

# Barnabas Bulletin

Newsletter of the Barnabas Medical Centre

Issue 4, December 2013

## Staying Well in Winter

So what have we got to look forward to this winter? Cold weather, short days, rising energy prices, colds and flu ... So here are some tips to help us all get through the next few months!

### Keeping Warm

The NHS and the government's advice on getting ready for winter aims to reduce cold related illnesses. Key tips include:

- ♦ Keep your home warm. Aim to keep your living room at 18-21°C (65-70°F) and the rest of your accommodation at a minimum of 16°C (61°F). Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket (but not both at the same time) to keep warm in bed.
- ♦ Eat well. Try to make sure you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day, and eat a good balanced diet.
- ♦ Wrap up warm, inside and out. Layer your clothing to stay warm. Try to stay active within the home if you can. Wear shoes with a good grip if you go outside when it's icy. And wear a hat!
- ♦ If extremely cold weather is forecast make sure you have a supply of your regular medicines and a well-stocked food cupboard so that you don't need to go out too often, especially if you have a respiratory or heart condition.

### Colds and Flu

Most of us will have a cold this winter, and some of us will have flu. Here's what you can do if you are under the weather:

- ♦ The main symptoms of winter cold and flu bugs are coughing, sneezing, blocked nose, sore throat, headache and slight temperature. If these are the only symptoms you have it's unlikely that your GP will be able to do

anything. You might want to visit your local pharmacy, where you can get advice on how to manage the symptoms and buy over-the-counter medicines.

- ♦ Get plenty of rest, eat well, including a good variety of fruit and vegetables, and drink lots of fluids.
- ♦ Painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, will help you to manage cold symptoms like headache and sore throat. Decongestants can help a blocked nose.
- ♦ **Don't pass it on!** Colds and flu are caused by viruses which spread through droplets coughed and sneezed out by an infected person. The best way to protect yourself, and others, is to always carry tissues, use these to catch your cough or sneeze, and dispose of them as soon as you can. Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch, so wash your hands with soap regularly, or use an antibacterial hand gel when out and about.
- ♦ See your doctor if you have cold or flu symptoms and a very high temperature, have a chronic health condition such as diabetes, heart disease or asthma, are older and/or frail or you feel very unwell.

### Eating and Drinking to Excess

During the run up to the festive season, and over Christmas and New Year it is very easy to eat and drink more than you normally would. Here's NHS Choices' advice on managing the effects of over indulgence:

- ♦ Men should not regularly drink more than 3 to 4 units of alcohol a day. For women it's 2 to 3 units a day. You might be surprised at how many units of alcohol there are in your drink: a large glass of wine (250ml) has 3 units of

alcohol, while a pint of lager has 2.3 units.

- ♦ If you go to a party don't drink on an empty stomach, make sure you drink water or a soft drink between each alcoholic drink, and drink a pint of water before you go to bed.
- ♦ If you've had a heavy drinking session, avoid alcohol for at least 48 hours.
- ♦ If you've overindulged on food and suffer from indigestion, over-the-counter indigestion remedies may help, so it's worth having these in your medicine cabinet.
- ♦ Try to balance the days when you eat and drink differently or more than usual with eating a good healthy diet the rest of the time.

Wishing everyone a healthy winter!

## 111 and 999

The 111 service was introduced this year. It is there to be used if you need medical help quickly but it is not a 999 emergency.

Call 111 if:

- ♦ you need medical help fast but it is not a 999 emergency
- ♦ you think you may need to go to A&E or to another NHS urgent care service
- ♦ you don't know who to call
- ♦ you need health information or reassurance on what to do next

For less urgent health needs, please contact your GP or pharmacist in the usual way. And if a health professional has given you a specific number to call when concerned about your condition, please use that number.

**For immediate life-threatening emergencies always call 999**

NHS 111 and 999 are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles.

