

The Elms Medical Centre Newsletter



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HEALTH & WELLBEING IN THE WINTER – MET OFFICE

There are some practical steps that you can make to help keep you warm and healthy in the winter months:

- If you are aged 65 or over, pregnant, have certain medical conditions, live in a residential or nursing home or are the main carer for someone – get your free flu jab.
- Keep warm by setting your heating to the right temperature (18-21 degrees Celsius) you can keep your home warm & your bills as low as possible.
- Look after yourself & check on older neighbours or relatives to ensure they are safe, warm & well. Layer your clothing to stay warm & wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside.
- Food is a vital source of energy, which helps to keep your body warm. Try to have hot meals & drinks regularly & keep active in the home if you can.
- Get your home ready for winter. Get heating & cooking appliances checked, flues & chimneys swept ensuring ventilation points are not blocked. Ensure you have an audible carbon monoxide alarm which is EN50291 compliant, but fitting an alarm should not replace regular maintenance of appliances.
- Good hand hygiene can help prevent the spread of Norovirus.
- Learn a few simple first aid steps; such as how to deal with strains and sprains or broken bones, as trips and falls can increase in icy weather. There are a number of accredited first aid providers & useful education resources available.
- Always check the weather forecast and ensure you have enough food & medicines.

WHAT IS COPD? (CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE)

COPD is a name used to describe various conditions when people have difficulty breathing because of long-term damage to their lungs and includes chronic bronchitis & emphysema. If you have COPD looking after your general health is very important.

Vaccinations – ensure you have had your pneumococcal vaccination (one off vaccination) & your flu vaccination annually.

EAT WELL - eat small regular meals during the day. Becoming too full can make you more breathless. Eat plenty of fruit & vegetables to prevent constipation which can also make you breathless. If you are worried about a poor appetite talk to one of our GPs or Nurses.

STAY HYDRATED – unless your GP has told you to limit your fluid intake, drinking 6-8 glasses of water a day will help thin mucus and reduce coughing.

KEEP ACTIVE – staying active is essential for your general wellbeing & fitness. Being physically active can almost halve the risk of you having to go into hospital.

FEELING DOWN? – it is common for people with COPD to feel anxious and/or depressed. Please see your GP or Nurse who can offer advice to help in different ways.

BENEFITS – If COPD affects your normal day to day activities you may be entitled to government support. Please ask the surgery for further information.

AVOID INFECTIONS – try and avoid getting too near to other people who have coughs or colds. Washing your hands is the best way to stop germs from spreading.

COLD WEATHER – avoid going out if it is cold weather, and if you do have to go out wrap up well.

MOST IMPORTANTLY – if you would like any further information please see your GP or Nurse.

EUROPEAN ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS DAY



UNFORTUNATELY NO AMOUNT OF ANITBIOTICS WILL GET RID OF YOUR COLD. THE BEST WAY TO TREAT MOST COLDS, COUGHS OR SORE THROATS IS PLENTY OF FLUIDS AND REST.

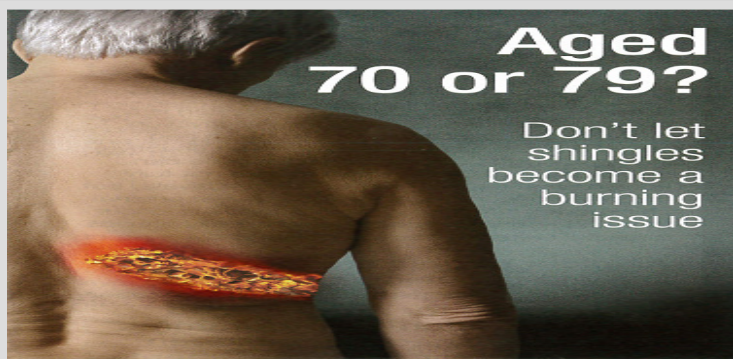
YOUR GP WILL ONLY PRESCRIBE ANTIBIOTICS WHEN YOU NEED THEM, FOR EXAMPLE FOR A KIDNEY INFECTION OR PNEUMONIA. ANTIBIOTICS MAY BE LIFE-SAVING FOR INFECTIONS SUCH AS MENINGITIS. BY NOT USING THEM UNNECESSARILY, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO WORK WHEN WE NEED THEM.

