

ISSUE

10.1

JULY  
2012

THE FREE  
HIGH QUALITY  
NEWSLETTER  
FOR OUR  
PATIENTS

# Ivy Grove News

always aiming to provide high quality and friendly family health care



VISIT US ONLINE AT [IVY.GS](http://IVY.GS)

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## This Issue

We continue our aim to keep you informed of the services at Ivy Grove and also let you know about the latest medical developments.

## Help Us to Help You

Recent huge increases in patient demand for appointments have meant that we have had to take extraordinary steps to change our appointments system. Such changes should benefit all patients and help to improve the quality of our service. Here we explain the changes to you and we ask that you help us to help you get the most out of the surgery.

## Appropriate care

Although many patients feel the doctor should be the first port of call, this is not always the most appropriate. We tell you where you can get help for your condition.

## More information

We give details of links available online via our website where you can read more about medical news, conditions and get advice on what to do for common conditions and more urgent cases.

## Your feedback

Your feedback is very important to us – feel free to write to us with your comments or questions. Our address is shown on the back page of this newsletter.

## All Change for Appointments at Ivy Grove

**GP surgeries and A&E Departments throughout the country have seen a huge increase in workload and the demand for appointments has meant long waits for patients.**

Ivy Grove Surgery is deeply committed to providing a high quality service for our patients and we do realise that it has been rather difficult to get an appointment in recent months. Therefore, we have decided to take immediate action and change our appointment system.

More detail on the appointment changes is provided on page 2, but in short, we are increasing our capacity by providing more appointments overall. We will introduce telephone appointments as a more appropriate means of dealing with some conditions. We are employing locums in order to clear the backlog of patient demand that has been building up.

In order that the system we are introducing is going to succeed and be effective, we do need your co-operation in making sure it works. It would really help us if patients are able to effectively choose the most appropriate port of call. For instance, if you think your condition or query could be dealt with by telephone, please ask for a telephone appointment. If it is simply to review a result or update us on your condition, then a telephone appointment may again be more suitable. If your condition is not urgent, then please allow us to offer you an appointment as soon as we

possibly can. If your condition has suddenly come on and cannot wait until the next day, please book a same day appointment. Doing this will help us to use our resources more efficiently.

- Choose a **telephone appointment** if you think your problem can be easily dealt with that way
- Please **don't book a same day** appointment if it's not really urgent
- Seek **advice from other services** as appropriate to your condition

If you have had an accident or fall, and suffered bumps and sprains, you can attend the Minor Injuries Unit at Ripley Hospital. If you just want simple medical advice, you can ring NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or ask your local pharmacist. If you have a back, neck or joint problem you can book yourself in for free physio with Physio Direct on 01335 230079 without seeing us first. Serious conditions like suspected stroke, suspected heart attack mean a major casualty attendance or ringing 999 will be more appropriate rather than coming to the surgery.

If you are unsure, you can always check our website **ivy.gs** for medical advice.

There are many options to choose from to get the right sort of care for your condition, rather than simply ringing at 8 o'clock every weekday morning and trying to get through extremely busy phone lines, only to find that all our appointments have gone.



ivy grove  
surgery



## Home Visits

If a patient can come to surgery then it is strongly recommended that they do so. The surgery has the facilities and access to appropriate equipment, which cannot be brought to patients' homes. **Home visits are strictly reserved for the housebound and those too ill to come to surgery.**

**Home visiting is a relatively inefficient method of providing good clinical care.** Up to four or five patients can be seen in the time it takes for a home visit. Often facilities such as lighting and space are poorer and the doctor does not readily have access to the patient's full medical record. Most home visits requests need to be assessed so that we can use our limited resources appropriately.

**It is practice policy not to visit children at home** as they can usually be seen sooner at the surgery than if they have to wait for a home visit.

**Lack of transport is never an acceptable reason for a visit request,** as relatives, neighbours, friends and taxi firms are generally available. A child (or adult) with a fever will not come to any harm by being brought to the surgery.

**Please make home visit requests before 10.30am if possible,** as this enables the doctors to plan their working day and visiting schedule. The doctor may ring you back to clarify the problem or give advice before deciding if a home visit is necessary. Although we do try and arrange for the same doctor who has been treating you to carry out your home visit, we cannot guarantee a particular doctor to visit you on any particular day.



## Appointment Changes in More Detail

### More information on the changes to our appointment system

#### Is it really that urgent?

When you now ring for an appointment, our receptionists will ask if you would like an appointment within a few days or if it is more urgent.

'Urgent' means something that cannot possibly wait until the time we are next open and that must be dealt with that very day. Experience at this surgery suggests that very many of the patients who request same day appointments do not actually need to be seen the same day. We do need to ask if your problem is more urgent as we must use our resources to try and help those patients who, because of their clinical condition, genuinely do need to be seen the same day.

