

ISSUE

10.2

CHRISTMAS
2012

THE FREE
NEWSLETTER
FOR OUR
PATIENTS



Ivy Grove News

always aiming to provide high quality and friendly family health care
Wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



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.

Appointments

We provide you with an update to the changes to our appointments system.

Test results

What does 'normal' mean? What does 'no action' mean? We give you some information on how to understand your blood result.

Citizen's Advice

We continue the long running series of articles from Richard Crowther of the Citizen's Advice with a topical piece on energy bills.

Common Ailments

More information on common conditions presenting in general practice can be found on page 3. This month we cover flu, sore throats and earache.

Patient Group

All registered patients are welcome to join our patient reference group to help us improve services.

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.

VISIT US ONLINE AT IVY.GS

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New Appointment System – an update

At the time of writing, we are now two months into our new appointment system, and so far, the initial feedback from the changes has been positive. We thank all patients (and staff) for bearing with us through a difficult transition, and will continue to make beneficial refinements to the system in order to improve the service for our patients.

Our telephone appointments are now being used more often. We are finding that patients are appreciating the convenience of being rung back at a specific time, rather than having to come to the surgery, and that this fits in with busy lifestyles. If you have a problem which does not need an examination then a telephone consultation may be appropriate for you. Examples of such conditions are shown in the green box.

TELEPHONE APPOINTMENTS

- Admin forms and sick-notes
- Advice about medications
- Advice on viral illnesses and minor ailments
- Reviews of certain long-term conditions* (e.g. thyroid disorders)
- Blood test and X-ray results*

** Please note that we will always invite you directly if we need to see you face to face for reviews or abnormal results*

As stated in the last newsletter, we have increased our overall appointment capacity

by working longer surgery hours and hiring more doctors. Waiting times for appointments have come down from in excess of two weeks, to an average of two or three days. This has led to a significant reduction in patients having to ring in first thing every morning for appointments and a similar significant reduction in the number of patients presenting to the reception desk to book an appointment. We have found that our staff are happier too, as they are now able to offer sooner appointments to our patients.

We have also made a change to our extended hours service, and can now offer late appointments up until 7.30pm on Tuesdays (and very occasionally Wednesdays). The very early morning starts on various days of the week have now been abandoned as we were finding these slots were not particularly convenient for patients, staff and doctors alike!

Over Christmas and New Year, we will again be making slight changes to the system by reducing the number of appointments that can be booked in advance, and we will be replacing them with same day appointments. We tend to find that through the festive season, demand for same day appointments increases dramatically, so we have to accommodate this. With 2013 round the corner, we hope that the new system will bed down properly and that everyone, from patients to staff, will find life just a little bit easier! Best wishes to all!





Test Results

It will no longer be necessary to ring the surgery for your results – we will contact you if we need to see or speak to you about any abnormal results.

But, if you do happen to ring, and are given your results by our receptionists, what does 'normal' or 'no action' actually mean? Here we give you a brief run-down.

What is normal?

When we report on your blood tests, we refer to what are known as 'normal ranges'. These are the limits that the hospital laboratory has set for that particular test. Usually most (95%) of the population fall within these limits. If your test result is just slightly outside the normal range, this does not necessarily mean your result is abnormal – it may just be normal for you – just as 95% of adult men may be between 5ft 5in and 6ft 3in in height, a man 6ft 4in would not be 'abnormal'.

What does 'no action' mean?

This generally means your result was slightly outside the normal range, but is such that the doctor is not unduly concerned, and nothing needs doing about it for now.

Routine appointment

Your doctor has decided you need a face to face or telephone appointment to discuss your result. This will be booked with your usual doctor. This may mean a wait, but your doctor has determined that your condition can be reviewed **at their next available appointment**.

We will always contact you urgently (often by telephone) should you need to be aware of any results which could be caused by a serious health problem.

citizens advice bureau

With gas and electricity prices up by around 20%, finding ways to save money on energy bills is a top priority in many households. If you are struggling to pay your energy bills, what can you do?

