**Winter Newsletter 2017**

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**Cough and Cold Advice During Winter**

There is no cure for the common cold and antibiotics have no effect on viruses, but you can treat the symptoms with some practical self-help measures and over the counter medicines. Your local Pharmacist has been trained to advise you on what is best for you. Wash hands regularly with soap and water and keep surfaces clean.

**Over usage of Antibiotics**

There is new guidance as to how we should be using antibiotics; this is from NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). The main points are:

• Antibiotics such as penicillin, only work on bacterial infections and are useless to treat viruses

• Virus infections are far more common and 9 out of 10 sore throats, colds etc. are caused by them and don’t need any treatment other than fluids and Paracetamol or ibuprofen.

To meet this guidance we may ask you to come to the surgery to be examined to see if antibiotic is really needed.

**Christmas Closures**

During the Christmas period we will be closed:

Monday 25th December 2017

Tuesday 26th December 2017

Monday 1st January 2017

**To access a doctor in an emergency please telephone and listen to message:**

**01302 349431**

Make sure you Choose Well over this period as there are many different ‘Choose well’ ways that you can help yourself get the right kind of care:

* **Self-Care** – look after yourself at home with a well-stocked medicine cabinet
* **Pharmacist** – for expert advice on common illnesses and the best medicines to treat them
* **GP** – for illnesses that just won’t go away, arrange to see th emost appropriate clinician.
* **A&E or 999** – only if you need very urgent medical attention

**Always pick the care you need**

**Prescriptions**

With Christmas fast approaching please make sure you have enough medication to cover you over the holiday period. To order your medication call the Prescription Line on **01302 811 188**, bear in mind that prescription takes 48 working hours to produce.

**Well Being Checks**

The practice is currently running Well Being Health Checks, if you meet the criteria held you will receive a letter inviting you to have a Well Being Check During this check a quick blood test will be taken and a few questions will be asked, the answers of which will be forwarded to the patient.

**Christmas Jumper Day**

On Friday 15th December we took part in the Christmas Jumper Day organised every year to raise money for the Save The Children Charity. We wore our glaring Christmas jumpers and had a great day raising money for Save The Children.

**Your Patient Participation Group needs you:**

Patient participation is a unique partnership between patients, GPs and their practice which is essential to and results in high quality and responsive care.

Come and have your say at our Patient Participation Group. Next year’s dates are:

22nd February

19th April

21st June

23rd August

18th October

13th December

You will be representing the patient population at The Medical Centre and if there is any services you would like to hear from or anything you would like to discuss please get in touch and join us at the next meeting.

**DNA Policy:**

When a patient fails to attend an appointment with a healthcare professional a note is made in their electronic medical record. If a patient fails to attend 2 appointments within a 12 month period, the patient will then receive a letter reminding them of the importance of cancelling an unwanted appointment in good time and detailing the consequence of not cancelling. If they fail to attend another appointment in 12 months, the Practice Manager will write to them to say this has been brought to the attention of the Partners where the usual next course would be to remove the patient from our list without further discussion unless they can provide a valid explanation in support of them remaining on the list.

If you do need to cancel an appointment please give at least 24 hours’ notice. Please also remember that if you cancel an appointment it may not be possible to offer you an alternative appointment on the same day.

In the last 3 months we have had a total of 610 (did not attend) appointments which are shown below:

* September- 177
* October- 203
* November- 230

**To cancel appointments please call:**

**01302 349431**