Examples of things that generally would require same

day appointments are poorly feverish children, those in pain, post-operative complications etc. If you do feel your condition can wait the few days until the next routine appointment, then we would ask that you accept such an appointment.

**Do you need to be seen same day or can it wait a few days?**

If you feel that your condition does require a same day appointment, our receptionists will ask if your condition could be dealt with over the telephone. If you agree, you will be booked a telephone slot that day. However, the option of coming in to surgery will still be available should you feel a face to face appointment is necessary.

#### Why speak to the doctor?

Evidence shows that many GP consultations can be carried out safely and effectively over the telephone. Certainly consultations for relaying results to patients, updates on conditions, paperwork and administrative tasks and some medication reviews can all be carried out easily by telephone.

If you would like to speak your usual doctor rather than come to the surgery, please ask for a telephone appointment at the outset. If, after speaking to the doctor, it is decided that a surgery appointment is still required, one will be booked for you as appropriate.

Hopefully with our new system, we can give timely appointments to all patients dependent on clinical need.

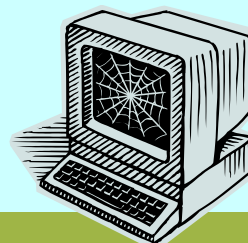
## Q: Where can I get more information online? A: [ivy.gs](http://ivy.gs)

**Our website [ivy.gs](http://ivy.gs) has plenty of information on medical matters,** useful numbers and links to other external sites that give validated medical advice. Please visit the following links to get to our site:

Surgery home page:  
<http://ivy.gs>

Medical advice:  
<http://ivy.gs/medadv>

Useful telephone numbers:  
<http://ivy.gs/numbers>



Useful external links:  
<http://ivy.gs/links>

Previous newsletters:  
<http://ivy.gs/ign>

Leaflet downloads:  
<http://ivy.gs/downloads>

Help page:  
<http://ivy.gs/help>

## DO I NEED A DOCTOR?

### THERE ARE GENUINE CHOICES FOR HELP & ADVICE

Did you know there are alternatives to booking an appointment with the doctor that may be more appropriate for your healthcare needs?

It may be frustrating to ring up and find that all of today's appointments have been taken up, but did you know that there are other ways to access medical help, that may be more appropriate to your needs. Here are a few alternatives to booking an appointment with the doctor.

- If your condition relates to back, neck or muscular problems, you can book an appointment with the free **NHS Physio Direct** Service without seeing a doctor first. The number to ring is

01335 230079.

- If you require simple medical advice, you can ring **NHS Direct** on 0845 4647. For self help advice and treatment of minor illness, you may wish to speak to your local pharmacist.

### GET THE RIGHT HELP FOR YOU AND YOUR CONDITION

- If you have a dental problem you must see your **dentist**. GPs are advised not to treat patients with dental conditions. If you are not registered with a dentist, you can ring **NHS Direct** for more information on your nearest facility.

- If you have had an accident or injury, or feel you need an X-ray for such an incident, you should attend the **Minor Injuries Unit at Ripley Hospital**.

- For life threatening emergencies – for example chest pain, suspected stroke, bleeding **PLEASE DO NOT RING FOR AN APPOINTMENT, even an urgent one. Please ring 999** or attend the nearest major casualty department. In this area, this is the **Royal Derby Hospital**.

- For other conditions, the **walk in centre** at Ilkeston Family Practice, Ilkeston Community Hospital, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8LN is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Sunday. You can ring them on 0115 9512496.

## COMMON AILMENTS #1 of a series

### Fever (high temperature)

Most fevers are caused by an infection or other illness. Fever helps your body fight infections by stimulating the body's natural defences. By increasing the body's temperature, a fever makes it harder for the bacteria and viruses that cause infections to survive. You can usually treat fever in young children at home using infant paracetamol. More information on fever, including when to see the GP, is provided at **NHS Choices** or <http://bit.ly/JvaD3Q>

### Diarrhoea and Vomiting

Diarrhoea can be caused by an infection and may be accompanied by vomiting. This is called gastroenteritis (a stomach bug). It is usually caused by a virus. In general, give extra fluids to replace the fluid that has been lost, but only give food if hungry.

You can help to prevent any infection spreading by using separate towels and encouraging hand washing after using the toilet and before eating. Also avoid returning to school or going back to work until at least 48 hours after the last bout of diarrhoea and vomiting. More information on gastroenteritis, including when to see the GP, is provided at **NHS Choices** or <http://bit.ly/IvwZDM>

### Coughs and colds

Most people with a cough have a respiratory tract infection caused by a virus, such as the common cold, flu or bronchitis. The common cold in adults and children can give rise to a blocked nose, sneezing or a runny nose, cough, headache, aches and pains and feeling tired.

