



Portishead Medical Group

Spring Newsletter 2020

General Update

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young people friendly



Good



Pharmacy Assistance

Local pharmacies are able to assist with some simple, medical problems and minor ailments such as Urinary Tract Infections, Tonsillitis and Conjunctivitis.

It would greatly assist our GP's if this could be considered by our patients as an option before calling for a GP appointment so that we can support patients with more complex medical issues.

Do remember that we are still here so if you have a medical problem that you are worried about please give us a call.

Greetings to all! Here is the next instalment of our Practice newsletter. We are aware that many of our patients have questions for us and we will try to answer most them as best we can in this newsletter. Firstly we would like to say thank you very much to all our staff members who have kept us running through these trying times. Every member of the Practice team is working incredibly hard to provide care and support to our patients.

Your Practice and COVID-19

As a practice we have made many changes during these new and uncertain times, and we expect this period of change to continue for a while yet. We continue to update ourselves daily with information regarding the COVID-19 virus so that we can stay open and provide care and support to our patients as effectively as possible. We appreciate that at this time there is a lot of uncertainty and concern among our patients and really appreciate the understanding and support that we are receiving from you all.

We have reduced footfall into the surgery as much as possible, ensuring that patients do not routinely sit in the waiting room but come straight through to see clinicians in their rooms.

We are also asking all patients to wear a face covering when entering the surgery – this can be two layers of material such as a scarf or large handkerchief.

Our clinicians are currently calling every patient who requests an appointment to ensure that we have screened every patient for symptoms of the COVID-19 virus and to assess whether we can provide care and support without bringing you into the surgery. As a result it is not currently possible to pre-book GP or ANP appointments and it may not always be possible to speak with a specific GP so please bear with our reception staff who will do their best to help you.

If we need to see a patient who has symptoms of COVID-19 we are being extremely careful to protect our staff and other patients. Where possible we will try and see patients with symptoms in their car rather than bringing them into the practice, however we have created an 'isolation room' in the practice for patients who need to be examined within the surgery.

We are monitoring this situation closely and updating our protocols regularly to account for new guidelines and information released by the NHS and Public Health England. We will inform you as our plans continue to develop and we begin to be able to provide more routine care.

From us all at Portishead Medical Group we hope that you stay safe and wish every one of our patients the very best.

Prescriptions

We have experienced quite an increase in requests for medication and would therefore like to ask our patients not to stockpile medications. We are not expecting to run out of medications essential for people's health and it will only make it harder for other patients to get hold of their medication if chemists have to deal with a surge in demand.

If you have access to the internet or a smartphone please use our online patient access system or the NHS App to order repeat medication. The NHS app can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play. It is possible to register via the app – there is no need to contact the surgery for any information.

Please see our website www.pmg.org.uk which has some useful instructions and guides to help you with sign up to the NHS App.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we have now begun to take prescription requests over the phone for any of our patients who are in self isolation or shielding. Please ensure that you know the name and dose of your medications when you call so we can have the best possible chance of requesting the correct items.

COVID 19 Research – PRINCIPLE Trial

If you have been told by a clinician that you are likely to have a COVID-19 infection, you have had symptoms for less than 15 days and you are willing to help research into this virus please consider taking part in the PRINCIPLE Trial.

This trial aims to find treatments that reduce hospital admission and improve symptoms for people with COVID 19.

Please go to the website www.principletrial.org.

The website will ask you a number of questions to assess your suitability for the trial and capture your details.

In particular the trial are looking for people with COVID-19 symptoms who have had symptoms for less than 15 days and:

- Are aged 65 and above
- Or aged 50 – 64 with
 - High blood pressure and/or heart disease
 - Asthma or lung disease
 - Weakened immune system
 - Diabetes not treated with insulin
 - Stroke or neurological problems
 - Liver disease

E-Consult

What is Econsult?

This is a new way to request treatment, sick notes, GP letters and recent test results online. You can access "eConsult" from our website (www.pmg.org.uk). Please complete an online form and we will get in touch by the end of the next working day.

What if my problem is urgent?

If you have a medically urgent problem we recommend you contact the surgery straight away, ring NHS 111, or dial 999 in the case of an extreme emergency.

Who can use this service?

Anyone can use the health information provided on this site. However, the online consultation service is only available for patients registered at this practice aged 16 and over and for parents or legal guardians of children over 6 months.

How will I be contacted?

The practice will contact you using our usual methods i.e. by phone, email or text depending on what permissions you have given us in the past. Please note that a call from your practice may sometimes appear on your phone as "Blocked", "No caller ID" or "Private number". And don't forget to check your junk email folder

Can I still see my GP or ANP?

Yes you can still book telephone appointments with the practice this is simply a new tool we are using to help take on the patient load and deal with as many patient queries as possible.

What about medication?

Our clinicians will issue medication where appropriate – the prescription will be sent to your nominated pharmacy or collected from the practice. This service is not appropriate for repeat prescription requests however. Please refer to the prescriptions article in this newsletter for more information on how to request your repeat medications.

If you have any more questions about this service please don't hesitate to contact us.

Lastly from all of us at PMG, Stay safe and stay healthy! We hope everyone pulls together and we come out of this feeling a sense of community and become even closer to one another.

Thank you for reading our newsletter!

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<http://www.pmg.org.uk/>