

Bridge & Monkseaton Medical Practice

Patient Newsletter

Autumn 2024

Welcome to your Autumn Newsletter!

This edition we aim to update you on the following:

- What do you say about us?
- Flu and Covid vaccinations
- STOPTOBER
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Young carers
- Staying well this Winter
- The Green Team



See what our patients have to say about us!



Check out our brand new website!

www.bridgeandmonkseaton.nhs.uk

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date!

@Bridge and Monkseaton Medical Practice

UPDATES

Why do I have to wait until October for my vaccine?

This year most eligible adults will be offered a flu vaccine from early October, which might be slightly later than in previous years. This is because the latest scientific evidence shows that protection from the flu vaccine decreases over time in adults. It is therefore better to have the vaccine closer to when flu typically circulates. The National COVID Vaccine campaign has been aligned to coincide with the flu campaign, so patients eligible for both vaccines can have them at the same time.

Eligible patients will be invited with a unique booking link via SMS. If we are unable to send an SMS, patients will receive a time slot to one of our clinics via letter.

STOPTOBER

This October, join the 2.5 million people who've been inspired by Stoptober.

Even if it's your first time or you've tried before, Stoptober gives you the perfect opportunity to quit smoking. Stay **smoke-free for 28 days**, and you're **5 times more likely to quit for good**



BUT HOW?

Some local North Tyneside pharmacies offer free **Stop Smoking Advisors** who, over 12 weeks, help you choose an appropriate treatment, learn how to use it and come up with a tailored plan to deal with your cravings. For more information on this:



0191 643 3737 (Mon - Fri, 9am-5pm)



stopsmoking@northtyneside.gov.uk

- ⇒ **Vaping** is less harmful than smoking and allows you to control the amount of nicotine you get to help withdrawal symptoms. You're twice as likely to quite with a nicotine vape compared to patches or gum!
- ⇒ **Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRTs)** such as patches, sprays gums & lozenges. These each have different benefits and absorption methods and are best used in combination with other NRTs over a period of 12 weeks or for as long as needed to help you quit for good!
- ⇒ **Prescription Medications** are available in tablet form and do not contain nicotine but help manage the withdrawal symptoms. If recommended by a doctor or stop smoking advisor, they can be taken with NRTs.

You can also make your own **Personal Quit Plan** for **free** through the NHS stop smoking website

www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/personal-quit-plan

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

As we approach the cooler and darker months it's important to take care of your mental health by keeping busy, exercising and eating well. In order to do this, we would like to highlight some of the groups in the area that can help keep you those winter blues away!

Active North Tyneside

www.activenorthtyneside.org.uk

Active North Tyneside is all about helping children, young people and adults to move more and live more, so they can feel the benefits of being physically active in living a long and healthy life.



All of the programmes and projects are **free or low cost** for residents of North Tyneside. All you need is a North Tyneside Eascard, available through the active north Tyneside website, to be able to access these groups for adults and kids.

Wellbeing Walks - Self Led Walks - Bump, Birth, Baby - The Walking Dad - Adapted Cycling - Tennis - Beginners Running - Walking Football - Club Elevate - Weight Management - Run North Tyneside



Mini Movers - No Limits Sports Hall Sessions - No Limits Pool Sessions - Bikeability - Teenage Gym - Kicks Football

What About the Family?

Stay and Play

Stay and Play is a free session for children aged 1 to 7 years old accompanied by an adult) Mondays 3.45pm - 4.30pm at The Lakeside Centre - No need to book, term time only!

Family Splash

Free swim session with floats and toys for families with children under 16, to introduce kids to the water, improve their water confidence and encourage being physically active.

Sunday 12-1pm at Hadrian Leisure Centre

Healthy4Life

Free 10 week after school programme to help families maintain healthy habits, including sports & activity time to help children identify what physical activity they enjoy and weekly group sessions covering :

What is a Balanced Diet? - Portion Sizes - Sugar & Fat - Food Labels - Trying New Foods - 5 Ways to Wellbeing - Meal Preparation Practise - Reducing Screen Time

Email: CHAT@northtyneside.gov.uk, call 0191 643 7454 or register through the active NT website

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

But What Should I Wear?