The Elms News

The Elms have raised £22.00 for the Royal National Institute for the Blind & £75.00 for Macmillan Cancer.

WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OUR PATIENTS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.





SHINGLES

As older people are more likely to get shingles, the new national shingles immunisation programme for people aged 70 with a catch up programme for people aged 79, has been introduced by the Department of health from September 2013, to help protect those most at risk from shingles. Please contact the surgery if you would like more information.

Symptoms of Shingles:

- Shingles usual affects one side of the body, often on the trunk, head, neck or the eye.
- Usually starts with a headache and tiredness and you are likely to feel unwell.
- It is very common to feel a tingling or burning pain in the area of the skin before the rash appears.
- Within a few days to 3 weeks this area of pain will start to develop a red rash, which turns into painful fluid-filled blisters.
- A few days after appearing, the blisters dry out and scabs form where they have been.
- It usually takes 2 to 4 weeks for the rash to heal completely.
- Most people recover but some may experience long-term effects.

STAFF TRAINING DAYS

The next scheduled training days for the Practice are as follows:
20th November 2013, 11th December 2013 & 23rd January 2014.

DNA APPOINTMENTS

There has been an increase in the number of patients failing to attend their appointments. In August there were 105, September 112 and October 130 , GP and Nurse appointments that patients **DID NOT ATTEND.**

FLU VACCINATIONS

So far we have had a great uptake on our flu vaccinations; October has been a busy month!

If you haven't had a vaccination yet there is still time to book, please contact the surgery to see if you are eligible for a flu jab.

From September 2013, all children aged 2 years and 3 years are being offered the Fluenz vaccine. This is a flu vaccination given by spraying a tiny amount of liquid into each nostril. All 2 & 3 year olds will be invited by the Practice to have their flu vaccination.

CHLAMYDIA - SCREENING TEST INFORMATION FOR 15 -24 YEAR OLDS

Did you know? You can get a test kit here at the surgery and all information is strictly confidential. The kits are kept in the patient toilet or waiting room area. To complete the screening, Females take a swab and Males a urine test. Once screening completed, fill in the form inside the pack, seal the envelope with your sample and hand in to one of our Reception Team. The test kit will then be sent to the laboratory and you will be contacted with your results from the Chlamydia Office.

DON'T DELAY HAVE A TEST TODAY. IT'S QUICK EASY & CONFIDENTIAL

MOVEMBER

At Movember the awareness raised through the power of the moustache is very important. The growth of a new moustache prompts a conversation, and in turn generates awareness and educates people on the health issues faced by men. Awareness and education can then prompt people to take action and change behaviour which helps change and saves lives.

On average men die 4 years younger than women and the suicide rate is 4 times higher for men than women. From Movember's perspective the reasons for the poor state of men's health includes:

- Lack of awareness & understanding of the health issues men face
- Men not openly discussing their health & how they're feeling
- Reluctance to seek help when men don't feel physically or mentally well
- Men engaging in risky activities that threaten their health
- Stigmas surrounding mental health.

Movember challenges men to grow a moustache for the 30 days of November, thereby changing there appearance and the face of men's health. In October Mo Bros sign up at Movember.com and on the 1st of November , with a clean-shaven face, then start their Mo growing journey. For more information you can email info.uk@movember.com or call 020 7952 2060.

Chlamydia
worth talking about

nhs.uk/worthtalkingabout

Chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI but most people who catch it don't get any symptoms. Say 'yes' to the test and find out if you've got it. Remember you won't be protected against STIs without a condom.