



Cherrymead Chat



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Help us fight Flu this Winter

Flu or influenza is an infection caused by a virus. It multiplies within your body and spreads to other people at high speed. Spreading is by saliva and mucus droplets during sneezing and coughing. Typical symptoms are fever, headache, or a cough. However, many exposed people will not have any of these or only mild symptoms. Others will become extremely unwell, bedridden or housebound. Sometimes they may be hospitalised or even have a terminal illness.

People who are at high risk of catching flu include children, young people, pregnant women and those over 65 years of age. People more prone to flu are those having chemotherapy, immunosuppressant drugs such as methotrexate, HIV or other conditions which affect the immune system. They also include those with some cancers, or coeliac disease. Those without a spleen are also more likely to get flu. The symptoms may be severe and also cause problems for these people. Others where the symptoms may be severe with complications are those with chronic

cardiac, kidney, liver, lung and nervous system conditions, asthma and diabetes mellitus. Carers of frail people are also advised to have the vaccine.

Children aged between 6 months and 2 years of age will receive an injection. Children between 2 years and 18 years of age will receive a live vaccine which is squirted into the nose. This is in accordance with licensing and government regulations.

If you are unable to attend these clinics, or wish to query your invitation, contact our office. Please let us know if you have already received the vaccine at work, or a pharmacy, or if your child has had the vaccine at school. Our Office phone number is **01494 478640**.

The aims of the clinics are to prevent the susceptible, or may have severe or complicated flu, from becoming hosts to the virus. They are also to prevent the virus from spreading. Even if you do not normally have flu, having the vaccine will speed the rate you clear the virus from your body. It will also reduce the chance of you spreading it to other people.

Dates for Flu Clinics

If you are in a high risk group, we will be writing to you in September and October to invite you to our walk-in flu clinics.

Our adult walk-in flu clinics, at which you will receive an injection, are on:

Saturday October 8, 8am - 1pm

Saturday October 15, 8am - 1pm

Saturday October 22, 8am - 1pm

Children's walk-in clinics:

Saturday October 8, 8am - 1pm

*Children's Clinic
(appointment only - please call
Reception to book once you have
received your letter)*

Thursday October 6, 4.30pm - 7pm

Thursday October 20, 4.30pm - 7pm

Update On Appointments

We have reviewed our appointments system. Our aim is to safely deliver the right care to the right patients at the right time. We assess patients in order of clinical need. So, please give the receptionist a very brief reason for your call unless it is a personal one you do not wish to disclose. We know many people with minor conditions prefer to see their usual doctor. However, we cannot see unlimited numbers of patients safely. This means that people with more complex conditions have delayed appointments. To reduce such delays, our receptionists now recommend the correct person to treat your condition. We request that you accept the appointment that you have been offered, unless there is a reason such as wanting a clinician of a particular gender.

Many minor conditions can be dealt with by your local pharmacist. Our receptionist will advise you of this using guidelines agreed with the doctors. We do not provide dental, minor injury, optician or basic foot care (podiatry) services. Also, we do not give counselling or drug and alcohol detoxification services. However, we will direct you to them if needed.

For other conditions you may be offered a face to face appointment with a Minor Illness or Practice Nurse, or a GP, when you first speak to the receptionist. That removes the need for a call back.



If it is unclear whether you need to be seen, a doctor will assess your history then instruct the receptionist to book you in with a suitable clinician. Otherwise they will telephone you to discuss your problem in more detail. They will then advise you, or book you an appointment if needed. Once we have received as many consultation requests as can be dealt with safely by the available GPs, we will tell you that we are full for that day. Emergencies are still put through to the duty GP. If we tell you that the GP does not have any available appointments that day, please consider your situation carefully. Is it an emergency? Can it wait until the next day?

Quick and Easy Online Bookings

Are you fed up with waiting in a phone queue? Would you rather book a telephone consultation with the GP when you don't have to rush off somewhere? Try booking your appointment online using our online system.

First, register for a Patient Access account at www.cherrymeadsurgery.co.uk.

We will check that you are over 16 and who you are. We will then give you a username and password. If you register online you will need to bring ID in to our receptionist. You can also ask your doctor to vouch for you at an appointment. Then pick up the log in details from reception afterwards.

