

ST MARTINS GATE SURGERY

Issue 18

May 2016

Please note that the surgery will be closed on **Bank Holiday May 2nd** and also closed on **Bank Holiday May 30th**.
In an emergency, please call 111 over both bank holiday weekends.



Hayfever - Hayfever is a common allergic condition that affects up to 1 in 5 people at some point in their life. Symptoms can include sneezing; runny nose and itchy eyes. These happen when a person has an allergic reaction to pollen. People can be allergic to tree pollen (released during the Spring); grass pollen (released during the end of Spring and beginning of Summer);

and weed pollen (released anytime from early Spring to late Autumn). There is currently no sure cure for hayfever, but most people are able to relieve their symptoms with treatment, at least to a certain extent. Treatment options for hayfever include antihistamines, which can help to prevent an allergic reaction from happening and corticosteroids (steroids), which can help to reduce levels of inflammation and swelling. Many cases of hayfever can be controlled using over-the-counter medication from your local Pharmacy. However, if your symptoms are more troublesome, it's worth speaking to your GP as you may require prescription medication.

Self-help tips...

It is sometimes possible to prevent the symptoms of hayfever by taking some basic precautions such as wearing wrap around sunglasses to stop pollen entering your eyes; changing your clothes and taking a shower after being outdoors to remove pollen on your body and try to stay indoors when the pollen count is high (over 50).

Appointment Reminders...

Urgent appointments are for matters that cannot wait for a routine appointment. There is only enough time allocated to discuss **one concern only** with the Doctor during the appointment.

If more than one person per family needs seeing, please book a separate appointment for each person.



Please remember to let the surgery know if you wish to cancel an appointment. We are then able to allocate it to other patients, even at short notice.

All of our patients have a named GP, if you would like to find out who your named GP is, please ask at Reception. Whilst we understand that patients often prefer to see the same GP for continuity of a problem, this may not always be possible due to availability. All of our clinicians are able to access your medical record so you can still see any doctor or nurse at the practice.

Annual Reviews

For any patients that have their annual reviews of their disease management, will in future be seen during the month of their birth. We will be contacting you the month prior to this informing you of what appointments you may need to make, please look out for these letters.

We will ask you to book a specific type of appointment, this may be named after a "TREE" (eg OAK or BIRCH etc) and you may be asked to book 2 appointments. The first one will be with a Health Care Assistant for height, weight, blood pressure and a blood test.

The second appointment will be with one of our specialist nurses for your condition.



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Pharmacist's Corner

St. Martin's Gate is one of the first Practices in Worcestershire to have our own Pharmacist. There has been a lot in the news recently about the Government's plans to improve access and services in GP surgeries. As part of these plans there is a move to have more Pharmacists working in surgeries as part of the practice team. Our Clinical Pharmacist, Emma Blanden explains more about her role in this month's newsletter.

What is a Clinical Pharmacist?

We are highly qualified health professionals who train for many years to become specialists in medicines and how they work. I can work directly with you, as part of the general practice team, to make sure your medicines help you get better and stay well. Having a Clinical Pharmacist in the practice team means you can be treated by the best professional for your needs. All Pharmacists are registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council.

When can I see you?

You can see me when you need expert advice about your medication. Below are some examples of how a Clinical Pharmacist can help.

Reviewing your medicines...

If you are taking medicines over the long-term, you should be seen for a review at least once a year. I can review all your medicines, discuss how they are working for you and carry out health checks, such as taking your blood pressure. I can also arrange for you to have blood or other tests.

After a stay in hospital or an out-patient clinic...

If your medicines have been changed whilst you were in hospital, I can help explain these changes and ensure you get the maximum benefit from these medicines.

Long-term conditions...

If you have a condition such as asthma, type 2 diabetes, arthritis or high blood pressure, I can discuss the medicines you are taking to make sure they are working for you. I can also help you with lifestyle changes to help you manage your condition.

Experiencing side effects...

If you are experiencing side effects from your medicines, we can discuss this and work together to find a solution, such as changing your medicine or the dosage. If you are taking a number of different medicines, I can help make sure they are working well together.

Your appointment

I am available at the surgery for telephone consultations and face to face appointments. Just as when you see a GP or practice nurse, you will see a Clinical Pharmacist in a private consultation room. You will still be able to see your GP if you need to. A Clinical Pharmacist will not give you your medicines. You should collect your medicines from your community pharmacy (or chemist) in the usual way.