Looking after yourself through winter

As we get older, our bodies respond differently to the cold which can leave us more susceptible to serious health problems. But with a little preparation, and by following some simple suggestions, you can stay healthy, safe and comfortable this winter. Below are a few other tips to stay healthy through winter.

- Wipe out winter tiredness by going to bed and waking up the same time everyday
- Eat more fruit and veg to help boost your immune system
- Drink more milk as it's a great source of protein, vitamin A and B12 and calcium
- Try new activities and keep active even when you feel like curling up on the sofa
- Have a hearty breakfast like porridge to keep you fuller for longer and help keep you warm

Prescriptions over the Christmas holidays

Just a reminder if you are on repeat medication please make sure you order so you do not run out over the Christmas and New Year period. We will be closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's day, prescription requests take 48 working hours to be processed, this does not include weekends bank holidays or days we are closed over Christmas.

If you need to access medical advice over the Christmas holiday please contact 111 or in an emergency contact 999.

Stocking up over Christmas

Most stores and pharmacies will also close over Christmas so make sure you are stocked up on paracetamol, ibuprofen and cold and flu like medicines to keep you tied over if you suddenly become unwell over Christmas.

Flu Vaccinations - Please book whilst we have stock available.

The flu is not only unpleasant it can also develop into something more serious like pneumonia. Flu viruses are constantly changing so it’s important you get your flu jab every year. We are still taking bookings here at the surgery if you are eligible on the NHS or if you are aged 65 and over, if you have not had yours yet please call us to book an appointment. If you are unsure if you are eligible please check our website or call and speak to one of our reception team.

Econsult - consult your GP on the go!

Needing to talk to a GP on the go? Why not give Econsult a try? Econsult can be found on our website home page, you can send pictures, messages and request sick notes that Drs will reply to within 48 working hours. Just click on the button that says webgp (as shown right) on our website front page and follow the instructions.

Chawton Park PPG Chairperson Pam - details her experiences of using eConsult

During the Saturday of the Easter weekend, when the surgery was closed for the holiday, I developed a very itchy, painful rash at the base of my spine... I didn't think I needed A&E and rather than phone 111, I used eConsult... I selected the 'rash' option and was asked if I had any symptoms that would suggest meningitis. I didn't, so I answered the questions that followed to the best of my ability and also uploaded a photograph (I will not be sharing it on Facebook before you ask). As the pain extended down my right leg I suspected it might be shingles at the end of my sciatic nerve. I submitted my answers and
immediately received an automated email in confirmation of my consultation along with a copy of the questions and my answers. I was assured I would receive a response from the surgery by the Wednesday... in fact the response came a day earlier. The email also asked me to get in touch again if I had not received a response by the given date...I saw the Doctor.. it was shingles and further advice was given.

Would I use eConsult again? I certainly would... Do try it and let us know if it worked well for you...

Pam

Winter blues and depression
Lots of people get depressed in winter, or suffer from the winter blues.

What causes winter blues?
It can feel as though winter blues is just a myth, but there’s sound scientific evidence to support the idea that the season can affect our moods. Most believe that the problem is related to the way our bodies react to daylight. One theory is that light entering the eye causes changes in hormone levels in the body. It also means we produce higher melatonin, causing lethargy and symptoms of depression.

What leads to depression?
Depression can come on very suddenly as a result of physical illness, experiences dating back to childhood, unemployment, bereavement, family problems or other life changing events. Chronic illnesses can also be linked to depression this can include heart disease, back pain and cancer. Sometimes there is no clear reason for depression but, whatever the original cause, identifying what may affect how you feel and the things that are likely to trigger depression is an important first step.

How do I get help?
- Counselling - Gives you the chance to talk through everyday issues
- Cognitive therapy - Address the way you think and how it can cause depression
- Psychotherapy - This is more intensive than counselling, it looks in to how past experience may be affecting your life now
- Anti-depressants - In many cases your GP will recommend anti-depressants (they do work for many people but they do have side effects, you can discuss this with your GP.)

Moving Medicine
Doing more physical activity can just be about doing small, everyday things a little bit differently - like standing up while you're on the phone, Hoovering one more time a week or just getting off the bus one stop early. Try changing just a few minutes of your daily routine, you'll be amazed at the impact it has on how good you feel, your health and your chances of further major illnesses. If it seems daunting or you'd like to know more about what physical activity means for your particular illness, ask your healthcare professional about it. They'll be able to give you advice, information and one of our jolly useful patient information leaflets to get you started. ([www.MovingMedicine.ac.uk](http://www.MovingMedicine.ac.uk), accessed 20/11/2018)

This month we will be looking in to depression and how staying active can help. Please find attached a leaflet and further information can be found on [https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/disease/depression/#start](https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/disease/depression/#start)

Newsletter by email
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