

Upton Village Surgery Newsletter

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Produced by



For the latest NHS advice & information on the Coronavirus click here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> to find the latest government advice click here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Upton Village Surgery's newsletter produced by our [Patient Participation Group \(PPG\)](#) and issued on a quarterly basis. Anyone who is registered with the surgery can receive the newsletter by emailing UVSPPG@gmail.com or by picking up a paper copy at the surgery. **Issue 13 will be published in April.**

Happy New Year to our Patients, I hope you all had a happy and safe festive period.

This winter continues to remain exceptionally busy for us here in the practice and demand for appointments has risen dramatically over the last four weeks, particularly relating to the increased presentation of children with viral illnesses. For any of our patients who are eligible and still yet to have either their flu or covid vaccinations, we would encourage you to contact us for an appointment as we have some remaining vaccinations available in our ad-hoc clinics and along with helping you to stay well this winter, helps to protect the practice from being overwhelmed during this busy period.

Since my last update I am pleased to welcome, Sam McGovern-Scott to the team. Sam joins us as our new Clinical Pharmacist in practice and allows us to continue to increase our availability for demand in dealing with medication reviews and the ongoing treatment of long-term conditions for our patients.

We are also pleased to announce that following feedback from our patients, we have invested heavily in a new phone system for the practice which we hope will make calling for an appointment a much easier and less stressful experience. The new system enables a call back feature, and we are confident that this new system will offer greater flexibility in how we handle incoming calls to the practice.

Thank you as ever for your continued support and thank you also to the fantastic team here at UVS for their tireless efforts in delivering healthcare to our patients.

Best Wishes,
Matt Davies – Practice Manager

Patient Survey - Next Steps

We had a great response to our first large scale patient survey during October and November. **A big thank you** to everybody who took part. Of the **5061** patients invited to complete the survey we received **1008** responses. This represents slightly under a **20%** return rate and is a fantastic result for this type of exercise, particularly as it's the first time we have undertaken a survey on such a large scale.

The PPG have been working with the practice over the last few months to analyse the results and we will summarise all the main findings together with the follow up actions on the website during February, a text message will confirm when this is available.

In the meantime, as Matt has said in his welcome note above, the practice have now invested in a new phone system which it is hoped will greatly improve the process for making appointments. All the survey results will play a key part in the PPG work programme for at least the next twelve months, helping to improve patient care.

Can't Make It?

Whilst most people do attend their appointments, if you find, for whatever reason, that you can't attend, please let the surgery know as soon as possible so they can offer that time to someone who needs it.

To contact the practice please use the phone number at the top of the newsletter.

[Tell them about the honey mummy!](#)

Readers of a certain age may be able to relate to this headline but readers of all ages will be interested to know that honey can improve key measures of cardio metabolic health, such as lowered blood sugar and cholesterol levels, according to new research from the University of Toronto.



One of the researchers on the study said “*We’re not saying you should start having honey if you currently avoid sugar. The takeaway is more about replacement - if you’re using table sugar, syrup or another sweetener, switching those sugars for honey might lower cardio metabolic risks.*”

More information at [Diabetes.co.uk](https://www.diabetes.co.uk)

[The future of general practice?](#)

The [House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee](#) has produced its fourth report on the future of general practice.



Health and Social Care Committee member Rachael Maskell said:

“The wider picture shows general practice as a profession in crisis, with doctors demoralised and overworked, the numbers recruited not matching those heading for the door. A reluctance by Government and NHS England to acknowledge this crisis cannot continue and Ministers must set out how they intend to protect patient safety in the short term.”

The report can be downloaded directly from the Parliament website using this link <https://bit.ly/3FRk4Qc> or you can access the document through the PPGUKNEWS “PPG Resources” folder in Google Drive by clicking on this link <http://bit.ly/3wnS5IO> where you will also find other resource documents that may be of interest.

