



windrush
MEDICAL PRACTICE

WELCOME TO YOUR PATIENTS' GROUP NEWSLETTER FOR WINTER 2019

Containing useful information which we really hope you will share with your family and friends of all ages.



In this issue:

- Is your mobile phone ready for action?
- Keeping fit in the winter:
- Do you, or do any of your friends, suffer with asthma?
- Did Not Attend statistics:
- Over the Counter medication:
- Reviewing the Windrush Medical Practice:
- Safe and Well visits:
- Seasonal Affective Disorder:
- On-line Pharmacies:
- I am worried about my relative: can I contact their GP?
- Keeping well this winter just got a bit smarter!
- We are here for you!
- And finally

Is your mobile phone ready for action? For most people nowadays their mobile phone is a permanent fixture somewhere in their pocket / bag / or mostly hand! But for a number of people, their mobile phone is kept in a drawer, only to be retrieved when they think of it.

We have heard of a recent incident where a lady felt really poorly in the night. She kept her phone in the bedside drawer – but it hadn't been used for months, wasn't charged and she couldn't remember how to switch it on. Please keep your mobile phone handy – keep it charged – and use it regularly so that you know how to use it in an emergency. Although this may not apply to you, it may apply to someone you know; so check it out with them and be sure that they can contact you if they need you.

Keeping fit in the winter:

When it's cold and blustery outside, going for a walk or a run might be the last thing you feel like doing. But walking in the winter can be surprisingly enjoyable if we are careful. When the weather is bleak, the streets poorly lit and the ground slippery with leaves, we could be forgiven for hiding indoors. But the weather shouldn't stop us. There's something special about the feeling of arriving home after a wintry run or walk. The experts tell us that *“exercising outside in winter has so many benefits for our well-being: just being out and exercising can really boost your mood, and since your body is working harder to stay warm, it's producing more endorphins. You can have a nice warm bath or shower afterwards and there is that satisfaction of having gone out and done it”*. It may be that you can only exercise when it is dark: so do make sure that you can see where you are going, carry a torch.

Do you go running when you get home from work? Then the advice from a Sports Consultant is *“Be visible to traffic and pedestrians, wear a head torch and high-vis clothing. Always take your phone in case you slip or fall. Keep an eye out for potholes and tree roots. While muddy ground or puddles might simply mean watching your footsteps, icy or snowy conditions could mean abandoning the idea. I'd advise not running when it's icy because the risk of injury outweighs the potential benefits. Generally, it's best to stick to well-lit, and carry some form of identification.*

Do you or do any of your friends/relatives suffer with Asthma? One of our fellow patients wrote in to say *"I was diagnosed with Asthma about 20 years ago. I managed the situation myself but then a friend suggested that I should request an Asthma assessment. The results have been outstanding. The advice I received both at the assessment and from the pharmacy has improved my wellbeing immensely."*

We took the query to our GPs who replied that

"All patients with asthma on regular medication should receive an annual review with their GP, or in some cases by our clinical pharmacist. Patients will be invited to make an appointment when it is due, but of course should be seen at any time if their symptoms become troublesome or not well controlled with their inhalers."

Did Not Attend statistics: your Patients' Group continues to be concerned about the number of patients who are not arriving for their appointments. In the one month of October 2019

- 106 patients did not arrive for their appointment with a GP;
- 171 patients did not arrive for an appointment with a nurse.

Whilst we know that this is sometimes unavoidable, there are many times when we have

- forgotten to put the appointment in our diary/calendar;
- forgotten to cancel it;
- not realised that this is taking up a time which is really needed by another patient.

So please be a Perfect Patient and make sure that you have given the Practice your mobile phone number; they use your phone to text reminders about your appointment and this also gives you the opportunity to cancel it if you don't need it by simply replying with the word CANCEL.

Over the counter medication: the press is making us all aware of the financial problems of the NHS. We all know the phrase “if you look after the pennies, the pounds will take care of themselves”.

So, the day may come when we need a heart operation, a hip replacement or cancer treatment – and we really hope that we don’t have to pay for those. To help ourselves we need to save the NHS pennies so that they have the pounds for our serious needs.

We are therefore being encouraged to purchase any medication which is available over the counter in a pharmacy or supermarket, even if we qualify for free prescriptions.

This applies to treatments for the following conditions:

Acute sore throat: Minor Burns and scalds: Conjunctivitis;
Mild cystitis: Coughs, colds and nasal congestion: Dandruff:
Mild dry skin; Diarrhoea (adults): Dry eyes/ sore eyes:
Mouth ulcers: Nappy Rash: Excessive sweating: Infant colic:
and several more

Please take a look at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1a-over-the-counter-leaflet-v1.pdf> for the full recommendations.

Reviewing the Windrush Medical Practice: we are keen for you to have your opportunity to review the Windrush Practice on the official NHS website – the “tripadvisor” of medical practices! The website has recently been revamped and is now much easier to use. You will need to have visited the Practice within the last two years. Please go to <https://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/ReviewsAndRatings/DefaultView.aspx?id=37835>
Over to you!

