

Practice Newsletter, January 2012

Welcome to our newsletter, we hope you find the content interesting and useful.



It's that time again – Flu Season!

We're pleased to say that we have had a successful campaign this year so, hopefully, many of our patients will benefit from having the 'jab'. However, we want to encourage everyone who is eligible to come along next year. If you are aged over 65 or have any of the following conditions – coronary heart disease, asthma, COPD or diabetes – we strongly recommend you have the vaccination.

The vaccine is developed each year from previous strains to teach our immune systems to recognise and attack the 'flu virus. You can't get 'flu from the jab.

Look out for clinic dates in Autumn 2012

Contacting us by telephone

We updated our telephone system in the Autumn and hope that you are all well acquainted with our **new number**:

01207 583400

To help you get through we have also added an extra number for patients to use when cancelling an appointment. If you are unable to keep a booked appointment please ring our dedicated **cancellation line on**:

01207 593580

and leave your name, date of birth and details of the appointment you wish to cancel.

Please note we are unable to deal with any other enquiries on this number.



Medicines waste campaign

Please help us save some NHS funds!



30-50% of prescribed medication is not used as intended! Approximately £300 million of medicines are wasted in Primary Care each year. Up to half of this may be avoidable. Please help us save money by only requesting items you are taking regularly on your repeat medication.

Take your medication according to the directions to get the most benefit from them.

If your doctor prescribes a new medicine, speak to the local pharmacist about the 'New Medicines Service' for additional information to ensure you take the medication correctly.



Handy hints to get the most from your GP

Be realistic - our routine appointments get booked in advance very quickly but if you are worried about a medically urgent problem, the receptionist will arrange for you to speak to the 'Duty' Doctor for advice.

The receptionist isn't being nosy when she asks questions regarding your problem, she's trying to find out if you need to be seen urgently or may use the information to direct you to the most appropriate health care professional – this may be one of our nurses who specialise in different conditions.



We are here to help but may not always need to be the first port of call. Our local pharmacies offer other services as well as dispensing medicines. Pharmacists are well qualified and able to offer advice on many minor ailments.

Finally... make the most of your appointment, think about your symptoms and describe them accurately to help the doctor in reaching an accurate diagnosis.

Cervical Screening

Ladies, have you made your appointment?

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Talking About Cancer (TAC) Service are working in the local community to promote cervical screening and encourage women to recognise the signs and symptoms of cervical cancer.

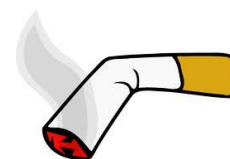


Members of the Talking About Cancer Service are working in partnership with the Practice to give women in Consett the opportunity to find out more about cervical screening and ask any questions.

There are around 2,800 new cases of cervical cancer in the UK every year. It is the most common cancer in women under the age of 35, but cervical cancer can affect women of any age.

Nearly all cases of cervical cancer are linked to a common sexually transmitted infection called the Human Papilloma Virus or HPV. Using condoms protects against the infection and can reduce the risk of getting or spreading the HPV infection.

If you smoke, this doubles your risk of developing cervical cancer. Research shows that long-term use of the contraceptive pill slightly increases the risk of cervical cancer, however it is important to know that the pill can help protect against womb and ovarian cancers.



Cervical screening saves around 5000 lives every year in the UK. It is important to go for your cervical screening test whenever you are invited. Cervical screening is not a test for cancer. It tests for changes in the cervix before they develop into cancer.

Women who are registered with a doctor are invited for free cervical screening tests every three to five years from the age of 25 to 64.

Please make an appointment at one of our Well Women Clinics to have your screening test.

Most women have normal results. Sometimes a sample is not clear enough, so you may have to have another test. If you have an abnormal result this does not mean you have cancer, it means that some of the cells in your test may have changed and you may need to be treated – your doctor will talk to you about having further tests.

If you notice any of the following signs or symptoms, make sure you see your doctor:

- Bleeding between periods
- Bleeding during or after having sex
- Bleeding after you have been through the menopause
- Any unpleasant vaginal discharge
- Discomfort or pain during sex

 **Cervical Screening**
It really matters



These may be signs of other common conditions. **They do not necessarily mean you have cancer**, but it's best to get them checked out by your doctor.

***On Tuesday 7th February – we are holding a Women's Health Event
You are invited to drop in for a chat, share your views or just pick up further
information.***

Link2

The new dial-a-ride bus service from Durham County Council for those where;

- There isn't a bus stop nearby (within 600 metres).
- There isn't a bus within one hour of when you want to travel.
- The journey would require a change of bus.



Concessionary pass holders travel FREE.

***Link2 runs Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm
To book a Link2 journey, call: 0191 383 5 383***

Link2 can be booked up to 14 days ahead. Disabled people can use this service and an escort can travel with someone who would normally require this support.

For further information, and to cancel a booking that is no longer required, please call the booking line telephone number, above.

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