Treatment is with rest, plenty of fluids, steam inhalations, gargling, vapour rubs and paracetamol for aches and pains. For more details of treatment of coughs and colds, visit **NHS Choices** (coughs) <http://bit.ly/JLgunx> and (colds) <http://bit.ly/ICc15L>

### Physio Direct...

Did you know that you can refer yourself to physio for any back, neck, joint or muscular problem without having to see a GP first? Just ring Physio Direct on 01335 230079. The service is completely free, based at local hospitals and is open to all those aged 18 years and over. The line is open Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm. If you have neurological (brain/nerve), breathing or gynaecological problems, please see the GP first.

### NHS Direct...

Did you know you can get free healthcare advice on any health related matter by ringing **NHS Direct** on 0845 4647? Lines are staffed by qualified personnel and open 24 hours a day, providing clinically checked, expert health advice. **NHS Direct** will also be able to advise you where you can turn to for help, for instance, if you need to find an emergency dentist, or the location of the nearest healthcare provider.

..more next time



## Do I really need that appointment?

Missed appointments waste huge amounts of time and effort. Nationally, missed appointments cost the NHS over half a billion pounds a year, which is enough to run two hospitals. **The total number of missed appointments in this surgery alone is the same as if the surgery was closed for two whole weeks every year!**

Please bear this in mind the next time you ring and can't get an appointment - it may be because someone didn't come to their appointment and forgot to cancel. If you could possibly be that person, please try and let us know that you cannot make it to your appointment, so that we may give your appointment to someone else.

## When do I need to go to a Minor Injuries Unit?

### • Ripley Hospital Minor Injuries Unit

Many conditions can be more appropriately treated in the Ripley Hospital Minor Injuries Unit. Examples of conditions seen at the department by qualified staff include:

- Minor head injuries
- Eye infections and injuries
- Chest and rib injuries with no shortness of breath
- Limb injuries
- Hand injuries
- Lacerations (which can be stitched, steri-stripped or glued)
- Abrasions
- Burns and scalds
- Broken bones (Fractures)
- Sprains
- Pulled muscles
- Certain infections and wounds requiring antibiotics
- Soft tissue injuries
- Animal and insect bites and stings
- Foreign bodies to eyes, ears, nose and wounds
- Puncture wounds



If you have any of the above conditions, please present yourself to the minor injuries unit rather than book an appointment at the surgery. There is no time limit from onset of injuries within which you need to attend the Minor Injuries Unit in order to be seen.

Should you have any comments, complaints or compliments about the service you have received from the practice please ask to speak to our practice manager, Mrs. Charmagne Stephenson or write to us at the address below.

Contributions and letters to the newsletter are very welcome. Please address correspondence to the address below.

Written by Dr M. Wong  
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## Medication Reviews

We are aiming to perform medication reviews just once a year in order to reduce unnecessary visits to the surgery and multiple reviews for different conditions. We will specifically invite you at the appropriate time either by letter or with a note on your repeat prescription – there is no need to ring to book an appointment yourself.

## Results

It will no longer be necessary to ring the surgery for your results – we will contact you by letter or phone if we need to see or speak to you about any abnormal results. If you don't hear from us, you can assume your result was either normal, or that nothing needed doing with it. Changing our system should free up our phones for those patients needing appointments.

## When do I need to go to a Casualty Department?

### • Accident & Emergency, Royal Derby Hospital

The following conditions require prompt attendance at the nearest major casualty department, which in this case is the one at Royal Derby Hospital:

- A feverish and lethargic (drowsy) child
- A feverish and floppy (unresponsive) infant
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe abdominal pain
- Accidental or intentional overdose of tablets or medicines
- Severe trauma (including falls) and broken bones



## When do I need to ring 999?

### • Ring 999 and ask for 'ambulance'

The following conditions require immediate and urgent attention in order to preserve life. Do not book an appointment at the surgery. Ring 999 without delay:

- Chest pain (suspected heart attack)
- Suspected stroke (one or more **FAST** symptoms: **F**ace drooped, unable to raise **A**rms, **S**peech slurred, **T**ime to call 999)
- Suspected meningitis
- Anaphylactic shock (severe allergy)
- Heavy bleeding (from any source) or deep lacerations
- Fluctuating levels of consciousness or completely unconscious
- Difficulty breathing or stopped breathing with change in colour
- Seizure, fit or uncontrollable shaking

## NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will hopefully be published in about two months' time.

## REMINDER

We will be closed on the August Bank Holiday, Monday August 27th, 2012. Please remember to get your repeat prescriptions in early!

## MAILING LIST

If you want to join our mailing list and get this newsletter sent out to you electronically in PDF format whenever it is published, please send us an email to [newsletter@ivygrove.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ivygrove.org.uk)

We would love to hear your comments about our newsletter and also any articles you could contribute, so feel free to write at any time. Our address is above.