## DoctorView

*The regular column by our doctors*

### Medical Students

*By Dr Bhatoa*

Many of you will already know that over the last few years we have become a teaching practice, which means that we sometimes have medical students with us. We currently have students from St Bart's & London Medical School, who come on short attachments to the practice to gain valuable practical experience. Most of the students are in their 4th year, so very close to finishing their 5 year course and qualifying as doctors. They are very experienced and knowledgeable, and past experience has shown them to be a positive contribution to the practice.

Of course this is only possible with the help and willingness of you, our patients, allowing the students to observe your consultations. You may sometimes be asked to see medical students and consent to having them in the room, in addition to your normal doctor, when you come for your appointment. This is an important part of their training as future doctors, and all student activity is supervised by your doctor.

However, if you prefer to see the doctor alone, without a student being present, then you are completely free to do so – just let us know. This will not affect your treatment or care in any way.

## Christmas & New Year Opening Hours

The surgery opening hours for the Christmas holidays are:

- ◆ Monday 23 December, 0830-1800
- ◆ Tuesday 24 December (Christmas Eve), 0830-1300
- ◆ Wednesday 25 December (Christmas Day), CLOSED
- ◆ Thursday 26 December (Boxing Day), CLOSED
- ◆ Friday 27 December, 0830-1800
- ◆ Monday 30 December, 0830-1830
- ◆ Tuesday 31 December (New Year's Eve), 0830-1600
- ◆ Wednesday 1 January (New Year's Day), CLOSED

From Thursday 2 January we return to normal opening hours.

If you need medical help when the surgery is closed you should:

- ◆ For minor illnesses and non-emergencies: telephone the medical centre, listen to the recorded message and follow the advice on who to contact (this may be different on different days)
- ◆ For urgent medical care or advice: call 111
- ◆ **For life threatening emergencies call 999**

### Repeat Prescriptions

If you take regular prescribed medicines please make sure that you have enough to last you over the Christmas holidays. If you need a repeat prescription please make sure you allow enough time for it to be processed (at least 2 working days) and check your local pharmacy's opening hours to ensure you can get it dispensed. **Please do not leave your request to the last minute.**

## Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road  
Northolt, UB5 4SR

☎ 020 8864 4437

[www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk)

### Surgery Times

Monday to Friday  
0830 to 1800

(Closed Mon & Fri 1300-1400)

### Out of Hours

If you need healthcare urgently outside surgery times please call  
111

### Repeat prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions must be requested in writing or online and will normally be available for collection after 2 working days

### Doctors

Dr MG Parmar  
Dr DG Knight  
Dr HS Kooner  
Dr HK Bhatoa  
Dr M Dhinsa  
Dr K Patten

### Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta, Anna Wan  
Purnima Gurung

### Heath Care Assistant

Niki Onoufriou

### Practice Manager

Paul Ranken

### Patient Participation Group

Chairman: Keith Marshall  
020 8864 7993

[barnabas.ppg@gmail.com](mailto:barnabas.ppg@gmail.com)

*This newsletter is a joint production of  
Barnabas Medical Centre and the Barnabas  
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## Sharing Your NHS Records

The NHS has a new system to use data from patient's medical records to improve health services.

The NHS plans to use this system to gather and analyse data about care received from all the parts of the NHS, including GPs and hospitals.

Your date of birth, postcode, NHS number and gender (but **not** your name) will be used to link your

records in this secure system. Data from GP practices will begin to be imported to the new system in late 2013. The GP data will then be linked with existing hospital data to create a new record which will not identify you. The information held, and how it is shared, is controlled by law and by strict confidentiality rules.

**If you are happy for your information to be used in this way then you do not need to do anything.** But if you have concerns, or do not want your information to be

shared outside your GP practice, please talk to your GP or another member of practice staff as soon as possible.

The NHS leaflet *How information about you helps us provide better care* contains more information and may be downloaded from <http://www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/thenhs/records/healthrecords/pages/overview.aspx>. If you don't have internet access please see the poster displayed at the surgery or ask a member of staff for more information.