The Good Practice

NEWSLETTER

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| white cherry blossoms | |
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| **WELCOME**  An update on current advice for patients who have been shielding  Guidance and rules have been changing very quickly during this pandemic. We will try to keep you up to date on the rules as they change, particularly now that COVID-19 disease levels have decreased over the last few weeks in London  The latest government advice for shielded patients is:  You can now leave your home if you wish, as long as you are able to maintain strict social distancing.  If you choose to spend time outdoors, this can be with members of your own household.  If you live alone, you can spend time outdoors with one person from another household. Ideally, this should be the same person each time.  If you do go out, you should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart | Seeing and Treating Patients as Covid 19 infection rates fall  Thank you to all our patients who have worked with us during this period using our e consult, video and telephone consultation systems. This has made the care and treatment of our patients much safer. Moreover, many patients have told us they can get an appointment much quicker now.  As we are given more freedom to travel and see others, we do not think that practices like ours will return to how we used to work. The experts think that the infection might be a risk for years to come and so we will have to change how we interact.  Ways of working in the future to help more patients  We will build on the success of the e consultations, video and telephone consultations, electronic prescribing and providing a clean and safe space for examinations. We will provide much more GP access on the day, avoiding the old system of weeks to be seen, and we will provide more home visits and support from social prescribers (more on this later), community nurses and pharmacists. |  |
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**RESUMPTION OF SERVICES**

Patients waiting for Cervical Screening

We are pleased to announce that we will very shortly be resuming our cervical screening programme. We are aware some patients have missed their smear test due to COVID 19. We will contact you shortly and we aim to see everyone over the next few weeks.

Immunisations for Children

During the outbreak we, and other practices, have continued to provide children’s vaccinations. We are all agreed that we must continue to prevent the spread of infections, such as measles, which has been increasing as immunisation falls. If your child is due to have their vaccinations, please do keep your appointment. We are also still offering catch up vaccinations for those who missed their measles vaccinations in the past.

Treatments for Hay Fever

Are you suffering from Hay Fever? Hay fever is caused by an allergy to pollen. The symptoms of hay fever are caused when a person has an allergic reaction to pollen.

Common hay fever symptoms are:

* a runny, itchy and/or blocked nose
* sneezing
* itchy eyes

Pollen is a fine powder released by plants as part of their reproductive cycle. Pollen contains proteins that can cause the nose, eyes, throat and sinuses to become swollen, irritated and inflamed.

### How to treat hay fever

Many hay fever symptoms can be controlled with over-the-counter medication at your local pharmacy.

* **Steroid nasal sprays** help to prevent or reduce inflammation in the lining of the nose and some can help to relieve watery eyes.  
  **Antihistamines** help to relieve a runny nose, sneezing, itching and watery eyes. Some types of antihistamines make you drowsy and are best taken before bed. Newer antihistamines are less likely to make you drowsy and are a common choice for children and people with milder or occasional symptoms of hay fever.  
  **Decongestant nasal sprays** and tablets are used to unblock the nose. They should never be taken for more than a few days at a time.  
  **Eye drops** can be used to treat itchy or watery eyes.
* Useful Links
* [**NHS**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hay-fever/) – Hay fever
* [**Met Office**](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/health/public/pollen-forecast) – Pollen forecast

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| Close-up Photography of Cup of Coffee | Thank YOU I would like to send special thanks to our Patient Participation Group for setting up a coffee morning for patients. Due to COVID 19 we have had to delay the start but once circumstances allow, the PPG will begin holding coffee mornings every Wednesday. We do hope you will come along to the surgery. Everyone is welcome and you can chat about health issues or anything you wish.  Dr Hammond and all the team |
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