

WINTER NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to our Winter Newsletter, as the days grow shorter and temperatures drop, it's essential to find joy in the season and maintain our well-being. There are a lot of wonderful things about the winter, and it can be a magical time of the year.

In this newsletter we look at Shingles, what it is and how we can try to prevent it. We look at ideas on keeping warm and looking out for others during the cold, winter months and we have an interesting article on GPs fighting to survive.

SORRY TO SEE YOU GO.....

We wish Stephanie Codd (GP Assistant) good luck in her new job

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR CLOSING

The surgery will be closed for Christmas on the dates below:

CHRISTMAS DAY

Wednesday 25th December 2024

BOXING DAY

Thursday 26th December 2024

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Wednesday 1st January 2025

We wish you all a very happy Christmas from The Bridges Medical Practice



DNA'S
(appointments
not attended)

297

NOVEMBER STATISTICS

HOME
VISITS

215

ATTENDED
APPOINTMENTS

7761

INCOMING
LETTERS

7608

REFERRALS
MADE

620

SHINGLES



Shingles is an infection that causes a painful rash. The first signs of shingles can be:

- a tingling or painful feeling in an area of skin
- a headache or feeling generally unwell

A rash will usually appear a few days later. In rare cases shingles can cause pain without a rash.

Get advice from 111 as soon as possible if you think you have it.

You can also speak to a pharmacist if you think you have shingles. They can provide the same treatments you would get from a GP, if you need it.

A shingles vaccine is available on the NHS for:
people who turned 65 on or after 1 September 2023

people aged 70 to 79 who have not yet been vaccinated

people aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system

The vaccine helps reduce your risk of getting shingles.

If you get shingles after being vaccinated, the symptoms can be much milder.

You can get shingles more than once, so it's important to get vaccinated even if you've had shingles before.

Keeping well this winter & looking out for others

Staying well this winter, the importance of self care and how to stay warm over the colder months is very important. Winter can be seriously bad for our health but there are a number of things that we can do to keep warm, safe and well:

- Try to heat just the rooms you spend the most time in
- Wear several layers of thin clothing; this will keep you warmer than one thicker layer
- Keep your bedroom windows closed at night
- Try to reduce draughts; you can fit draft excluders around doors cheaply

Other people around you, particularly older members of your family and neighbours may need extra support during cold weather. To support others you can:

- Keep in touch with them and ask whether they are feeling unwell, or whether they need any practical help
- If bad weather is forecast, see if they need any help stocking up on food and medication

Positively Embrace the Winter

Snuggling up inside, in the warmth when it is wet and wild outside can be comforting and on clear, bright, sunny days it can be incredibly refreshing to wrap up and go for a bracing walk!

General Practice is Fighting to Survive



Weymouth and Portland GP practices are committed to delivering safe, high-quality care but you have probably noticed that something is wrong.

Recent surveys have shown GPs across the nation are facing an unmanageable workload, which at times is affecting their ability to provide safe care. At the same time costs are rising, just as yours are – electricity, building, supplies, and staff salaries. Some practices are struggling to stay afloat, let alone maintain the service they want to deliver.

Nationally GPs have voted overwhelmingly to encourage better support for UK Primary Care as GPs are on your side.

We believe general practice deserves a bigger slice of NHS funding so we can train and hire more GPs, deliver the services you require and make it easier for you and your loved ones to get appointments to see your Practice team.

GPs want the same things that you do. General Practice should be as it once was – a familiar doctor, offering continuity of care in a surgery full of friendly familiar faces within a safe building where you know you will get the care you need.

What does this mean for you?

All 5 GP Practices in Weymouth and Portland will follow the BMA's "safe working guidance". As a result, once our maximum daily capacity has been reached, we may need to signpost people to other supporting NHS services. **We will endeavour to ensure care is prioritised for the most vulnerable.** It would be appreciated if patients would consider alternative providers such as the pharmacy service for minor and self-limiting problems, consulting the NHS website www.nhs.uk or for pregnant women and parents of children and young people under 18 years old - the Wessex Healthier Together website www.what0-18.nhs.uk

The changes are designed to create a safer environment for you, our patients, who are our priority, and also for all our clinical teams, to keep your Practice open and able to continue to deliver services with the teams we have.

Will you notice anything else?

Another change you may notice is that the practice may be firmer about signposting back to another service (eg the hospital) or not getting involved in areas that are not part of our contracted work. This is so we can better focus on our own core work, particularly aiming to provide long-term high-quality care with GP continuity. We hope that by acting now, we can ensure the long-term resilience of high-quality general practice, which is the bedrock of the NHS.



Did you know... 

The Government gives this practice just £107.57 a year for each patient, whatever their health needs. That's less than the cost of a TV licence.

This means we're only given 30p a day for every patient registered with us – less than the cost of an apple.



GPs want the same things that you do.

We believe nobody should struggle to see their family doctor.

We believe general practice deserves a **bigger slice** of NHS funding so we can train and hire more GPs, deliver the services you require and make it easier to get appointments to see your GP and practice team.

We know you deserve better than this. GPs Are On Your Side.

bma.org.uk/GPsOnYourSide