There are different tariffs and payment methods available so the first thing to do is speak to your energy supplier to check you are on the best deal for you and whether there is a cheaper way to pay your bill.

It's also really important that you check you are receiving all of the benefits and tax credits you are entitled to. It's easy to think that because you go out to work and earn a wage you wouldn't get any financial help from the Government – that's not true. £20 billion of benefits

goes unclaimed every year – and some of these are 'in work benefits' for those who don't earn a lot. So you could be missing out on money that could help you cope with rising costs – like energy bills.



Citizens Advice Bureaux can help you figure out whether you are entitled to any benefits.

If you think that you are not going to be able to pay your bill – which leaves you in debt to your energy company, then you need to tell your energy

supplier as soon as possible. They have a duty to help you and make sure that you are repaying what you can afford. For more advice on getting the best energy deal, or help if you're struggling to pay gas and electricity bills please make an appointment with reception to see our adviser.

Appointments are held every Friday from 9.00am – 1.00pm.

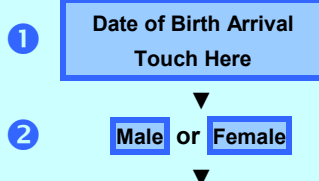
The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their money, legal and other problems by providing information and advice, and by influencing policymakers.

Advice provided by the Citizens Advice service is free, independent, confidential, and impartial, and available to everyone regardless of race, sex, disability, sexuality or nationality.

Save queues with our check-in system



It's really very easy to use our check-in system and takes seconds! Touch the series of five blue buttons as shown on the screen:



- 3 **1 2 3 ... to ... 29 30 31**
corresponding to the **date** of the month you were born on
- 4 **January ... to ... December**
corresponding to **month** of your birth.
- 5 **A confirmation will now display.**
Now touch **Clear Screen** to clear your info or if you need to start again.

PATIENTS NEEDED TO SHAPE NEW SURGERY GROUP

PATIENTS registered at Ivy Grove Surgery can find out more about how they can help get the best service for them and other patients by joining the surgery's Patient Representation Group.

We are hoping to restart this group, where patients meet regularly to give feedback and suggest future improvements on care and we want as broad a demographic as possible to join the group.

Charmagne Stephenson, practice manager for Ivy Grove Surgery, said: "Our

practice runs for our patients, and we hope to better understand our patients' views by

"AN ACTIVE AND DYNAMIC PATIENT GROUP CAN IMPROVE NHS CARE AT THE SURGERY"

establishing an active, dynamic patient representation group so that we can shape and improve NHS care at the surgery both now and in the future.

"Given the planned

changes to the running of the local NHS, it's vital that as many people from as broad a demographic as possible come along to the planned meetings, as we really are at a unique juncture in the NHS' history where GPs and clinicians will be putting our voice at the heart of the local NHS for the first time ever."

Patients registered at the surgery should email admin.ivygrove@nhs.net if they are interested in joining the group, or leave their name and telephone number with the surgery on 01773 514130.



COMMON AILMENTS #2 of a series

Flu

Flu can give rise to the same symptoms as a common cold but symptoms are usually much worse and accompanied by a high temperature (in excess of 38°C). Treatment is as for the common cold. For more details of treatment of flu, including when to see the GP, visit <http://bit.ly/QP4PtR>

Sore throats

Most sore throats are not serious and pass within three to seven days without the need for medical treatment. After a week, 85% of people will find that their symptoms have been resolved. Gargling with salt water, drinking warm liquids and sucking on throat lozenges can help to reduce the pain. For more details of treatment of sore throats, including when to see the GP, visit <http://bit.ly/QHH9W4>

Earache

Earache is cited as the most common reason for parents to call a doctor out of hours for their child. It will often be the result of an ear infection. If earache has just started, and there is no high fever (greater than 38°C), headache, dizziness or swelling around the ear, it is safe to take painkillers and use a cold flannel held to the affected ear for pain relief.

