

# Barnabas Bulletin

Newsletter of the Barnabas Medical Centre

Issue 18, June 2017

## Self Care or “Do you really need to see a doctor?”

By Jacqui Piper

Self care is about avoiding becoming ill, treating common illnesses at home and seeking help when you need it. It is also about managing any long term conditions you have in a way that puts you in control and improves your quality of life.

We can all take responsibility for managing our own health and wellbeing, and there are many things we can do: from eating well, drinking alcohol only in moderation, getting some exercise and maintaining good hygiene. But we can all become ill despite our best efforts and it is important to know what help is out there if you need it, and how to access the right help.

If you have internet access the NHS Choices website is full of information that can help put you in charge of your own health and wellbeing. There you will be able to find a symptom checker; an A-Z of treatments and conditions, providing explanations on a wide range of illnesses and ailments; and information, tips and tools to help you stay healthy and live well. Go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

### Your Self Care Kit

Self care is the best choice to treat very minor illnesses and injuries. A range of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply by combining a well-stocked medicine cabinet with plenty of rest.

Make sure that your medicine cabinet is out of the reach of children (or kept locked) and is well stocked with:

- paracetamol and/or ibuprofen
- (if appropriate) child paracetamol or ibuprofen syrups, eg. Calpol
- a thermometer
- tweezers
- scissors
- selection of plasters
- elastic bandages and dressings
- mild antiseptic wipes/spray

- antihistamines (hayfever tablets)
- travel sickness tablets
- aspirin (not for those under 16 years)
- rehydration mixture
- anti-diarrhoea medicine
- indigestion remedy

Watch out for expiry dates; don't keep medicines after their expiry date.

Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be bought over the counter for as little as 16p a box in most supermarkets, and own-brand medicines are just the same as the more expensive brands so it shouldn't cost much to stock your medicine cabinet in this way. A pharmacist or member of staff in a chemist should be able to advise you on what alternatives are available for expensive branded medicines, so don't be afraid to ask.

### Your Local Pharmacy

Community pharmacists dispense prescriptions and other medicines, offer testing and screening for common conditions and can advise on minor problems and ailments such as:

- coughs, colds and flu
- bugs and viruses
- minor injuries
- tummy troubles
- women's health, including emergency contraception and pregnancy testing
- stopping smoking
- skin conditions
- allergies
- aches and pains
- children's problems

They can also help you decide whether you need to see a doctor.

You can talk to your pharmacist in confidence, even about the most personal symptoms and you don't need to make an appointment. Most pharmacies now have a private consultation area where patients can discuss issues with

A pharmacy staff without being overheard by other members of the public.

## Your GP

GPs look after the health of people in their local community and deal with a whole range of health problems. They also provide health education, offer advice on smoking and diet, run clinics, give vaccinations and carry out simple surgical operations.

GPs usually work in practices as part of a team, which includes nurses, healthcare assistants, practice managers, receptionists and other staff. Practices also work closely with other healthcare professionals, such as health visitors, midwives, and social services.

When you need to see a GP at Barnabas Medical Centre there are several ways to make an appointment:

- If you wish to see a particular GP then you can ring the surgery, walk in to speak to a receptionist, or book an appointment online. However you do need to be aware that the GP you wish to see may not have any convenient appointments available, so you may have to wait for a while to see them.
- If you wish see a GP on the day, you may be offered an appointment with any GP available, however if no appointments are available you have the option of having a telephone call with your usual GP or the GP on call. This service starts from 8.45am.
- If your need to see a GP is not urgent you may find it easier to register for online services and book your appointment online as you will instantly see which appointments are available and with which GP. Otherwise you can ring the practice or walk in and book an appointment with the reception staff.

## Always remember to cancel your appointment if you cannot attend

Not turning up without letting the practice know you can't make it is a waste of time and resources for them – and it is one reason why appointments can be difficult to book.

If you have not already signed up for online services at Barnabas Medical Centre you can do so now. System Online allows you to order repeat prescriptions (only medication on repeat can be ordered from this application), pre-book appointments and cancel them, and see your summary care record.

To start using this service please go to the practice with photo ID such as a passport or picture driving licence. The staff can then allocate you your user ID and password and activate your account.

## When Your GP Surgery is Closed

When your GP surgery is closed and you need urgent medical assistance or advice there are a number of options and services, including NHS 111, Urgent Care Centres and A&E.

You should call NHS 111 if:

- You need medical help fast, but it's not a life-threatening, 999 emergency
- You think you may need to go to A&E or another NHS urgent care service
- You don't know who to call for medical help
- You require health information or reassurance about what to do next

## In a life-threatening emergency always call 999

Information about local Urgent Care Centres and A&E departments can be found on the NHS Choices website. It would be helpful to make a note of the local services so that when you need them you have their contact details ready.

## Managing Long Term Conditions

If you have a long term or chronic condition there may be support and information available to you through both the NHS and other organisations. Having information about your condition can empower you and enable you to take control in managing it, so talking to your GP or practice nurse is the first step, followed by contacting any relevant support organisation. There are organisations offering support for people with most long term conditions, these can be found by doing a simple internet search, asking your GP or checking the NHS Choices website. There may also be local support groups or condition management programmes; again your GP should be aware of these or you can visit the NHS Choices website where you will find a "services near you" search facility. <sup>g</sup>

## Minor Ailment Scheme

Some pharmacies run a minor ailment scheme for common health problems like aches and pains, skin conditions and stomach upsets. If they do, the pharmacist will be able to assess your needs, give advice, suggest appropriate medicines, and refer you to a GP if necessary.

