

Greenmoss Medical Centre News



Patient Newsletter edition 17: December 2024



*The Partners and staff at
Greenmoss would like to wish
all our patients a Merry
Christmas and a happy,
healthy New Year*

Closed for Christmas and New Year

The Practice (Surgery and Dispensary) is closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day. We are open as usual on all other days over the festive period.

Why am I always tired in winter?

Disrupted sleep cycles

There are several reasons we might feel more tired in winter. Firstly, as the days become shorter, our sleep and waking cycles may become disrupted and we may experience hormonal changes as a result.

Changes in the level of the hormone melatonin - which helps to regulate how awake or sleepy we feel - may be to blame.

When it is dark, we produce more melatonin, which gives us feelings of tiredness so in the winter when it is darker, we may produce more melatonin, which can impact on our mood and leave us feeling more fatigued and tired compared to the summer months.

Lack of vitamin D

A vitamin D deficiency can also make us feel tired (fatigued). The body creates vitamin D from direct sunlight on the skin when outdoors, which is far easier in the summer when the days are longer and we spend more time outside.

But between October and early March in the UK, we don't make much vitamin D from the sun - and our supplies become depleted over the course of the winter.

Change in diet

Additionally, our diet may also change during the colder months. In winter, we tend to reach for comforting foods that aren't always healthy - and can make us

feel more tired and sluggish. Research suggests that we may be more likely to turn to comfort foods in winter because they release mood enhancing neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine. When it's cold and dark outside, these foods can give us a temporary boost

Physical activity can make us feel energised and help us to sleep better, but it can be difficult to feel motivated to exercise in the winter.

So, how can I boost my energy in winter?

Let some daylight in

Ways to help reduce the influence of melatonin can be to open the curtains in the morning to allow sunlight through to the room. It also helps to try to get out for a short walk in the morning or early afternoon to get in some light where possible. If you work from home or in an office, it can help to get outdoors in natural daylight as much as possible or work near a window.

Exercise regularly

It's also important to keep moving and exercise regularly. The exercise-induced release of 'feelgood' chemicals called endorphins will give you a boost, reduce stress and help you sleep better at night.

Eat the right foods

To help with overall energy levels, it's important to aim to eat a variety of wholegrain carbohydrates, proteins and plenty of vegetables. Many people find it easier to eat a larger range of fruits, vegetables and salads during the summer months, but can struggle with these during the colder season. It can help to be more inventive with the ways you add vegetables and salads into your meals.

Avoid too much added sugar

Food products that contain added sugars can cause a rapid increase in our blood sugar levels and lead to a crash later on, which can cause energy dips. So too can refined carbohydrates such as white pasta or white bread, cakes and pastries.

Wholegrains such as brown rice or pasta, wild rice, wholemeal bread, quinoa, buckwheat and freekah can help keep our blood sugar levels more stable, providing a more steady release of energy throughout the day.

Try a vitamin D supplement

It is also recommended that everyone take a daily vitamin D supplement during the winter months. This is because sunlight is the best source of vitamin D as opposed to food sources.

Work on your sleep hygiene

If you have difficulty falling asleep, trying to stick to a regular bedtime routine may help you switch off and prepare for bed. Keeping to - roughly - the same sleeping hours, having a warm bath before bed and reading a book or listening to a podcast can help you wind down. Try to avoid screens and don't exercise vigorously before trying to sleep, as this will make you feel more awake.

Visit your doctor

Sometimes, feeling tired all the time can be a sign of a medical problem. If you are constantly exhausted and it is having a negative impact on your life, it's important to speak to your doctor.

Your doctor will be able to investigate to see if there is an underlying health problem causing your persistent tiredness.

Samples

If you have been asked to bring a urine, stool or sputum sample to the Surgery, please use the correct container. If unsure – please ask at the Reception.

When you bring in the sample, please make sure your name and all necessary information is on the sample pot.

The Receptionist will advise where you need to leave the sample. Please don't leave it on the desk, we have appropriate boxes for these.

Blue tokens

Just a reminder that we have a slot on the blue tokens scheme at Kidsgrove Tesco. Our project is to provide support for carers. When you shop at Tesco please ask for a token and drop it in our slot to help us raise money for this project. Thank you

Surgery Statistics

October 2024

4363 appointments were booked

| Mode | October 2024 |
|--------------|--------------|
| Face-to-face | 69% |
| Telephone | 16% |
| Home Visit | <1% |
| Digital | 1% |



Repeat prescriptions?

Only order what you need

-  **10% of medicines prescribed nationally are not needed**
-  **In Cheshire and Merseyside large amounts of medicines are wasted**
-  **Speak to your pharmacy team about only ordering what you need**
-  **Take your medications when you go into hospital for safe, seamless care**

Find out more about our medicine waste campaign at:
cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/medicines-waste

