

ST MARTINS GATE SURGERY

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**I'M ON A
DECHOX™**

TIME FOR A DECHOX?

CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO GIVE UP CHOCOLATE THIS MARCH.

We are challenging the nation to give up chocolate for March and get sponsored to help raise money towards the fight for every heartbeat. Whether you're an undercover chocolate eater, a crafty nibbler or a full-on midnight fridge raider, deep down you know it's

time to dump the chunk and give chocolate the finger!

Any sort of cocoa in a no-no, which means chocolate bars, treats, biscuits, ice cream, cake - and even the chocolate sprinkles on your cappuccino - are off limits during March.

Last year more than 16,000 people took on the challenge to DECHOX, and raised more than £1 million for life saving heart research and 2018 promises to be even bigger and better!

So if you've ever found yourself sneaking a cheeky chocolate bar after the gym or digging into your desk drawer for an afternoon cupcake, then now's the time to test your willpower, have fun and feel good in the process!

WANT TO TAKE ON THE ULTIMATE DECHOX?

If giving up chocolate doesn't seem like enough of a challenge, try out an Ultimate DECHOX! Not only is chocolate off limits during March, but all sweet treats are a no no - eek! That's no cake, dessert, biscuits or even gummy sweets... this is extreme test of willpower is sure to raise even more money for a great cause.

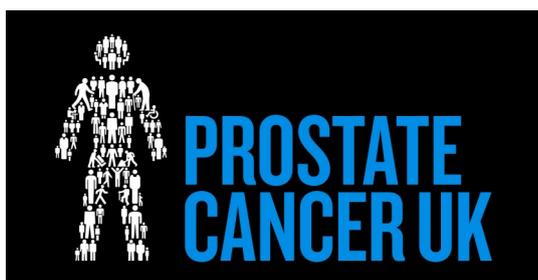
To find out more visit www.bhf.org.uk and search for "DECHOX".

EPILEPSY AWARENESS PURPLE DAY - 26TH MARCH

There are 50 million people that have been diagnosed with epilepsy worldwide and Purple Day is an international grassroots effort dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide. On 26th March annually, people around the world are encouraged to wear purple and host events in support of epilepsy awareness. Purple Day is your chance to end stigma, improve healthcare and stand together! Visit the [epilepsy in action](http://epilepsyinaction.org) website and get involved.



GET TALKING ABOUT EPILEPSY



PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

In the UK, about one in eight men will get prostate cancer at some point in their lives. Prostate Cancer UK is the largest men's health charity and they aim to help more men survive prostate cancer and enjoy a better quality of life, so the aim in March is to raise awareness and invite the public to join the fight against prostate cancer by fundraising, campaigning and donating.

Patient Participation Group

Patient Participation Group are still holding their drop in sessions. These are a great way to get your opinion across on how we can improve our services to benefit you, the patient.

They are available in reception to speak to you on the following dates:

- Wednesday 7th March - am
- Thursday 22nd March - am @ St. Peter's

LIVING WITH DIABETES

St Martin's Gate Surgery and Haresfield Patient Participation Group would like to invite you to a talk about living with diabetes.

This is being held at the surgery on: **Monday 16 April 6.00pm to 7:30pm**. If you are interested in attending this talk then please email the PPG chairman colinmajor@tesco.net

Pharmacy Corner

Vitamin Supplements - who needs them?

Many of us take vitamins and dietary supplements hoping to achieve good health, ease our illnesses or defy ageing. Recent years have seen a massive boom in supplement use - it's a market worth three quarters of a billion pounds in the UK. However, the huge range of dietary supplements now available makes the area a minefield for consumers. Take a browse through the supermarket, on the internet or health food shops and you will find hundreds of products. Even individual supplements can come in a range of doses and a number of different formulations, making it hard to know what is worth taking and what isn't. So if we add to our normal diet with supplement pills, does it actually do us any good?

What are dietary supplements?

Dietary or nutritional supplements include any consumed products that aim to supplement the diet and provide additional nutrients that may be missing from it, or aren't being consumed in sufficient quantities. Today's supplements contain not just vitamins and minerals, but herbs, amino acids, enzymes, fibre and fatty acids. They also come in a variety of forms, including traditional tablets, capsules, powders, drinks and supplement bars. Many supplements are actually classified as foods rather than medicines and so don't have to go through the usual checks and regulations a medicine would go through for safety and efficacy (how well it works) before being put on the market.

What's the best way to get enough vitamins?

The best way for most of us to get enough vitamins is to eat a varied and balanced diet. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, children under five years and some adults benefit from taking certain supplements. Vitamin supplements should not be used as a substitute for a balanced diet. If you do take them, make sure you do not exceed your daily requirement. Many people choose to take supplements, but taking too much or taking them for too long could be harmful.

Effervescent (fizzy) vitamin supplements can contain up to a gram of salt per tablet. Consider changing to a non-effervescent tablet, particularly if you have been advised to watch or reduce your salt intake.

In short, there is no easy answer to the question of whether we should be taking supplements, but what is clear is the need for people to know what they are taking, to know whether it is likely to help and to know whether it is likely to harm. Before taking a supplement, make sure your information is reliable.

Good sources of information about supplements:

- NHS Choices - Vitamins & Minerals
- NHS Choices - Do I need to take vitamin supplements?
- British Dietetic Association Food Facts - Supplements

