

# CROSS DEEP SURGERY



Issue 5

Bulletin

Winter 2014

## IS IT A COLD OR IS IT FLU.....?

Flu is not a "bad cold" and a bad cold is not "a touch of flu". Although colds and flu share some of the same symptoms they are caused by different viruses and are different conditions. It used to be said that if you can manage to pick up a £10 note you find in the street, you don't have the flu! Not the best basis for a diagnosis, so what are the symptoms?

### Colds

Symptoms develop over one or two days and include a sore throat, sneezing, a runny nose (beginning with clear mucus that develops into thicker, green mucus as the cold progresses and then a blocked nose), and a cough.

Somebody with a cold may also suffer with a mild fever, earache, tiredness and headache.

The symptoms usually begin to improve after a few days but some colds can last for up to two weeks.

### Flu

Flu usually comes on much more quickly than a cold, and symptoms include headache, muscle aches and pains, sweating, a sudden fever of 38-40C (100-104F), a dry chesty cough and a feeling of exhaustion with the need to lie down.

A person with flu may also have a runny nose and be prone to sneezing, but these are not usually the defining symptoms of flu.



Flu symptoms appear one to three days after infection and most people recover within a week, although you may feel tired for longer.

If you are generally fit and healthy you can usually manage the symptoms of a cold or flu without seeing a doctor. Look after yourself by resting, refraining from strenuous activity and by drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids to avoid dehydration. Ibuprofen or paracetamol can relieve aches and pains. **Colds and flu are caused by viruses so antibiotics are of no use.**

However, if you have a chronic condition such as lung or heart disease or if you develop a very high temperature, a severe headache or chest or abdominal pain, you should seek medical help. The very young and the over 65s are more at risk from complications and help should be sought sooner rather than later.

**DR GRAEME ROBERTSON** retired on 31 December this year. He has been with the practice since 1986, latterly as senior partner, and he will be much missed—we wish him all the very best for a thoroughly enjoyable retirement.

**Dr Eloise Weeks** joined the practice with effect from 1 January 2015.

## Late arrivals and missed appointments

When you book an appointment, please take into account the time it will take you to travel to the surgery and plan to arrive in good time. We do understand that an occasional delay is unavoidable and if you arrive within a reasonable time of your appointment you will be seen. However, if you arrive more than 10 minutes late you will only be seen at the discretion of the doctor or nurse concerned, although generally patients will be asked to rebook.

If you are unable to keep an appointment please let Reception know as soon as possible. We have a text messaging appointment reminder system which will remind you of your appointment by means of a text to your mobile phone. (If you do not receive such texts and would like to do so please update your mobile number with Reception.)

One patient's late arrival can have knock-on effects causing the doctors and nurses to run late—this in turn increases waiting times and causes frustration to the doctors, nurses, reception staff and primarily to other patients. Missed appointments and late arrivals that lead to cancellations mean that appointments that could have been made available to other patients are wasted. It is a massive waste of resources.

The practice has a DNA (Did Not Attend) policy which involves pro-actively contacting patients who miss appointments more than once in a 12 month period. If a patient continues to miss appointments thereafter the practice will take action and patients may be removed from the practice list.

Help us to help you by not missing appointments and by arriving on time. Thank you.



# What can I do when the Surgery is closed?

It can be very distressing if you or a member of your family becomes unwell during the evenings or at weekends—what do you do, where do you go for advice?



**Websites** [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk) offers advice on all sorts of illnesses and conditions—you can access the same directory of leaflets that are available to the doctors at the surgery.

Advice on a range of health issues and minor ailments is also available from [www.nhs.net](http://www.nhs.net) and [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

**Pharmacies** Your local pharmacist can offer practical help and advice.

**NHS 111** They can provide medical advice and direct you to various sources of information and local services. Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Access by dialling 1-1-1 which is free from both landlines and mobiles.

**GP Out of Hours Service** The practice has an Out of Hours Service which patients can access when we are closed. This GP-led service can be contacted on 0300 024 0000. The service is only operational when the practice is closed.

**Local NHS Walk-in Centre** This is appropriate for patients with minor injuries and illnesses.

**Teddington Memorial Hospital, Hampton Road, Teddington, TW11 0JL** (Tel: 020 8714 4004)—you will be seen by a health care professional.

Opening Times: Monday-Friday 8 am–10 pm Saturday-Sunday and Bank Holidays 8 am–9 pm

**Local NHS Urgent Care Centre** This is for minor injuries and illnesses that require **urgent treatment** only.

**Hounslow Urgent Care Centre, West Middlesex Hospital, Twickenham Road, Isleworth, TW7 6AF**

(Tel: 020 8321 6700)

Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

(A Patient Information Leaflet is available from Reception)

**Where somebody is seriously ill or injured dial 999 or go to your local Accident and Emergency Department**

Please remember these services are intended for medical emergencies only — inappropriate use could prevent somebody else from receiving urgent treatment in a life-threatening situation

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## SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Cross Deep Surgery is committed to supporting carers. We try to identify carers by various means but, inevitably, some will fall through the net so, if you are a carer, please make yourself known to Reception. You might also like to **consider joining our Patient Participation Group** where you can air your views and voice your concerns. If you have access to the Internet you will find information and advice at <http://www.crossdeepsurgery.co.uk/Carers.php>

In addition to the practice there are a number of organisations also committed to supporting carers -

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

0208 891 7971 **0208 744 2442** Emergency out of hours

(Social Services may be able to help with things such as Meals on Wheels, respite care, day care, aids and adaptation in the home etc)

### **THE CARERS CENTRE**

0208 867 2380 [www.carers.org/richmond](http://www.carers.org/richmond)

### **CARING WITH CONFIDENCE**

0800 849 2349 / 0113 385 4491 [www.caringwithconfidence.net](http://www.caringwithconfidence.net)

### **HOMELINK RESPITE**

0208 255 1992 [www.homelinkdaycare.co.uk](http://www.homelinkdaycare.co.uk)

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING FUND**

0845 601 8815 / 0115 945 0700 [www.ilf.org.uk](http://www.ilf.org.uk)

This special fund could assist severely disabled people who meet its eligibility criteria to buy the personal assistance they need – from a private carer or care agency – to live at home rather than in residential care.