recommended)
  - Indigestion remedies (for occasional use)
  - Mild acne and eczema
  - Skin rashes
  - Travel medicines
4. **Speak to your Pharmacist to get advice on the best treatment for your symptoms.**
  - Your local pharmacist can help with some minor illness without the need for a GP appointment.



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
PRACTICE  
SELF-CARE**



## IN OTHER NEWS...

### **ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIBING**

Antibiotics are increasingly in the news and the subject is making an impact at National Level. **Antibiotics do not fight infections caused by viruses like colds, flu, most sore throats, bronchitis and many sinus and ear infections.** Taking antibiotics for viral infections will not cure the infection or keep other people from getting sick. They will not help you or your child feel better, may cause unnecessary and harmful side effects and may contribute to antibiotic resistance. **Rest, fluids and over the counter products may be your best treatment option. For more information visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/antibiotics](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/antibiotics)**

**URGENT MEDICATION ISSUES** Like many other surgeries, repeat prescriptions need two or three working days for us to process. This gives us time to perform checks and maintain safety. We are getting increasing numbers of requests for repeat medication to be issued urgently due to a lack of simple forward planning from patients. Such requests delay other patients' prescriptions and increase the risk of mistakes. Please manage your own medication appropriately.

### **ONLINE ACCESS**

By registering for on-line access you will be able to see and request repeat prescriptions, book or cancel appointments and download your past medications, allergies and immunisations. You may also apply for access to your coded medical record. To register simply present yourself at the Reception desk with a photographic proof of ID and your current email address.

### **PATIENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Is the information the surgery holds on you and your family up to date? Have you changed your email address, mobile telephone or land line number? If so please let the surgery know so your records are updated and to ensure we are able to keep in contact with you.

**APPOINTMENTS** If your doctor or nurse asks you to make a follow up appointment (for e.g. in 2 weeks' time) please book this before you leave the surgery rather than waiting until the appointment is due when you may find there are no slots available. When booking online, make sure that the appointment is long enough for what you need e.g. a double appointment if you have more than one problem. Thank you.

**TEST RESULTS** (i.e. blood tests or x-ray results) In order to find out the results of your tests please ring the surgery in person after 10.30am (We cannot give your results to anyone else unless we have your written permission to do so.) The receptionist will be able to inform you if the results are normal or if you need to be seen by your doctor and appointments can then be made as necessary.

**MEDICATION REVIEWS** Ruth, our practice Pharmacist, is available to carry out medication reviews for all our patients. She is available Tuesday to Thursday and can also offer telephone appointments and home visits\* [\*for our housebound patients only].



**EXTENDED ACCESS APPOINTMENTS:** We are increasing the number of appointments available for you to see a GP in the early mornings, evenings or at weekends across West Leicestershire. **Depending on your individual circumstances and symptoms, we may offer you an 'extended access' appointment.** Please note however, that these appointments will not be in your usual GP practice. Depending on the reason for your appointment, and if you are in agreement, it may be suitable for you to see an Advanced Nurse Practitioner, instead of a GP. These appointments will be available at: Loughborough Urgent Care Centre at Loughborough Community Hospital, Coalville Community Hospital, Hinckley and Bosworth Community Hospital. If you would like to know more please speak to a member of practice staff.

# PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

*YOUR REPRESENTATIVES WORKING WITH YOUR PRACTICE*

## **We are very pleased to have an active Patient Participation Group [PPG]**

The PPG for Dr Virmani & Dr Bedi is a group of patients who meet every 3 months with the practice to improve the services to patients, and to provide the patients' perspective.

The aim of our PPG is to help patients to get the best service from their practice and for the practice to respond to patients' ideas and needs.

PPG's are a route for patients to advise and inform the Practice on what matters most to patients and to help identify solutions to problems. Members of PPGs think about the wider patient interest and not just their own personal concerns.