The Kit Hub - "Take what you need or leave what you can"

Visit The Kit Hub to donate, take, or swap items of children's and adults sports clothing for free.

Every Thursday, 10am-12pm at the Cedarwood Trust (NE29 7QT)



The Monthly Meeting

Each month we have a speaker for various topics followed by tea/coffee. You are welcome to visit and learn about us.

University Of The Third Age

whitley-bay.u3asite.uk

0772 419 2193

u3a

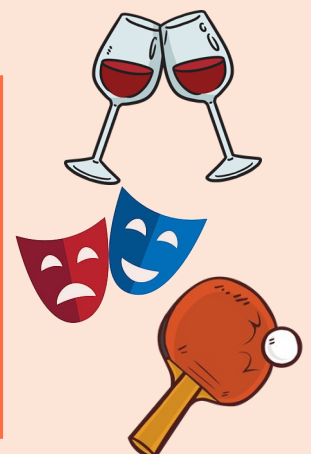
Whitley Bay u3a provides a wide range of skill, learning and friendship opportunities to maintain mental and physical fitness, key to staying happy and healthy. Whitley Bay u3a is part of a large international organisation which in the UK has over 1,000 branches and 400,000 members.

Membership is open to anyone no longer in full-time work irrespective of age or ability. All we ask is that members treat fellow members with respect and courtesy. Being a member of our u3a gives you access to over 35 interest groups, covering a wide range of educational, interest and socially based activities. Our membership year runs from May 1st to April 30th and the annual membership fee is £20. However, if you join on or after November 1st, you only pay £10. You can join via the website, emailing u3awbmembership@icloud.com or in person at the monthly meeting.

Whitley Bay u3a is run by members for members. Everyone is a volunteer and volunteering can range from setting out tables and chairs at group activities, organising a group, committee membership or one of the many other roles.



Groups Include: Art, Art Appreciation, Crafts, Theatre, Tai Chi, 10 Pin Bowling, Bowls, Board Games, Bridge, Canasta, Table Tennis, Mah Jong, Scrabble, Church Bell Ringing, Community Garden, Archaeology, History, French, Italian, Books, Poetry, Wine Tasting, Discussion, Fine Dining, Quiz, Sport Appreciation, Country Walks & Short Walks



HELP FOR YOUNG CARERS

If you're a young carer, it's good to talk to friends and relatives about how you feel. If you find it hard to talk, try writing your thoughts in a diary, poem or letter. This can help to make sense of your thoughts and how you feel.

SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL

Although you might not want people to know about your caring role, it's important to let teachers know so they can understand your life at home and give appropriate support, especially if you're missing lessons or struggling to get your work in on time. If you let just one teacher you trust know that you're a carer, they can give advice, support and make adjustments such as:

Extra time for school work - Assistance for parents getting to parents evening - Time to talk privately - Homework clubs - Phone use during break & lunch to check on who you care for



If

you find it difficult to talk about your home life with a teacher, ask someone in your family to write to the school, it can be easier to talk about the situation if you keep a diary or list of all the jobs you have to do. If you feel you have to miss school to care for someone this can affect your future so try to get help as quickly as possible so the situation does not go on for a long time.



FRIENDS & SOCIAL LIFE

As a young carer, you may miss out on opportunities to play and spend time with your friends because you do not have as much free time or you're thinking about the person you look after. It's important to put some time aside each day for you to do something you enjoy, whether that's playing with friends, reading a book, watching TV or doing your favourite hobby.

Meeting up with other young carers is a great way to make new friends, have some fun and share some of your worries with people in similar situations to your own. If you ask your local young carers project or carers centre, they may be able to help source activities for young carers in your area!