Safe and Well visits – these are really useful:

Did you know that the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service carry out Safe and Well visits to provide advice on a lot of different things in your home?

Fire safety in the home is a key topic, but in addition they can help you with advice on falls prevention, staying well and warm, scams and doorstep crime prevention and many other things. They are available to us all and you may say "it doesn't apply to me" – but it might apply to someone you know who is living alone, anyone has a physical and/or learning disability, anyone who is over 65 or has young children The Safe and Well team are super ladies and gentleman who only have your very best interests at heart. So why not ask for a visit? You can do so by calling 08000 325 999 or visit the website at www.365alive.co.uk. You know it makes sense!

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): a lot of us get bouts of the "winter blues" and for some it becomes an issue which we take to our GP.

But here are some very simple ways for us to cheer ourselves up and blow those blues away:

- try to get as much natural sunlight as possible - even a brief lunchtime walk can be beneficial;
- make your work and home environments as light and airy as possible;
- sit near windows when you are indoors;
- take as much regular exercise as you can - particularly outdoors and in daylight;
- eat a healthy balanced diet;
- if possible, avoid stressful situations and take steps to manage your stress.
- talk to your family and friends about SAD, so that they understand how you feel during the winter; this can help them to support you more effectively.

There is a lot more on this topic on the NHS Choices website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/>

Online pharmacies: Your Committee wrote to the NHS about these as we are concerned about the demise of the High Street and the lack of personal interaction for patients who use on-line pharmacies. We are also concerned that anything coming in the post can be picked up by any member of the household, including children and pets. The NHS replied that on-line options are there to provide patient choice.

When making your choice, please bear in mind that we need to continue to use our local pharmacies on the High Street if you can for your prescription needs. If we don't use them, we will lose them!

I am worried about a relative: can I contact their GP?

Sally (not her real name) is very concerned about her mother. She has noticed that Mum struggles to remember Sally's name, the names of her grandchildren, the names of Sally's brother, his wife and their children. Mum goes out walking with the dog and has problems finding her way back to her new home. She is evidently confused on several levels. Sally and her brother would like to contact Mum's GP and ask him to see her for a check-up so that he can judge whether there is a problem. We asked our GPs whether Sally could write to her Mum's GP and whether he would be able to act on their concerns.

Our GPs suggest that Sally should express her concerns to her Mum's GP either by phone call or letter and request that the GP find some way to assess her mother if they are not already aware of the situation. The GP would obviously not be able to divulge whether she has seen Sally's mother or not, or whether they were aware of any issues without Sally's mother's consent, but they are able to receive information from a third party and it is often very useful in these situations. Better to act now rather than wait for a crisis and hopefully the GP practice will be receptive to her concerns. It is also possible that this is a potential safeguarding matter if her husband is not engaging in seeking help for his wife who may not have the ability or insight to seek it herself.

Keeping well this winter just got a bit smarter



A free smartphone app could help you this winter. Health and Care Oxfordshire uses digital mapping to help you find your nearest health service, wherever you are in the county. The app highlights the type of injuries or illnesses treated at minor injuries unit or first aid units, and the advice and support provided by local pharmacies and GP practices. To find out more just go to <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/keeping-well-this-winter-just-got-a-bit-smarter/>

We are here for you! Remember that we are your Patients' Group and are keen to hear from you on any topic with ideas, suggestions and even grumbles! To contact us just pop a note into the Patients' Participation Post-box in the corner of the Information Area, or e-mail us at patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net. And you can join our electronic group there too, if you would like to.

And finally: A message from a fellow patient.

"I'm not suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder but am afflicted by Chronic Brexititis. The symptoms are worst in the early morning after the BBC 4 Today programme. Fortunately, I find it responds to treatment in the evening with a whisky." ☺

Opening times for Minor Injuries and X-Ray

The Minor Injuries unit at Witney Hospital

is available seven days a week - 10 am until 10.30 pm.

The X-Ray Unit at Witney Hospital

Is open

Monday to Friday - 10.30 am to 5.30 pm (and later if you are presenting directly to the Minor Injuries Unit).

Saturday and Sunday - 9.30 am to 5.30 pm.

Please note that the staff do need to fit in a lunch break at some stage in their day!

The phone number for both services is 01865 903 841.

Christmas and New Year Practice information:

Thursday 19th December: last day to order prescriptions ready for Christmas:

Monday 23rd December: last day to order prescriptions ready for the New Year:

Tuesday 24th December: normal hours

Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th December: Closed

Friday 27th December: normal hours

Monday 30th December: normal hours

Tuesday 31st December: normal hours

Wednesday 1st January 2020: closed

Thursday 2nd January: normal hours

THE WINDRUSH MEDICAL PRACTICE

Website: www.windrushmedicalpractice.co.uk

Opening hours: Monday-Thursday: 0830 - 1830

Friday: 0700 - 1830

Daytime enquiries: 01993 702911

Dispensary: 01993 708452 (1030-1300: 1500 - 1630)

Patient Advice and Liaison Office (PALS) for the
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group 0800 0526088

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An emergency is a medical problem that cannot wait until
8 am the next morning, or at weekends until Monday