



Winter 2008/2009



Welcome to the first of what will be a quarterly issue of our surgery newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to provide a means of communicating what is going on in your surgery along with health promotion advice and any other related subjects. It is as much the patient's newsletter as it is ours and if you have any ideas or suggestions for future articles please let us know! On behalf of everyone at the surgery I would like to wish all of our patients a very merry festive season and best wishes for the New Year. Steve Reeves, Practice Manager

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NEW! ONLINE SERVICES

We are pleased to announce that from December all of our patients will be able to book appointments, cancel appointments and order repeat prescriptions online via our secure website. New patients to the practice will also be able to register with us online.

The new service is completely secure and will require you to have a user name and password that you will need to collect from



our main reception. Further information can be found from the leaflets and posters available from the surgery or on our website.

WE NEED YOUR COMMENTS!

Are there things that we could do better at? Do you have any ideas or suggestions for us? What else would you like to see at the surgery? What do you particularly like about us?

In each waiting room there are suggestion & comment forms that you can use to let us know what you think of our service to you. All comments are anonymous and will be reviewed at surgery and patient meetings. (Please note if you have a formal complaint that requires investigation then please ask a member of reception for the necessary documentation.)

APPOINTMENTS UPDATE

BY JOAN TEBBUTT (RECEPTION SUPERVISOR)

We provide many different clinics and services at The Woottons Surgery. These include same day telephone triage appointments with the GPs and a selection of pre-bookable appointments that can be booked up to two weeks in advance with all of our clinicians.

Evening Surgeries

To enhance and compliment our existing services we have recently introduced Monday evening surgeries. These surgeries have so far proved very popular with patients who find it difficult to come to the surgery during the day. Appointments for evening surgeries are also booked in advance.

Choose and Book

We participate in the Choose and Book service. When you and your GP agree that you need to see a specialist you will be able to choose your hospital or clinic plus the date and time of your appointment. This gives you the flexibility and choice to choose where and when you want to be treated.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL? To help save paper we are asking people if they would like to receive information about the surgery via email. If you would like to have the newsletter and other surgery information emailed to you visit our website or ask at reception for an email information service form.



IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: The health and medical information contained within this newsletter or our website is intended solely for the patients of this practice and should never be used as a substitute for seeking advice from your GP.

The Woottons Surgery has prepared the content of this newsletter responsibly and carefully, but disclaims all warranties, express or implied, as the accuracy of the information contained in any of the materials included, on our website, on other linked websites or on subsequent links.

COUGHS AND COLDS BY SISTER REEVES

Coughs and colds are usually caused by a virus infection. They normally clear away on their own, and antibiotics are usually of no use.



What causes coughs and colds and what are the symptoms?

Most coughs and colds are caused by viruses. Many different viruses can infect the nose and throat. They are passed on by coughing and sneezing the virus into the air. Most people have 3-8 coughs or colds per year. Sometimes several coughs or colds occur one after the other. If you smoke or live with a smoker you have an increased risk of developing coughs and colds.

- The common symptoms are a cough and a runny nose. The cough is often worse at night. Coughing does not damage lungs.
- In addition you may have: a raised temperature (fever), a sore throat, headache, tiredness, and be off your food.
- A build up of mucus behind the eardrums may cause dulled hearing or mild earache.

What are the treatments for coughs and colds?

There is no magic cure! Typically, symptoms are worse in the first 2-3 days and then ease over the next few days. An irritating cough may linger for up to 2-4 weeks after other symptoms have gone. Antibiotics do not kill viruses, so are of no use for common coughs and colds.

Treatment aims to ease symptoms whilst the immune system clears the virus. The most useful treatment is to use paracetamol to ease aches and pains, headaches and fever.

Also make sure you have enough to drink. Dehydration (low body fluid) may develop if you have a fever and do not drink much.

You can buy various other 'cold remedies' and 'cough mixtures'. There is little evidence that they do much good, but some people find them useful. Note: they often contain several ingredients. Some may make you sleepy (which may be useful at bedtime). Some contain paracetamol, so be careful not to take more than the maximum dose if you are already taking paracetamol. Some contain a decongestant which may help to ease a bunged up nose (but notes: do not give decongestants to children under 2 years old, if you are on medication for high blood pressure or if you are pregnant).

Another popular treatment for a bunged-up nose in a baby is to put a few drops of saline (salt water) into the nose just before feeds. Some people feel that this helps to clear the nose to make feeding easier. There is little scientific evidence as to how well this works, but it may be worth a try if feeding is difficult. You can buy saline drops from pharmacies.

What symptoms should I look out for?