To book your telephone consultation, log into the account, select the Appointments option and book. Give your phone number, a brief reason why you need to speak to the doctor and whether you want to speak to a particular doctor. The doctor will call you back on the same day if you book between 8am and 6.30pm. The doctor will call you the next working day, if you book outside our normal hours.

The PRG works with the Surgery to offer a patient perspective on the services that are provided. We also help to improve communication, encourage patients to take more responsibility for their health and provide practical support.

Our next full PRG meeting is scheduled for 6.30pm on Tuesday 25th October. Please contact the surgery on 01494 445150 if you would like to join us.



First Aid for the Fireworks Season

It's nearly time for bonfires and fireworks. They're fun but can be bad for your health. The safest way to view fireworks is to go to a professionally organised display. If you do buy fireworks, first read about the Fireworks Code and Sparkler Safety. You can do that at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents' website, www.ROSPA.com under Home Safety. Make sure you have a First Aid kit nearby.

Hypothermia

It can get very cold and wet at this time of year, so check the weather forecast. Wrap up in woollies and waterproof clothing if needed. If someone looks shivery, is wet, has cold skin, or seems confused, they may have hypothermia. Take them out of the wind into the warmth. Change them out of any wet clothes into dry ones, including a hat. Wrap them in a blanket, bin liner, foil or papers. Give warm drinks. Take them home wrapped up. If you are concerned seek medical advice.

Sprains and Broken Bones

Make sure to keep to well-lit areas. Know where your children are at all times. In the dark it's easy to trip over holes, ropes, plants and litter. Sprains and broken bones are common. If someone has a bruised or swollen joint which is painful, ask them to sit or lie down. Support the joint with something comfortable. If there is bruising or swelling, apply ice wrapped in a cloth if available. Compression with a pad and bandage will help reduce swelling in sprains. If you are concerned about a fracture seek medical advice.

Burning clothes

It's important to prevent heat from getting through clothing to the skin. Burns which take place through clothing are more severe. Stop the person from running around fanning the flames. Ask them to drop to the ground. Wrap them in non-flammable material such as wool to cut off oxygen. Roll them along the ground until the flames are put out. Seek medical advice.

Burns

Burns are the commonest cause of fireworks injury. They are most common amongst boys, on the hands, followed by the face and eyes. Sparklers are five times hotter than boiling oil. Don't give them to children under 5. Make sure they are held at arm's length away from other people at all times. Dispose them in a sand bucket on site.

All burns should be cooled down at once to prevent further damage to tissues. Cold water should be run or poured onto the area for at least ten minutes. Remove jewellery while cooling before swelling starts to happen. Never rub oil, cream or butter onto the burn. It will keep heat in and make matters worse. Wrap the affected area in cling film, a plastic bag or a non-adhesive dressing. Seek medical advice if the burn is larger than the palm of the person's hand, is painless (because nerve endings have been damaged), appears deep, or affects a young child or elderly person.

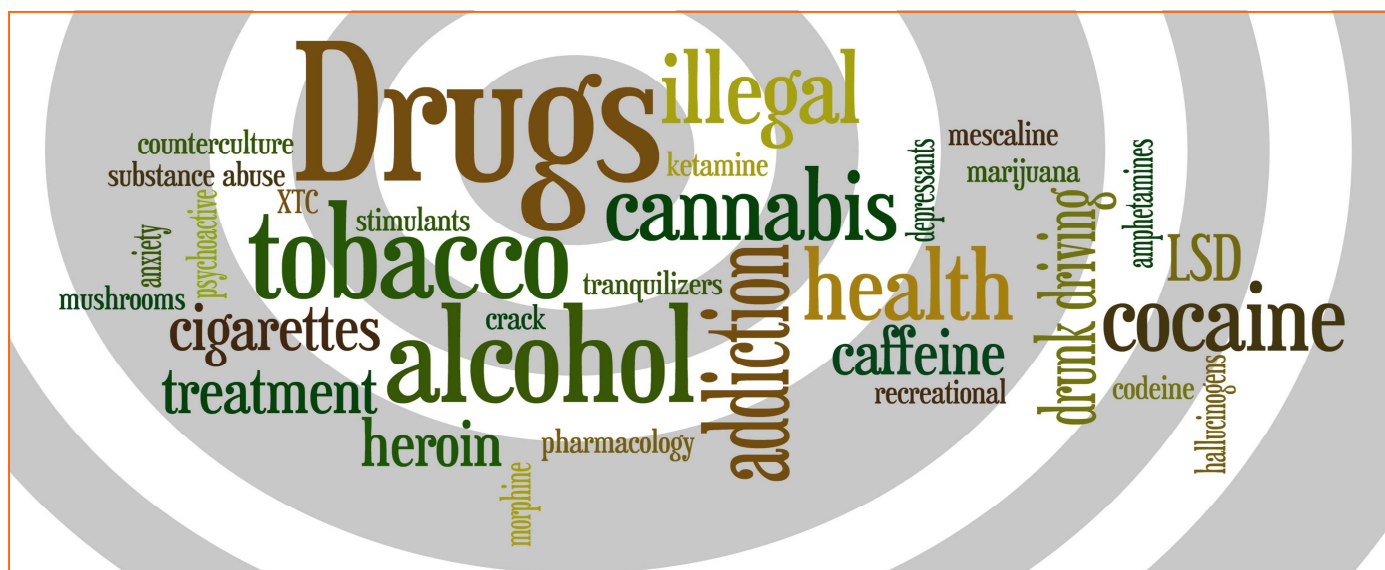
Finally, enjoy the barbecue, but let bangers and burgers cool down before you put them in your mouth. Have a cool drink to hand just in case.