No time to wade through the full report? Then the [NHS Confederation](#) have conveniently produced a briefing of the contents, click here for the headlines <https://bit.ly/3YpTRPU>

[#BowelCancerAwareness](#)

Know the signs of bowel cancer; visit this link for more information <https://bit.ly/3GJwpDQ>

[New Practice Website - Have Your Say](#)

The practice launched a new website in October, so now you can experience a more user friendly way of accessing services and information at uptonvillagesurgery.co.uk.

Please take a moment to browse through the new web pages and feedback suggestions and comments to the practice directly. The PPG will continue to work with the surgery to help develop the content and format to make sure the website offers the best possible experience for all our patients.

[One lump or two?](#)

Most of us can’t resist the temptation of a sweet snack now and again or perhaps more frequently than that! If that sounds familiar and you would like to try and cut down on your sugar intake then have a listen to Dr Michael Mosley’s latest series of “[Just one Thing](#)” on Radio 4.

Click here <https://bit.ly/3QrXII0> to listen to the “**Swap out Sugar**” episode and you can also try this link <https://bit.ly/3k7jENq> from [Patient Info](#)

676 People currently subscribe to the Upton Village Surgery Newsletter

[Coronavirus – ONS Latest](#)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces an interactive tool to help explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus pandemic.

Click here <https://bit.ly/3WJqTwT> for the latest updates.

[Your diet & the menopause](#)

Hot flushes are just one of the many unpleasant symptoms of the menopause, along with mood swings, exhaustion and weight gain. HRT is an effective treatment for hot flushes, but making changes to your diet may also help relieve some of the challenging symptoms too. Use this link for more details <https://bit.ly/3GTIR7Q>

[Chester East PCN website](#)

Our very own **Chester East Primary Care Network** (PCN) has recently launched a website. Chester East PCN covers four local GP practices, including Upton Village Surgery.

The four practices through the PCN work together with community, mental health, social care and voluntary services in their local area with the aim to deliver high quality, innovative and sustainable care for the community. You can visit the website using this link <https://chestereastpcn.co.uk/>

Stress, exhaustion & 1000 patients a day

In November a reporter from the Guardian newspaper visited a GP practice in Gloucester. Here are some quotes from the article:

"It's the boiling frog analogy," Hodges says. "The water's not been comfortable for a decade, but it's now very noticeably warmer. It will soon reach a threshold where there is a collapse."

"...Studies that show that patients who've seen the same GP for a year or longer are 25% less likely to use out-of-hours services or be admitted to hospital in emergency, and have better outcomes in all sorts of ways."

"...It's like Challenge Anneka, without Lycra,"

Use this link to read the full story <https://bit.ly/3j7wc72>

Cheshire & Merseyside Health Care Partnership - Magazine

The Partnership produces a monthly "Connect" magazine and you can find the latest and back dated issues by using this link. Spot the title typo, still there!! <https://issuu.com/cheshireandmerseysidehpc>

We need to talk about - Testicles

Testicle pain or discomfort can be a symptom of a minor injury or health issue, but it may also be a sign of something more serious. What are the possible causes of your pain? And how do you know when to get it checked out by a professional?



Pain in the testicle can be a sign of testicular cancer. However, testicle pain by itself is not usually a symptom and can present in a number of ways that may not be painful. To spot testicular cancer in its early stages you need to regularly check for any lumps or swelling on your testicles as well as changes in shape and texture.

Sometimes the pain is caused by **testicular torsion**. To find out what that is and for much more information use this link <https://bit.ly/3CDdta0>

Patient Access to Data

In our last newsletter published in October we referenced the 1st November deadline for GP practices to ensure patients could automatically view new entries on their medical record.



Unfortunately, life is not always that simple and for a number of good reasons the practice has had to delay this change.

However, it is expected that access will be implemented by 31 March. Click here for more background <http://bit.ly/3BzqJme>

New PPG Newsletter

If you want to find out more about Patient Participation Groups and the environment in which they operate as well as lots more information about the primary care environment, you can now subscribe to a new national PPG newsletter set up by a member of Upton Village Surgery PPG.

The newsletter is published every two months. Back copies are also available for reference at <https://bit.ly/3QvTiR8>

You can subscribe by emailing ppguknews@gmail.com, please also confirm you are a patient at Upton Village Surgery to allow us to allocate the correct PPG to your details.

