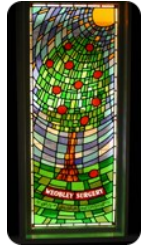


NEWSLETTER



September 2016

Practice Update

Time has flown by since our last practice Newsletter. The extension work at Weobley has been completed and has provided an additional two consulting rooms, separate lobby area for the Dispensary, new extended waiting room and the three existing consulting rooms have had new flooring and cabinetry. We are very grateful to our patients for their patience and understanding during the building work and thank our builders also for their kind consideration.



Please be aware that this is strictly an invite only session.

Immunisation season is upon us and those that are entitled to a free flu vaccination will be contacted shortly either via text message or letter to attend the Vaccination Clinic at the Village Halls on Saturday 22nd October.

MacMillan Coffee Afternoon

We will be hosting a Macmillan Coffee afternoon at Weobley Surgery on Tuesday 18th October 2016 from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm.

Please do come along for tea and cake. Donations would also be very welcome.

NB: Unfortunately the surgery will not be open for appointments or prescriptions

Welcome to Dr. Holly Vaughan

We are absolutely thrilled to have Holly rejoin the practice in the role of a Salaried GP. Many of you will remember her as part of our team a few years ago when she undertook part of her GP training with us.

Holly will be working at both surgeries and has a range of particular interests including women's health eg. coil fitting and contraceptive implants, and minor surgery.

In This Issue

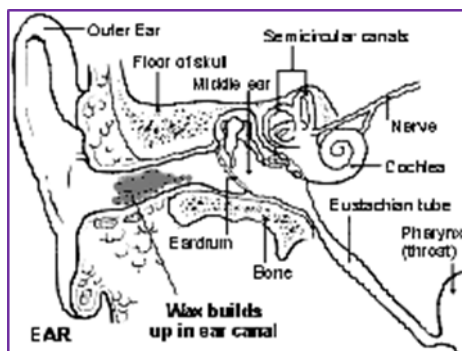
- Practice Update
- Staff Changes
- Ear Syringing Advice
- Text Messaging Update
- Dispensary
- PPG Update



Recent surgery extension work at Weobley

Ear Syringing/Ear Care Information

If there is a build up of wax in your ear(s) please read the following self-help guide as you may not need an appointment. Ear wax is normal and is produced to form a protective coating over the skin in the ear canal. Ears are normally self-cleaning – the movement of your jaw whilst eating and talking helps to move the wax along the canal where it will usually fall out naturally without you noticing.



Why is my ear blocked with wax?

The amount of ear wax produced varies from person to person; some people produce excessive amounts which can lead to a blockage in the ear canal.

You are more likely to develop a blockage of wax in the canal if you:

- use cotton ear buds to clean the ear as this pushes the wax deeper into the canal,
- wear a hearing aid, ear plugs or use in-ear speakers for i-pods or similar - as these can all interfere with the natural process of wax expulsion,
- have abnormally narrow ear canals,
- have a particularly hairy ear canal,
- are elderly – because the ear wax you produce is drier and harder,
- have a dry skin problem such as eczema or psoriasis

Advice to help you manage and prevent ear wax blockage

Ear wax only becomes a problem if it causes deafness, discomfort or if your Health professional requires a clear view of your ear drum.

If you experience any of the following, you should seek advice from your GP or Nurse at the Surgery: pain, discharge or bleeding from the ear, sudden deafness or buzzing, foreign bodies in the ear, dizziness.

If you are not experiencing any of the above, we recommend that you manage the blockage as following:

Olive Oil Drops

The following needs to be done 2-3 times daily for 14 days:

Lie on your side with the affected ear uppermost

Pull the outer ear gently backwards and upwards to straighten the ear canal

Put the 2-3 drops of olive oil into the affected ear(s) and gently massage just in front of the ear

Stay laying on your side to allow the wax to soak in for around 10 minutes

Afterwards, wipe away any excess oil but do not plug your ear with cotton wool as this simply absorbs the oil.

Your hearing problem may initially worsen after first starting to use the olive oil drops; this is why we advise you to concentrate on treating one ear at a time if both ears are blocked with wax. In most cases, after 14 days, the wax will have softened sufficiently to encourage the wax to come out without further intervention. However, if you feel your hearing is still impaired please make an appointment with the Practice Nurse for further advice and management.

Alternatively, an olive oil spray can be purchased over-the-counter or from our dispensaries.

Ear Syringing is only usually considered if the above recommendations have proved to be unsuccessful. Ear wax needs to be softened as above for 5-7 days before attempting to syringe. Although the risks are low and our nurses are specially trained to perform this procedure, there is still a small chance (thought to be around 1 in 1000) of complications occurring - such as a perforated ear drum, middle ear infection, external canal infection or causing ringing in the ear (tinnitus).

Understanding Our Appointment System

Our appointment system allows patients to see the doctor of their choice by being able to pre-book appointments in advance. Please be aware that you may have to wait for an appointment to see the doctor of your choice, if this is not acceptable we will offer you an appointment with another doctor. We can also offer you a telephone consultation with the doctor of your choice if you think that will be of benefit.

Please do not ring the surgery at 8 am hoping to see a specific doctor for a **routine** appointment as this may not always be possible. We recommend that you only ring at 8am if it is important that you speak to a doctor on that day, this way we can offer the best service to all our patients and make contacting the surgery easier.

