

CROSS DEEP SURGERY



Issue 20

Bulletin

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MANAGE YOUR MEDICINES

and help reduce the massive cost to the NHS of wasted and unused medication

Doctors, nurses and pharmacists understand that sometimes people struggle with taking their medicines, especially those people who need to take multiple pills at precise times.



Some people simply forget to take their pills—some others may be worried about side-effects and be scared to embark on a course of medicine or they may decide to stop taking a prescribed medicine if they think it isn't helping them. On the other hand, some people are worried they will run out of prescribed medicines and request far more than they need and stockpile them at home.

Not taking medicines correctly could make your condition worse and waste NHS money that could otherwise be used elsewhere. (The Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group estimate that medicines waste in Richmond alone costs around £1.1 million a year!).

Following a few simple guidelines will help you to manage your medicines and will also save the NHS money.

- ◆ Make sure that you understand exactly how and when to take a prescribed medicine and **follow the instructions**—if in doubt, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.
- ◆ If you find it difficult to remember to take your medicines, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about reminder charts, dose record charts and medicine boxes which contain the correct dose for the correct time of day. Larger, easier to read labels are also available on request.
- ◆ **Let your doctor know if, for whatever reason, you have stopped taking a medicine** that has been prescribed for you.
- ◆ **Do not order medicines that you do not need** (you will still be able to order that medicine in the future when you need it).

- ◆ **Check what medicines you still have at home before re-ordering**—make sure you tick only the appropriate boxes for the medicines you need on the repeat prescription form.
- ◆ **Do not stockpile medicines.** Some medicines have a very short shelf life and can become ineffective or change chemically leading to further health problems if taken after the use-by date. Unused medicines kept at home are also a safety risk for children.
- ◆ **Return unused medicines to a pharmacy for disposal.** Even if not opened these medicines cannot be recycled or used by anyone else because their safety and effectiveness cannot be guaranteed.

FLU JABS

As many of you will know, there were problems nationally with the supply of the flu vaccine for the over-65s and we were forced to cancel appointments, sometimes more than once, for which we apologise.

If you have still not received a flu jab please contact Reception to make a further appointment.

DON'T FORGET YOUR LOCAL PHARMACIST IF YOU NEED ADVICE



All pharmacists can recognise many common health complaints. They can give advice or, where appropriate, medicines that will help clear up the problem.

If your problem is more serious and needs the attention of a GP, your pharmacist will recognise this and advise you to see your GP instead.

NHS E-REFERRAL SERVICE

The NHS e-Referral Service (e-RS) combines electronic booking with a choice of place, date and time for a first hospital or clinic appointment.

If your doctor would like you to see a specialist they will discuss with you what choices are available. In due course you will receive a letter from the hospital/clinic, offering you an appointment—you will need to confirm as soon as possible that you will be able to attend on the specified date. (Very occasionally you may receive a letter asking you to phone the hospital to make an appointment.)

If subsequently you need to change or cancel your appointment, details of how this may be done will be found on your appointment letter.

If you are unable to make the date given to you, please always remember to cancel your appointment—not attending costs the NHS approximately £160 and you will be discharged without being offered a further appointment.

If you wish you can change or manage your appointment online using the Patient Web Application—

www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/appointment-booking/Pages/about-the-referral-system.aspx

You will need your Unique Booking Reference Number and your password both of which will be available on your appointment letter.

NOT SURE WHAT TO DO OR WHERE TO GO?

Conditions such as -

Grazed knee

Coughs and colds

Sore throat

Diarrhoea

Headache

SELF-CARE

OR

PHARMACY

Make sure your medicine cupboard is stocked with over-the-counter remedies, plasters and dressings, antiseptic lotion etc.

And use your local pharmacy for advice on common conditions and medicines to treat them.

Ear pain

Chest infection

Urinary infection

Any condition that has not responded to self-medication

YOUR GP

If you have an illness or injury that is not urgent, make a routine appointment to see your doctor. (Same-day appointments are available for more urgent conditions.)

Out of hours, call 111 and you will be directed to an appropriate service that meets your needs—this may include referral to a GP at an Urgent Care Centre if appropriate.

Unsure, need urgent medical advice but it is not a 999 emergency

NHS 111

Call 111—you will be given advice and directed to an appropriate service that meets your needs.

Strains and sprains
Suspected broken limbs
Cuts requiring stitches

URGENT CARE CENTRE

For more serious illnesses and minor injuries

Choking

Chest pain

Blackout

Blood loss

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY/999

For life-threatening situations and emergencies

Please remember that inappropriate use of the 999 service could prevent somebody else from receiving urgent treatment in a life-threatening situation