Our PPG members are involved with various other significant NHS/Local authority partners and they kindly give up their own time representing the practice and their fellow patients.

Recently our PPG has been busy undertaking their own survey to find out what matters to patients and have been discussing the findings with the Practice. This has proved to be a very fruitful and positive experience for everyone. The group publish their meeting minutes on our website and the results of the survey will be on there too.

Are you interested in finding out more about your GP surgery & NHS Services ?

As a patient would you like to influence the development of local health services?

**We are keen for our patients to be actively involved in contributing constructive ideas to the future planning of healthcare provision in your area. ALL Dr Virmani and Dr Bedi's patients are welcome to join the PPG - we would all like to see our group grow and become even more representative of our patient population.**

If you are interested in getting involved in our PPG; please ask at reception for further details and leave your contact details for the Practice Manager.



## **CHRISTMAS FUN FACTS**

1. The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes from 12th-century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and tangerines at the houses of the poor
2. The first commercial Christmas cards were commissioned by civil servant Sir Henry Cole in London in 1843. Featuring a family drinking wine, one sold for £8,469 in 2014.
3. According to tradition, you should eat one mince pie on each of the 12 days of Christmas to bring good luck.... Maybe not 12 in one day!?!)
4. **6 million** - The number of rolls of sellotape that will be sold in the UK in the run up to Christmas (5.99 million - the number of rolls where you can't find where the tape ends).
5. In the UK, natural Christmas trees outsell artificial Christmas trees by a ratio of 3:1.
6. Irving Berlin hated Elvis Presley's version of "White Christmas" so much that he tried to prevent radio stations from playing Presley's cover.
7. **£700 million** - The amount of money spent on unwanted Christmas gifts.
8. During the Christmas period, nearly 28 Lego sets are sold EVERY SECOND
9. Christmas pudding was originally a soup made with raisins and wine
10. The word "Carol" actually means dance or song of praise and joy, and they used to be sung during all four seasons, but the tradition of only singing them at Christmas is the only one to survive



## Practice Opening Hours: Christmas & New Year



### Week commencing: Monday 17th December

Normal Opening hours and clinics.  
Closing at 6.00 pm on Friday 21st December.

### Week Commencing: Monday 24th December

**CLOSED from 4.00pm on Christmas Eve and CLOSED Christmas Day & Boxing Day.**

Normal opening hours resume: Thursday 27th December to Friday 28th December from 8.30am until 6.00pm

### Week commencing Monday 31st December

**CLOSED from 4.00pm on New Years Eve and CLOSED New Years Day**

Normal opening hours resume: Wednesday 2nd January 8.30 am onwards.

**!! REPEAT MEDICATION REQUESTS TO COVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR: DEADLINE THURSDAY 20TH DECEMBER !!**

## HELP US TO HELP YOU IN 2019

**Reducing the amount of Waste Medication:** We know that it is tempting to ask for an extra supply of medicines "just in case" but please would you make an extra conscious effort to look through your repeat medication order sheet and not order any items where you have enough. These could be medicines that you use only occasionally or, in a few cases have stopped taking altogether. It is becoming more apparent that some patients are requesting medication unnecessarily. This has an impact on the finances of the NHS and also the quality of services offered by the NHS ( for example longer waiting times). **Please be considerate when ordering medication.**

**Tell us if we have permission to speak to your spouse, partner or someone else.** We will not discuss or share information about you with relatives or friends, unless we have your written permission.

**Tell us if you cannot make your booked appointment:** We have a lot of wasted appointments each week, often after we have had to tell another patient we are unable to see them! Please help us to help all our patients and tell us if you no longer need your appointment.

### **Commit to your reviews: Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF)**

The Government expects GPs to follow QOF standards and in order to meet these required standards, we will be writing and/or texting you in the coming months. Please do not ignore these requests and on receipt of one of these, phone the Practice and book an appointment as requested. We will be most grateful for your help with this.

**THANK YOU**