Most coughs and colds get better without complications. Sometimes a more serious 'secondary' bacterial infection develops from an initial virus infection. For example, an ear infection, pneumonia, etc. Symptoms to look out for that may mean more than just a cold include:

- Wheeziness, fast breathing or difficulty breathing
- Persistent earache
- A cough that persists longer than 3-4 weeks
- Persistent high temperatures
- Drowsiness
- Chest pains
- Any symptom that you cannot explain

Seek advice if any symptoms develop that you are concerned about. We are skilled at checking you over to rule out serious illness. We may not be able to prescribe anything more effective for a common cough or cold, but a check-over can be reassuring.

THE MMR "CATCH-UP" PROGRAMME BY SISTER GALLOWAY

The surgery is currently inviting all children with an incomplete or zero measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination history to come in to the surgery as part of a "catch up" vaccination programme. Only children found to be overdue or outside the routine childhood immunisation schedule will be invited by the practice. The routine letters for scheduled vaccinations will be sent in the usual way from the child health department. The reason for the "catch up" is because urgent action is needed to prevent a measles epidemic. The Chief Medical Officer recently warned that an epidemic in England could result in 30,000 children being affected. Routinely, two doses of MMR are needed to protect children from this infectious disease – one at 13 months and another at 3 years 4 months – This is to ensure adequate coverage so that children who cannot be immunised for medical reasons are also protected from getting measles. Measles is very serious. It can lead to pneumonia and/or encephalitis and can kill.

If you have a child that you think may not have had the correct number of MMR vaccinations for their age then please don't wait for a letter, make an appointment to see one of the practice nurses. If you are uncertain, then we can discuss your concerns and give you the facts about the MMR. More information can also be obtained from the Department of Health's web site www.immunisation.nhs.uk



WHAT WILL BE YOUR NEW YEARS RESOLUTION? BY SISTER GALLOWAY

Have you been thinking about stopping smoking? Ready to quit? The Woottons Surgery can help you!

We have some experienced smoking cessation advisors who can help you decide the best options to aid your efforts to quit that smoking habit. It has been shown that smokers are more likely to quit successfully if given on going support from trained advisors.

It is never too late to stop smoking. There are always physical and financial benefits and you will feel fitter and more energetic within weeks.

Not convinced? Then firstly think about the harm smoking tobacco can do including many serious & fatal diseases. The most common are Coronary Heart Disease, lung cancer and other lung diseases such as chronic bronchitis, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), emphysema and pneumonia.

Other scary facts

- 83% of people who die from lung disease in England are smokers.
- People who smoke 25 a day are 25 times more likely to die from Lung Cancer than a non-smoker.
- Smoking can ruin a man's sex life and can damage a woman's fertility
- Half the smokers who start in their teens and continue to smoke, will eventually be killed by their smoking habit!
- Passive smoking increases the risk of stroke in non-smokers by 82%.
- Mothers who smoke double the risk of cot death.

Department of Health.

Then consider the many benefits to giving up:

- After 20 minutes, blood pressure and pulse return to normal
- After 8 hours the oxygen level in the blood improves and the chances of having a heart attack start to fall.
- After 3 to 9 months breathing problems, coughing, shortness of breath and wheezing improve.
- And of course you will save money – by not buying a pack of 20 every day you will be able to save enough within 12 months for a great holiday!

So convinced yet?

At the Woottons surgery we can help anyone who wants to quit, whether it is their first attempt or they have tried many times before. Nicotine is as addictive as heroin so it is not surprising it is so hard to kick the habit.

There are nicotine replacement products and other medications that can help with the cravings while learning to live without "lighting up". All these products are available on prescription so it makes financial sense to see us. Smoking Cessation Advisors have lots of advice and

useful tips to offer as well as regular support to get through the first few weeks. We always advise setting a quit day then to take one day at a time. Those trying to quit should not worry about how they are going to manage at next months party or on their summer holidays. They just need to think about the next 24 hours and make plans to keep busy. Every day that goes by without lighting up is another day as a non smoker!

So it's up to you! A New Years Resolution? Make a decision that will affect the rest of your life and the lives of those close to you. Take the next step. Give the surgery a ring and book an appointment for a one to one chat. We can help you help yourself. Alternatively you can ring the quit line on **0800 0854 113** or go to <http://www.significant.co.uk/> for lots more advice.



WEAR IT PINK DAY

Friday 31st October some of the team dared to wear it pink to help raise money for the breast cancer campaign 'Wear it Pink' and raised £48.17p. A big pink thank you to everyone who supported us.



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP IMPORTANT NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 10TH MARCH 2009 12.30 NORTH WOOTTON VILLAGE HALL

This will be the first meeting of 2009 and we will be looking to appoint a new chairperson and redefining the purpose of the group. Minutes of previous meetings available on or website. All welcome to come along.