Any Questions

Q: How can I make best use of my GP appointment?

- Plan ahead to make sure you cover everything you want to discuss. List your symptoms, so you don't forget them.
- If you have more than one problem, ask for a longer appointment when you book.
- Be honest about what you think may be causing the problem, and don't be embarrassed. Your doctor will have seen and heard it all before.
- Be clear about what you want the GP to do. Be assertive if you need to, but always be polite.
- Ask the GP to explain anything you don't understand. If there are words you don't understand, ask what they mean or get the doctor to write them down, so you can look them up later.

How to get help if you have a Drug or Alcohol problem



Welcome to the second in our series of articles on topics requested by our patients on the Patient Reference Group's Survey. Your GP is available to hear your concerns about your own or a family member's drug and/or alcohol problems. They can advise you on where to get help and support. However, you may prefer to talk to someone else. Hence, we have compiled this list of confidential local and online resources for you.

Smoking

Our Nursing Team holds Smoking Cessation sessions for individual patients. Ring the surgery to book in for as many attempts as you need. You can also contact Smokescape. It is Buckinghamshire's NHS smoking cessation service. You can arrange support by telephone or text. The numbers are 0845 2707 222 and 07824 625311. Its website address is www.smokescape.org.

Drugs and Alcohol

The Bucks single point of access for young people and adults is SMART. It gives help to reach and maintain recovery. Telephone 0300 123 3166 or email info@smartcjs.org.uk for an assessment. The website address is www.smartcjs.org.uk.

You can chat online with an adviser. You can also ask SMART for help with secure housing, improving your employment prospects and managing debt. Your SMART worker will refer you to STARS (the Structured Treatment and Recovery Service) if you need more medical help. That help includes community detox, psychological or social help. If you require in-patient treatment, STARS will refer you to the hospital team.

Websites

www.talktofrank.com gives up-to-date facts about drugs and where to get help, as well as a live chat service.

Drinkaware, www.drinkaware.co.uk gives advice on alcohol and means to help you towards recovery.

Recovery Support Groups

Narcotics Anonymous, www.ukna.org has a free course of total avoidance from all drugs. It is for groups of recovering addicts. They meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. You can ring the Helpline on 0300 999 1212 from 10am to midnight.

Alcoholics Anonymous, www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk has a 12 Step course. It is free to recovering alcoholics who want to stay sober. You can call the Helpline on 0800 9177 650 or find your local meetings by using the Search box on the website.

Support Groups for Families and Friends

Al-Anon (www.al-anon.org), on 020 7403 0888 and Families Anonymous (Tel 0845 1200 660 or www.famanon.org.uk) give support for family members and friends of people who abuse alcohol and drugs. It runs a 12 Step course. It also has a support group for teenage relatives and carers known as, Alateen. That has online chat and forum facilities. You can contact it on 020 7593 2070, or at www.al-anonuk.org.uk/public/whatalateen

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