Four out of five ear infections resolve within 3 days without the need for antibiotics. For more details of treatment of earache, including when to see the GP, visit <http://bit.ly/U8OUCU>

111 Service – now available in Derbyshire



when it's less urgent than 999

111 is a new service is now available in Derbyshire to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS '111' will replace the existing NHS Direct number and sit alongside the established 999 emergency ambulance number. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

..more next time



Are you anxious, suffering from sleepless nights, or feeling overwhelmed by debt? If you are then you are not alone. The good news is there is a FREE service local to you which can help.

Christians Against Poverty is an award winning debt counselling charity. Our Bradford headquarters supports our growing network of over 205 UK centres to offer you a professional, friendly and local service. We have helped over 45,000 people facing problems just like yours to find a way out of debt, completely free of charge.

We can help anyone who lives near one of our centres, regardless of belief, background, race or any other factor. We will come visit you at home; we will not judge you and we will support you as you work your way out of debt. 94% of clients say our service was either life transforming or a great help.

Visit www.capdebthelp.org or call 0800 328 0006 for more info.

Day in the Life of a GP - #1 of a series

Contrary to what you read in some tabloids, an everyday GP does not work 9 to 5 with a good dose of golf in the middle of the day! Here we start a new series having a brief look at the working lives of some of the practice staff. For this first episode, we look at a typical day for a GP at Ivy Grove.

Arrive at 8.00am. Deal with half a dozen urgent prescription queries and look at about a dozen hospital discharge letters requiring action. Start morning surgery at 8.30am with face to face appointments followed by ringing patients on a telephone list. Sign prescriptions and a short break at 10.30am. Continue seeing patients face to face till 12.00pm.

Meet with colleagues again at around 12.30pm and discuss clinical cases, significant events and chat about the morning. Perhaps eat a packed lunch if didn't forget to bring it! Discuss and share out the visiting workload.

Visit anything from 2 to 4 patients from about 1.00pm. Get back to surgery at around 2.00 to 2.30pm. Deal with 30 to 40 clinic letters, ensuring information is added correctly to the system, respond to about a dozen electronic notes for action, review about 30 to 40 blood results. Ring GP and hospital colleagues for advice on a few patients. Dictate letters. Catch up on reading of clinical journals and reply to emails.

Start evening surgery at 3.30pm by ringing more patients then face to face appointments after that. Finish surgery at 6.00pm if running right on time.

Dictate a couple of letters and finish off the day's work. If all goes well, leave surgery at 6.30pm. If a last minute emergency comes in, home time could well be 9.00pm.

The above does not include running late because of having to admit a poorly patient to hospital, emergencies cropping up throughout the day, abnormal blood results being rung through and needing action, fitting in required clinical meetings at lunchtime, preparing for an annual appraisal, keeping up to date and any of the other 1,001 things that a GP must do. As you can see, no time for golf at any point!



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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ivy grove surgery

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"All calls are now recorded..."

All patients are advised that we have introduced a new telephone system which will now record all calls made to and from the surgery. This is to protect both patients and staff and to help with training. All recordings made are kept confidential and will not be made available to third parties unless directed by law.

Mail Service

We are now using a commercial mailing service for all patient correspondence. You will find our envelopes are marked Private and Confidential with a 'Postsort Two' logo on the top right, with our return address on the top left.

Healthy Carrot Cake Recipe

• Our receptionist Tina has found a healthy recipe

This recipe serves 8 and contains 20g of carbohydrate per portion

Ingredients

- 4oz/100g polyunsaturated margarine (e.g., sunflower)
- 4oz/100g demerara sugar
- 2 eggs
- 5oz/125g self-raising wholemeal flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ lemon, juice and zest
- 4oz/100g grated carrots



Method

- Cream the margarine and demerara sugar until light and fluffy
- Beat in the eggs
- Fold in the flour, baking powder, carrots and lemon zest
- Add the lemon juice
- Bake in a lightly greased flan tin at 190°C/375°F (Gas mark 5) for 25 to 30 minutes until golden brown
- Enjoy!

REMINDER

We will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Please get your repeat prescriptions well in time...

NEXT ISSUE

Details of our next issue will be posted on the surgery website at <http://ivy.gs>

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

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.

*Wishing all our readers
a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year*