Bullying can include being physically or emotionally hurt or being left out of activities. Young carers are sometimes bullied because the person they care for is ill or disabled, or because they cannot do the things others can. If you are being bullied it's important to talk to school, family or call CHILDLINE on 0800 11 11. This is a free, phone line where they can give you advice and get you help. They will not tell anyone that you have called.

HEALTH

If you're worried about your physical or mental health, or the health of the person you care for, speak to a doctor or GP. School nurses are happy to speak with you about health concerns. If you want some support for your mental health, ask to speak to a school counsellor; their job is to listen carefully and give advice in a private setting.

Social workers may be asked to help a young carer's family if there are problems that the family members are finding hard to sort out on their own. A social worker from your local council has to visit, if you or your parents request this and can help



STAYING WELL THIS WINTER

Winter is coming which means it is important to be aware of what the most **common winter conditions** and how to **prevent and manage** them.

THE COMMON COLD

A minor illness that can be caused by many viruses most commonly; the rhinovirus. It is more common to catch a cold during the winter as most people stay indoors making it easier for the virus to spread. It is important to take measures to help prevent the spread such as **regular hand washing, using tissues** to catch your cough or sneeze and **avoid sharing items** such as cups and towels with someone who has a cold. Colds usually get better on their own within 1-2 weeks and can be managed **without seeing a GP**. Symptoms of a cold usually **come on gradually** over a couple of days. The main symptoms of a cold include sneezing, a **blocked or runny nose**, a **cough**, a **sore throat**, feeling **tired**, **aching muscles** and joints, and can sometimes cause a high temperature. Many of the symptoms can be **managed yourself**. If you have a cold, it is important to **drink plenty of water, get plenty of rest**, have a hot bath and a hot honey and lemon drink.

You can also buy these medications from a pharmacy to help ease your symptoms:

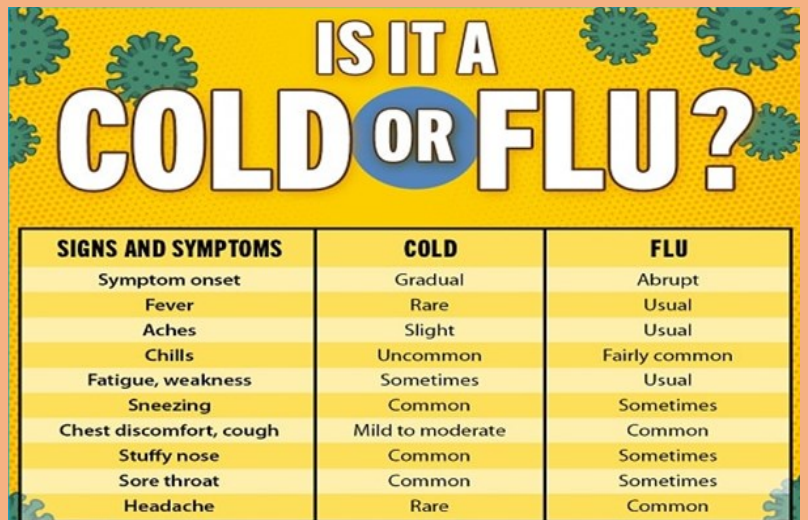
Paracetamol: Can help with aches and pains, helps with a sore throat, and helps to bring a temperature down

Throat lozenges: Help to soothe a sore throat

Decongestants: Products such as Sudafed can help with a blocked nose

Combination products: Many products such as Lemsip and Beechams contain a combination of medicines.

Please speak to your pharmacist to find the one that best suits you



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

THE FLU

The flu is more common during the colder months and is caused by the influenza virus. Flu can get better on its own, but it can make some people seriously ill. It is important to get the **flu vaccine** if you are at risk of suffering from serious illness caused by the flu. Unlike a cold, symptoms of the flu usually **come on rapidly**. Symptoms include; feeling **exhausted**, an **aching body**, a **dry cough**, a **sore throat**, a **high temperature** and **loss of appetite**. Many people with the flu struggle to get out of bed. Many of the **medicine's used to treat the cold are also effective** at easing symptoms of the flu. It is also important to drink plenty of fluid and get plenty of rest. However, if you have a **weakened immune system**, symptoms lasting **longer than 7 days**, are **pregnant**, **over 65 years** old or have **conditions that affect the lungs or heart** it is important to **speak to a GP** as you could be more at risk of complications.

