



April 2020

Dear Patient

## **Covid-19 and B12 injection arrangements at Ivy Grove surgery**

We have identified from your records that you receive B12 injections at the surgery on a regular basis.

During the covid-19 pandemic we will be unable to provide these injections due to the risk of covid-19 infection to our patients and staff. This recommendation is based on national guidance and is not unique to Ivy Grove Surgery.

Research has shown that it is possible to achieve good B12 levels using oral tablets rather than injections. The dose needed to achieve this is high but any excess that your body does not need will be excreted via the urine, therefore it is impossible to overdose on oral B12.

In fact, oral tablets for low B12 levels or pernicious anaemia are preferred in some countries such as Sweden and the USA. Research shows that a daily dose of 1000 (one thousand) mcg (micrograms or sometimes written as ug) daily one hour before or two hours after food, is effective in keeping a constant level of B12 in the blood rather than the peaks and troughs an injection may cause.

You will remember when you first started your B12 injections you will have had six injections over the course of two weeks. This loading dose brings the B12 level up to normal and in most cases well above normal levels. The purpose of your 8-12 weekly injection is to "top up" your B12 levels. This maintenance of B12 can easily be achieved with high dose oral B12 tablets in most circumstances.

**The only exception to the above is in patients who have undergone major bowel surgery where intestine has been removed. If you feel you are in this category, we would ask you to contact the surgery to discuss this with one of the doctors. Please bear in mind this is a routine matter and the doctor may have to call you back.**

For all other patients we kindly ask that you purchase 1000 (one thousand) mcg/ug (microgram) tablets from your pharmacy, health food shop or reputable on-line and take one a day an hour before food or two hours after food.

**We are unable to prescribe B12 oral tablets for you as it is blacklisted by our local prescribing committee for cost saving reasons.**

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours Sincerely,

Ivy Grove Surgery Team