

# Monkseaton Medical Centre & Bridge Medical

## Patient Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2023

### Let's Spring into Summer Newsletter!

### Finally some better weather...

This edition we aim to update you on the following

- What do you say about us?
- PPG
- Important updates
- Walking groups
- We are Park run practices: come join in!
- Self referrals
- Self care over summer



### See what our patients have to say about us!



The PPG meets 3 times per year for an hour. Members are involved in some of the practice campaigns, such as Flu Clinic and our annual Christmas Hamper campaign organised with the local school. If you are interested in joining, please contact our Deputy Practice Manager, Janet, who will be happy to give you more information.



# Important Updates

## Bridge Medical Patient Update

We value our patients and staff and are working hard to deliver a quality service whilst maintaining certain levels of safety. This is why with increased winter pressures, high demand for appointments and some staff shortages, we have had to review how we operate the practice to maintain standards.



Whilst we experience these pressures over the next few months, we have decided to have all clinical staff working from our larger practice, Monkseaton Medical Centre on a Friday.

However, Bridge Medical reception will remain open for you to speak to a member of our reception team, hand in samples, prescription requests, pick up letters, fit notes etc. This is to ensure that we run a safe service for both practices and continue to deliver a high standard of care. For an 'on the day appointment' on Fridays, you may therefore be asked to travel to Monkseaton Medical Centre to be seen. If your appointment can wait until you see your regular clinician at Bridge Medical, our reception team will be happy to help you book a date and time that suits.

Please bear with us as we try to navigate these challenging times. We thank you for your continued support to both practices.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Janet on 0191 2521616.

## What do I do with my empty inhaler?

Dispose of your inhalers correctly! Take them to the pharmacy!



All inhalers should be returned to your pharmacy for disposal and should **NOT** be put in household waste. If sent to landfill the propellants used in some types of inhalers will be released into the atmosphere and even if separated from the canister, the plastic cannot be disposed of via domestic recycling schemes.

Proper disposal of inhalers by returning them to the pharmacy allows them to be incinerated, stopping these gases from being released into the atmosphere and stops inhaler plastic from going to landfill. If all used inhalers in the UK were returned to your chemist for proper disposal this could save 512,000 tonnes of CO2 annually, which is the equivalent of a VW golf being driven around the world 88,000 times!



# Improving Your Wellbeing

At Monkseaton Medical Centre and Bridge Medical we are really focused on how we can help our patients improve their wellbeing. We have dedicated Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinators, Beth Houghton and Susan Gent, who are currently looking to provide our patients with the tools and resources to improve mental health and wellbeing.

Susan and Beth are currently looking at running a Walking Group to promote physical activity and getting out in the fresh air to help clear your mind and give you something to focus on. They will be running these walking groups from Monkseaton Medical Centre on a route which has been mapped out and ranges from 2-5 kilometres.

The goal is that these groups will allow you to make new social connections, get some physical activity in a group setting and make you feel good. Beth and Susan will be on hand to answer any questions and join in the fun with you.

After the covid-19 pandemic kept us all at home for so long, we feel now is a good time to get back out there and create a connected and social community spirit.

If you feel like this is something you would be interested in or something that might help you get that head start you need to help your wellbeing, please get in touch with the surgery and we will be able to give you more information.



If you think walking might not be the thing for you, but you are interested in finding out about other groups and activities in the area, then please do not hesitate to book an appointment. Beth and Susan are available on different days across both surgeries and would be happy to find the best fit for you and help you on your way to improving your mental and physical wellbeing.

# Park Run Practice

Physical exercise has been proven to have a beneficial effect on people's physical and mental health and people who regularly exercise have a lower risk of developing many long-term health conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, osteoporosis, and some forms of cancer. If exercise was a tablet, we would prescribe it to all our patients.

We are pleased to announce that Monkseaton Medical and Bridge Medical have linked up with the Whitley Bay Parkrun team to become official Parkrun practices. Park runs are free weekly 5k events across the country, organised by volunteers. It is important to note that this is not a race, and you can walk, jog, run, volunteer, or spectate – simply put, take part in any way that suits you. This is an inclusive event and open to all including those who are inactive or who have health conditions.

If you think this is something that may be beneficial for you and your health, you can find out more information about the Parkrun and how to sign up at [www.parkrun.org.uk](http://www.parkrun.org.uk)

You can also discuss this with your GP or health care practitioner at your appointment.



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**Proud to be a  
parkrun practice**



# Self-Referrals

Did you know there are many services patients can self-refer to without the need for a GP appointment?

## Adult social care

This is for people who have care and support needs. They can offer care packages, such as personal hygiene care and live-in care for those living independently who qualify

How to Refer – 0191 643 2777

[www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)



## Crisis Team

The Universal Crisis Team is a team of experienced mental health staff. They offer assessment for people who feel they're experiencing a mental health crisis. This team offers a 24/7 service but does not provide 'emergency' service such as 999.