More reading material can be found at <https://bit.ly/3QvnavW>, including a diagram of the new [Integrated Care System](#) model.

An integrated health and care system

For a useful overview of the new Integrated Care System (ICS) introduced by NHS England check out this summary from Cheshire West & Chester Council, including an explanation of ICBs, ICPs and how Chester West "Place" will play its part. <https://bit.ly/3Xcw5Gs>

Can you prevent arthritis?

Whilst there is no sure way to prevent arthritis, you can lead a lifestyle that reduces your chances of developing the condition and delays the onset of certain types of arthritis.

Unfortunately there are some risk factors that are unavoidable, such as a higher risk for females and your family history.

So the focus should be on things you can control. This article from [Patient.info](#) lists a number of changes you can make to your lifestyle to help lower the risk or at least delay the onset of the condition. All the details are right here <http://bit.ly/3iTWutr>

[NHS England Operating Framework](#)

This document, published in October, sets out how the NHS will operate in the new structure created by the 2022 Health & Care Act. The web page also includes a letter to the health and care system from Mark Cubbon, NHSE Chief Delivery Officer. Full details can be found here

<https://bit.ly/3WiCPBI>

[Quick Fixes for the NHS?](#)

In a recent episode of Radio 4's "[The Briefing Room](#)" David Aaronovitch was joined by several experts to try and understand the quickest way to tackle the current NHS crisis and asks the question, *are there any quick fixes for the NHS.*

Listen to the full programme here <http://bit.ly/3iEgEHT> "NHS: Are there any quick fixes"

[It's ALL in the stretch](#)

Did you know?

- ✚ Smartphone use shortens, tightens and weakens muscles
- ✚ Pregnancy can cause pain around the buttocks and pelvis
- ✚ Stretching the muscles in your chest can help alleviate back pain and bring your shoulders back into alignment.
- ✚ Spending long periods of time seated can tighten up hip flexors and hamstrings, eventually affecting your spine health.

The benefits of correct stretching are many and varied and all it takes is 5 to 10 minutes a day at a time to suit you.



Stretching regularly means our muscles are able to travel through a greater range of motion. This, in turn, will reduce delayed-onset muscle stiffness (DOMS) after exercising.

Taking a few minutes to decompress and stretch in the evenings, for example, will ease muscle tightness built up throughout the day, and stretching before bed may help you to relax.

For lots more information and tips on stretching exercises use this link <http://bit.ly/3sUnfyj>

NHS Tracker – To find out how the NHS is coping in our area with A&E, ambulances and hospital waiting lists, compared to the rest of the UK use this tracker <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-59549800> from BBC News. You just need to enter your postcode. The date also shows a comparison with 2019 figures.

[You & Prostate Cancer](#)

1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer. If you're over 50, or you're black, or your dad or brother had it, you're at even higher risk.

If you think "... *it won't happen to me*" Then take a look at this recent article from the mirror newspaper <http://bit.ly/3Xqi7QE> for a reality check. For more information, including details on testing visit Prostatecanceruk

[Benefits of patient access](#)

In an earlier article in this newsletter we referenced the timescale for greater access to patient data.

This article from [NHS Digital](#) highlights evidence demonstrating how online access to health information benefits patients and practice staff. Comments include:

✚ "... *doctors felt that it did increase the patient's awareness of their own health which encourage them to independently care for their health*"

✚ "... *We found that 187 clinical appointments, including appointments with doctors and nurses, and 290 telephone calls were saved*"

Use this link for more details <http://bit.ly/3HdUmpY>

Do you have a change of contact details? - Use this link <https://bit.ly/3SF32Zv> to complete an online form to the surgery.

[Brain check- up tool](#)

A new brain check-up tool from Alzheimer's Research UK is now available offering tips on keeping our brain sharp and keeping mentally active. More details in this link. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-64308997>

[In the News](#)

Use this link <https://www.england.nhs.uk/news/> for the latest news from the NHS.