If your problem is an ongoing problem that has flared up recently then we appreciate you may wish to see the doctor who has been dealing with this problem for you. If you let the receptionist know who the doctor is they will endeavor to book an appointment with the same doctor.

Please be patient with us. We are a very busy surgery and always try to accommodate every request but demand for appointments is high and not every doctor works full time. We will do our best to always book you an appointment with the doctor of your choice but please understand that this may not always be possible

Update on our Dispensary

Patients are politely reminded that there is a **48 hour** minimum turnaround and this does not include weekends and Bank Holidays.

We are seeing an increasing number of patients requesting urgent repeat prescriptions for medications prior to going away on holiday and giving less than the minimum notice. Unfortunately this increases the burden further on our extremely busy dispensary staff and we therefore ask you to plan well ahead if you are planning a holiday or a trip away from home for a period of time to allow your medications to be available for you.

Repeat medications can also be requested via the Patient Access online page.

We are seeing an increasing amount of medications returned that are out of date or unused. The photo below shows wasted medications from only a three month period. These have to be taken away to be destroyed at a cost to the NHS.

We would therefore ask you to be mindful of your needs



Waste medications for 3 months

Staff Changes

There are a number of changes afoot.

Emma Bradley has left the Dispensary for pastures new and **Gill Mazonas**, our Medical Secretary at Weobley, has left the practice to spend more time with her family and grandchild.

Sarah Griffith from our Dispensary at Weobley will also be leaving to take up a new challenge in the middle of September. We wish each of these staff members well in their endeavours.

Gwynnan Smith has joined the Dispensary to replace Emma and is settling in well to her role as Dispensary Assistant.

Sam Price has been appointed to the Medical Secretary role at Weobley and will start in her role at the beginning of October.

An advertisement has already been placed for a replacement for Sarah and it is hoped to appoint to this role shortly.

GPs in training are often seen in the practice and **Francesca Howells** has joined us for a period of four months and **Dr. Rebecca Ogilvie**, who has recently passed her GP exams will be with us until January 2017. The Practice is proud to offer this opportunity to doctors in training.

Text Messaging

Please ensure that you register your mobile telephone number with the Practice if you wish to take advantage of this service. If you do not wish to partake in the service please register your dissent with a member of the Reception Team.



We will be shortly extending the use of our text messaging service to recalls for long term condition appointments, Immunisation and specialist clinics, in addition to reminders to pick up your medications when they are ready.

Patient Advice for Dental Infections

Toothache may result from many different causes including a dental abscess which is due to inflammation and development of pus in the restricted space within or around the tooth. If the pain lasts for more than 1-2 days the patient should consult with a **dentist**. The best way to treat a dental abscess may be drainage and regular painkillers. Antibiotics are not always the best treatment. Your dentist will advise you on the most appropriate treatment for you. Patients who seek consultations at this surgery for dental pain will be advised on first aid treatment and signposted to see a dentist as soon as possible. Patients who do not have a dentist can find details of dentists taking NHS patients be reviewing the NHS Choices website or telephoning 111 where a clinical operator will be able to advise you.



Interesting Facts....

Practice population - Patients by Age Group:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Under 20 years | 1060 (18%) | 20 to 40 years | 840 (14%) |
| 40 to 60 years | 1432 (25%) | Over 60 | 2281 (40%) |

Patients with a Mobile Phone number registered at the surgery:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Under 20 years | 392 (36%)* | 20 to 40 years | 665 (79%)* |
| 40 to 60 years | 976 (68%)* | Over 60 | 918 (40%)* |
| Total | 2952 (52%) | | |

* % figure is the percentage of patients in the corresponding age group with a mobile phone registered at the Practice

Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Patient Participation Group met again on 9th May 2016 where a number of items were discussed, including: text message reminders, online access, provision of wheelchairs, payments by card machine for Dispensary items, patient online survey, 7 day working.

Meeting Agendas and Minutes

These are available on our website:

www.weobleyandstauntonsurgeries.nhs.uk

If you would like to raise an issue for discussion at the PPG please feel free to contact our Chairman Alan or contact the Practice Manager. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 29th September.

Thank You!

We would very much like to thank the Burghill Academy PTFA for the generous donation of £250.00 to allow the purchase of a wheelchair for Weobley Surgery. This will enable better access to the practice for those patients who encounter difficulty due to frailty and/or suffer a long term condition, making it difficult for them to walk from a vehicle to the surgery itself. The wheelchair that is available at Staunton on Wye Surgery is currently undergoing maintenance and will be in service again shortly.

Another Milestone....

Rachel and Oli Penney have completed 25 years at the practice, commencing in post on the 1st June 1991. We're sure they have seen many, many changes over the years... some for the good and others perhaps not so good.

Feedback

You may wish to leave feedback with us when visiting the Practice using the Friends and Family Test feedback cards, in person, or online via the NHS Choices website.

We always welcome any constructive feedback with regard to our services and your experiences. It helps us to review our practices, policies and shape our services of the future.



Contact Us

Weobley & Staunton on Wye Surgeries

Gadbridge Road
Weobley
Herefordshire HR4 8SN
Tel: 01544 318472

Staunton on Wye
Herefordshire
HR4 7LT
Tel: 01981 500227