When pharmacies provide medicines as part of a minor ailment scheme, they are provided on the NHS. If you normally pay for your prescriptions, you'll have to pay for any medicines. If you're exempt from prescription charges you won't pay for the medicine. <sup>g</sup>

## PPG Corner

*Updates from our Patient Participation Group*

### Practice Annual Survey & PPG Awareness Week

For the PPG there are two significant things which happen in June: the Practice's annual patient survey and PPG Awareness Week.

For the last several years the PPG have conducted the annual survey on behalf of the Practice. The PPG is pleased to be able to provide volunteers to run the survey. Although it is not, perhaps, directly relevant to the PPG, we recognise that it is important for the Practice and such collaborations are an important part of the PPG/Practice relationship. The survey helps the Practice understand patient healthcare needs, which improves healthcare for all patients and is a part of what the PPG is there to facilitate.

The survey also gives PPG members the chance to talk to patients about the work of the PPG, and to gently recruit additional members.

In recent years we have conducted the survey during PPG Awareness Week, which always falls in June. But this year we have decided to do the survey on five separate days over five weeks in June as it is hoped this will make the workload easier for our volunteers. Look out for us in the waiting area on 2, 8, 14, 20 and 26 June.

PPG Awareness Week is 19-24 June. As well as conducting the survey one day this week some of us hope to be present in the waiting area to talk to patients generally about the PPG and to try to answer any questions you may have. So if you see us around the Practice (all PPG volunteers should have a name badge) please do come and chat to us!

*Keith Marshall, PPG Chairman*  
*Email me at [barnabas.ppg@gmail.com](mailto:barnabas.ppg@gmail.com) or*  
*leave a note for me with Reception.* g

## Next PPG Meetings

### Tuesday 6 June

1400 hrs, St Barnabas Church Hall

*Matt Edwards, Barnabas MC Practice  
Manager will talk about the Role of the  
Practice Manager*

### Monday 7 August

1800 hrs, St Barnabas Church Hall

## Missed Appointments

Like everyone in the NHS we are seeing increasing demand and it is often a challenge to find appointments for patients who really need to be seen urgently. Other than having more doctors and nurses, for which we have no funding, there are only limited things we can do to ease the pressures. On average we have six missed appointments a day, which if they could be used would make a huge difference to the appointments log-jam. So please remember:

**If you no longer need, or can't  
keep, your appointment  
please tell us!**  
**A quick call is all it needs!**

And if you can book your appointments online, you can also cancel them online!

## Repeat Prescriptions

Please remember it takes 2 working days from the time you request a repeat prescription to it being ready for collection.

Whether you request your repeat online or in writing, if you are registered for electronic prescriptions your prescription will go direct to your nominated pharmacy and cannot be collected from the Medical Centre. g

## Extended Hours

The Practice offers appointments, with a doctor or nurse, between 0730 and 0830 hrs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. These are **pre-booked appointments only** and are intended to help those needing to get to work.

The Practice will open early only for patients that have a pre-booked early appointment. We will then open our doors to everyone as usual at 0830 hrs. g

## Friends & Family Test

We would like to remind patients about the Friends & Family Test (FFT). Whenever you visit the Medical Centre for a consultation we would appreciate it if you completed a FFT card to tell us your opinion of our services. If there are no cards available in the waiting area, please ask Reception, and drop the completed form in the blue box. Thank you!n

## Data Protection

During May the world came under a very nasty cyber-attack and the NHS was affected by this attack. We would like to assure all our patients at the practice that Barnabas, like nearly all GP practices in Ealing, was not affected by this virus.

Nevertheless the Ealing IT team has been working overtime to apply additional security patches to its IT infrastructure to ensure that the virus does not spread through the GP network.

On the Monday morning after the weekend attack, instructions had been sent to all practices to advise them how to react if the virus had penetrated the practice's network. On Tuesday morning, during login, patches had been sent and applied to all users as a safeguard.

Please be assured that your medical information is vital to your ongoing care and the NHS IT team has taken many steps to ensure its security.

## Annual Patient Survey

**As you will see from "PPG Corner" (inside) we will be conducting our Annual Patient Survey during June.**

The survey is important as it allows us to measure your satisfaction with our services and how well we are performing. We value your feedback and comments, which are key inputs when planning the Practice's future. We would therefore appreciate as many of our patients as possible completing the one page questionnaire.

Members of our Patient Participation Group will be in the Waiting Area to help with the survey on Friday 2, Thursday 8, Wednesday 14, Tuesday 20, Monday 26 June.

If you are here on these days you will probably be approached by a PPG member and asked to complete the survey, which should take just a few minutes

If you wish to complete a survey at other times during June, please ask Reception or download the form from the Practice website.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. g

## Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road  
Northolt, UB5 4SR  
( 020 8864 4437

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

### Surgery Times

Mon & Fri: 0830-1300, 1400-1800  
Tue, Wed, Thu: 0730-1800

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### Out of Hours

For urgent healthcare outside surgery times please call 111

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### Repeat Prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions must be requested in writing or online. They will normally be ready for collection after two working days.

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### Doctors

Dr Mohini Parmar (f)  
Dr David Knight (m)  
Dr Harpreet Kooner (m)  
Dr Harjeet Bhatoa (f)  
Dr Sonya Jey (f)  
Dr Shankar Vijayadeva (m)

### Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta (f)  
Anna Wan (f)  
Purnima Gurung (f)

### Pharmacy Assistant & Care Plan Advisor

Paresh Virji (m)

### Health Care Assistant

Kalyan Goli (m)

### Practice Manager

Matthew Edwards

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### 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 Patient Participation Group.  
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**No longer need your appointment?  
Can't get to your appointment?  
Then please tell us!**

**If you need this in  
large print, please  
ask at Reception**