STAYING WELL THIS WINTER

SORE THROAT:

Sore throats are common and usually clear up on their own within a week. To help treat your sore throat make sure to drink **plenty of water**, **eat cool or soft foods** and **avoid** irritants such as **smoking**. Paracetamol can also help with the pain and sucking on **medicated lozenges** such as Strepsils. However, some are more serious and **may require antibiotics** to help clear up the infection. You may be eligible for antibiotics as part of the pharmacy first scheme at a pharmacy that provides this service if you have **at least 4 out of 5** of the following:

High temperature - White spots on your throat - Severe inflammation of tonsils - No cough and/or nasal congestion - Visit within 3 days of symptom onset

If you go to the pharmacy within 3 days of symptoms starting the pharmacist can do a consultation with you, and if suitable you will receive antibiotics. However, if your sore throat lasts **longer than 7 days**, have **difficulty breathing** or are very unwell, it is important to **speak to a doctor**.

SINUSITIS:

Sinusitis is **swelling of the sinuses**, usually caused by an **infection** (sinuses are air-filled spaces in the skull). It usually **clears up on its own within 2-3 weeks** without the need for antibiotics. Symptoms commonly include **nasal blockage** or nasal **discharge**, **facial pain/pressure** that's worse when bending down, **headache** and **reduced sense of smell**. To help manage your symptoms, drink **plenty of water**, get plenty of **rest** and take **paracetamol** to help with the pain. However, you may be eligible for antibiotics as part of the pharmacy first scheme if you have any of the following:

- Symptoms lasting more than 10 days without improvements.
- Gradually getting worse
- Fever above 38°C
- Severe localised pain particularly over the teeth and jaw

However, if you are very unwell or your symptoms have lasted **longer than 3 weeks**, it is important to **speak to a doctor**.



PHARMACY FIRST:

The pharmacy first service launched in January 2024 and enables participating community pharmacies to **provide care for 7 conditions without a GP** appointment. The aim of the service is to provide easier and more convenient access to high quality care whilst also freeing up GP appointments. The conditions included in the service are; uncomplicated urinary tract infections (**water infections**), **shingles**, **impetigo**, **infected insect bites**, **sore throat**, **sinusitis**, and otitis media (**ear infection**). The care is provided following a **strict guidance** known as a patient group direction (PGD). This is NOT prescribing, there is **set criteria that must be met** for the pharmacist to be able to provide the service.

THE GREEN TEAM

We here at Bridge and Monkseaton Medical Practice have declared a **climate emergency**, recognising climate change as one of the biggest threats to public health.

We have made a commitment to further reducing carbon emissions and prioritising this agenda alongside other national and local health priorities.

Climate change is not just an environmental issue, there is now good evidence that climate change is the greatest threat to public health in the 21st century and we have a responsibility to tackle climate change, we really want to make a difference for our staff, patients and local people now and for generations to come and will look to take actions collaboratively to deliver zero carbon.

We will pay attention to the climate footprint of our travel (both staff and patients), energy use, the services we use, and the products we buy and use. We will make low-carbon choices wherever possible. We will treat all the resources we use as valuable and not be wasteful.

While you're here, why not pledge to make some simple changes to make a big difference to the environment?

- I pledge to use a reusable water bottle
- I pledge to plan meals in advance and reduce food waste
- I pledge to choose plastic-free packaging
- I pledge to leave the car at home for short journeys
- I pledge to turn off lights and appliances when I'm not using them

THINK GREEN, SAVE ENERGY, SWITCH IT OFF!