How to Refer – 0800 652 2861



## North Tyneside Recovery Partnership

The Team is a dedicated service for anyone living in North Tyneside who is experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol.

How to Refer – 0191 640 0180

[www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/north-tyneside-recovery-partnership/](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/north-tyneside-recovery-partnership/)



## Talking Therapies

If you're over 16 and struggling with your mental health Talking Therapies can be accessed online via their portal or by calling the number. They can offer the following services and support, anxiety, depression, stress and phobias.

How to Refer: 0191 295 2775

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk/talkingtherapies](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/talkingtherapies)



## Occupational Health

They can help assess your home and any household aids you feel you may need if you're struggling to mobilise around your home, such as grip rails (excludes walking aids) .

How to Refer – 0191 643 2777 (option 3)



## Podiatry

This service is for non-diabetic patients offering support with, difficulty cutting toenails, blisters or skin splits, corns/hard skin, pain in ball of foot, pain in heel, flat feet and ingrowing toenails.

How to Refer – 0191 282 8080



## Sexual Health/Family planning

This is operated via the 1-2-1 centre who can help with wide range of sexual health queries and contraception options, including vasectomy.

How to Refer – 0191 297 0441

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-services](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-services)



## Pregnancy test and decision making

Help and advice about pregnancy and options available to you.

How to Refer – 0191 297 0441

For termination of pregnancy – 0191 203 1242



## Physio/Musculoskeletal Services

This service helps people manage problems relating to their muscles, bones, nerves and joints (called musculoskeletal problems). They aim to help people be as physical as possible.

You can refer yourself online through the website:

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk/ntims](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/ntims)



# Hay Fever

**Hay fever** is a common condition that affects around 1 in 5 people in the UK. People who suffer from asthma or eczema are more likely to have hay fever.

When the body is exposed to certain substances it can trigger the immune system to overreact by releasing histamine in the nose, eyes and airways which then cause inflammation. These triggers can be pollen (from weeds, trees, and flowers), dust mites and fur from pets. Symptoms can be either all year round or seasonal.

## Symptoms include:

Sneezing  
Red, itchy, puffy, or watery eyes  
Headaches and sinus pain  
Itchy, blocked or runny nose  
Itchy throat  
Fatigue

Treatment depends on how severe the symptoms are and what is being affected (nose, eyes). Sometimes symptoms are manageable without treatment but sometimes treatment is required with either topical treatments (nose sprays or eye drops) or oral tablets.

Hayfever can be self-treated by going to the pharmacy and the medicines are often cheaper to buy than on a prescription.

Anti-allergic medicines can also be bought from supermarkets.

Some medicines must be taken or used regularly for full effect whereas other medicines can be taken on a 'when required' basis.

For more information about this, please ask at the pharmacy.

If you take any prescribed medicines please ask at the pharmacy if there are any interactions with hay fever medicines.

## USEFUL TIPS

Keep house and car windows closed, especially when the pollen count is high (early morning between 7am to 9am and evenings between 5pm and 7pm).

Avoid large grassy areas, woodland, cutting the grass, pollutants and car fumes

Wear wrap-around sunglasses

When you get in from outside wash your hands, face, hair, rinse your eyes and change your clothes

If possible, stay indoors when the pollen count is high

Use petroleum jelly inside your nose to block inhalation of pollen

Keep your house clean and wear a mask and glasses when doing housework

Don't dry damp washing outside to avoid pollen sticking to your clothes

You could buy a pollen filter for the air vents in the car

Listen to weather forecasts which include pollen counts so you are aware when the pollen count is high



Symptoms	Medicine available	Information
<b>Eye symptoms</b> e.g., watery, itchy, red eyes	Eye drops such as sodium cromoglicate 2%	This can be used alongside nasal spray or oral tablets if symptoms are not fully managed by eyedrops.
<b>Nasal symptoms</b> e.g., itchy, runny or blocked nose	Nasal spray such as Beconase	Steroid nasal spray can reduce inflammation and allergic reaction. It can take a few weeks to see the maximum effect.
<b>Generalised symptoms</b>	Oral tablet such as cetirizine, loratadine, fexofenadine, chlorphenamine.	Chlorphenamine can cause drowsiness  Cetirizine and loratadine cause less drowsiness  Fexofenadine is the strongest antihistamine – it has only recently become available to buy over the counter

## When should I seek for further help?

If you are experiencing persistence wheezing, breathlessness, or tightness in the chest

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, medicines over the counter are unlicensed to sell to pregnant ladies.

If your symptoms are not relieved by over-the-counter treatments in combination with measures to reduce your exposure to pollen