

CROSS DEEP SURGERY



Issue 11

Bulletin

Summer 2016

LET THE SUN SHINE IN (but take care...)

Most of us feel better when the sun is shining. Research suggests that sunlight stimulates the pineal gland in the brain to produce certain chemicals called 'tryptamines'. These chemicals improve our mood. Sunlight also triggers the body's production of Vitamin D which helps to strengthen bones, muscles and the body's immune system.



But, there's a down side. High temperatures, especially if accompanied by high humidity, can make us feel uncomfortable and the UVA and UVB rays in sunlight can cause serious damage to skin. The very young and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the effects of heat and sunlight but the following advice applies to us all whatever our age and whether we are at home or abroad.

- * Light coloured, loose fitting cotton garments are far more comfortable in hot weather. It is also sensible to cover-up with long sleeves, trousers or skirts, a hat and sunglasses.
- * Protect yourself from harmful rays by wearing a sunscreen (at least SPF15) and reapplying frequently especially after swimming. Sunscreen should be applied to all areas not covered by clothing—pay particular attention to the back of the neck and tops of feet. And don't assume you are safe from sunburn if it's cloudy or overcast—around 30-40% of the sun's rays can get through clouds.
- * The effects of dehydration can make us feel very unwell (symptoms include headache and dizziness) so make sure you have plenty of water or other cold non-alcoholic drinks.
- * Avoid sunbathing between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm when the harmful rays are at their strongest. Stay in the shade where possible.
- * Take particular care with regard to babies and toddlers. Their skin is far more sensitive than adult skin and repeated exposure to sunlight could lead to serious problems in later life. All young children should wear hats, a high factor sunscreen and be encouraged to remain in the shade.

Enjoy the sun but take these few sensible precautions and avoid overheating and sunburn that could have potentially serious consequences in the longer term.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

They are a Massive Waste of Money and Resources

In June there were 138 missed appointments. On average each GP appointment costs in the region of £18 so, in June alone, almost £2,500 was wasted. Quite apart from the cost involved, these were 138 appointments which could have been made available to other patients.

We accept that, occasionally, missing an appointment might be unavoidable but, generally speaking, there is no excuse. If you are unable to keep an appointment or no longer require it please ring to let us know as soon as possible—your appointment can then be offered to somebody else. Also, bear in mind that as a practice we operate a non-attendance policy which could result in persistent offenders being removed from the practice list.

We have a **text messaging system** which sends reminders of forthcoming appointments so if you would like reminders please ensure that we have an up-to-date mobile number for you.

CROSS DEEP SURGERY

Practice Charter

We aim to provide the best possible service to our patients and hope you will feel that we achieve that aim. The care of your health is a partnership between you and the Primary Health Care Team. The success of that partnership depends on an understanding of each other's needs and co-operation between us.

Our responsibility to you:

- ◆ You will be greeted courteously
- ◆ You have a right to confidentiality
- ◆ You have the right to see your medical records subject to the limitations of the law
- ◆ You will be seen by your own (preferred) doctor whenever possible
- ◆ You will be referred to a consultant when your GP thinks it is necessary
- ◆ You will be given the result of any test or investigation on request or at your next appointment
- ◆ Your repeat prescription will be ready for collection within 72 hours (3 working days) of your request
- ◆ Your suggestions and comments about the services offered will be considered sympathetically and any complaint dealt with promptly

Your responsibility to us:

- ◆ Please treat all surgery staff with the same respect. We reserve the right to remove patients from our list if they exhibit violent or abusive behaviour towards any member of staff or other patients
- ◆ Do not ask for information about anyone other than yourself
- ◆ Tell us of any change of name, address contact numbers and email addresses, so that our records are accurate
- ◆ Please cancel your appointment if you are unable to attend
- ◆ Please be punctual, but be prepared to wait if your own consultation is delayed by an unexpected emergency
- ◆ Use the tear off slip to request your repeat prescription whenever possible. Please attend for review, when asked, before your next prescription is due

HEALTH HELP NOW

(if you need medical help fast but it's not a life-threatening emergency)

Health Help Now is a website that has been developed with input from Richmond GPs, hospital doctors and other healthcare professionals to help people in Richmond upon Thames to find the right service for their health needs, especially when they need medical help fast but it is not a life-threatening emergency.

The website lists common symptoms and offers suggestions for treatment. Health Help Now then links through to local services, shows whether they are open or closed and their location. For people using one of the recommended alternatives to A & E it could mean a more convenient service, little or no time in a waiting room and treatment by professionals who are experts in common illnesses and injuries rather than A & E staff who specialise in emergencies. By using Health Help Now you are also helping the NHS save A&E for those who really need it.

Health Help Now can be accessed on <http://www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net/> (select Richmond upon Thames from the list on the home page)

The website has been optimised for use on mobile devices that have internet access. This means it can be used on any smartphone or tablet with an internet browser. It is also available as an App.

HOLIDAYING ABROAD? Don't forget our Travel Clinic

Our comprehensive travel vaccination service is run by our nursing staff and fully supported by the doctors. We provide all vaccines necessary for foreign travel along with anti-malarial prophylaxis and up-to-date travel related health advice. Some of the vaccines will be available on the NHS whilst others will need to be paid for. Please request your vaccinations as soon as you have made your travel arrangements. Some vaccinations need to be given two weeks prior to travel in order for them to be effective so we ask that you complete a travel vaccination request form at least six weeks prior to your travels to ensure that you are fully protected. Travel vaccination request forms may be downloaded from www.crossdeepsurgery.com or obtained from Reception.

