

Maple



View

Medical Practice

Newsletter Autumn 2015

Autumn update:

Our thanks are extended to our Patient Participation Group who have written an article on ‘A day in the life of your Doctor’ for this edition. We hope that this will give you an idea of the flow of a General Practitioners day at the surgery.

The Autumn/Winter seasons are particularly challenging to patients with long-term medical conditions. This is the time of year to protect against the risk of flu, pneumonia and shingles. The NHS provides vaccinations free of charge to all those who are most at risk from these illnesses, please see below to find out if you are eligible. If you wish to have one or more of these vaccinations please ask at reception – the nurse can usually offer to do this for you without an appointment. Please see the article in this newsletter for details about these vaccinations.

What do you think our doctors do all day?

Have you ever thought what our doctors do all day? This item may dispel a few myths

The Patient Representative Group meets several times in a year with members of the team at Maple View Medical Practice to discuss issues and questions raised by patients. In the last two meetings the above question has been explored and your patient representatives thought it would be a good idea to try to give patients a clearer understanding of the workload of our doctors.

As patients, our contact with the surgery, whether by phone, visit or consultation, is only ever a few minutes on any one occasion and can never give a complete picture of the wide range of activity undertaken by the medical and support staff to ensure patient safety at all times. The Doctor's day usually starts at 8.00am with organisation and preparation for the first consultation at 8.30am. In a routine morning surgery a doctor would deal with 18 or more patients, 12 face to face in surgery and another half-dozen telephone consultations. Morning sessions often over-run. Appointments should be for one patient with one problem but frequently patients require consultation time for more than one concern and that needs to be dealt with safely.

The time between morning and afternoon surgery might appear a long break but in reality that time is when doctors are able to review and complete patient notes, check the safety of prescriptions, receive and respond to hospital letters regarding patients, monitor test results, deal with phone calls and liaise with other staff as necessary.

The afternoon session follows a similar pattern to the morning with planned 10 minute appointments during which patient problems are discussed, investigations undertaken, referrals made, prescriptions issued and records updated. With every consultation there is the pressure to get the treatment right for the patient and that there is secure and safe practice for the Surgery. With limited appointments available each day the triage system operates to make the best use of the time available. Every morning one of the doctors is on call and has to make up to 60 phone calls to triage any urgent request for appointment. With this triage system for dealing with appointment requests, every patient who feels they have a serious concern will be spoken to by a doctor within two or three hours. Many of these consultations are dealt with without the need for a face to face meeting. This service is also available during the afternoon session but at the moment is much less used by patients.

Each day there can be up to 100 requests for repeat prescriptions. Contrary to the belief of some patients this is not simply a case of the reception staff printing them off. Each request has to be checked by a doctor to ensure dose and quantity are appropriate to the individual patient and most importantly that patient safety is not compromised, only then will the prescription be issued.

If you have ever wondered why the receptionist has asked you what your appointment is for? It's not that she is nosey; it is to enable the doctor to be given a heads up on what the problem is and enable the doctor to save time solving your medical issues. The receptionists are an important part of the teamwork needed to provide a first class service to all

Clearly face to face appointments are only a part of the doctor's day. We have seen that there are many other demands on their time. Government initiatives have to be implemented. There is mandatory training in safeguarding and CPR for example, paperwork has to be kept up to date and all doctors have to keep on top of all the health care initiatives that we hear about in the news.

We would like to acknowledge that our doctors work under a great deal of pressure because they have to get every decision right every time.

***Members of the Patient Representative Group writing this:
Barbara Gasby; John Carter; Keith Davies and Barry Parker***

FLU SEASON!

Flu vaccination by injection, commonly known as the "flu jab" is available every year on the NHS to protect adults (and some children) at risk of flu and its complications.

Flu can be unpleasant, but if you are otherwise healthy it will usually clear up on its own within a week.

However, flu can be more severe in certain people, such as:

- anyone aged 65 and over
- pregnant women
- children and adults with an underlying health condition (particularly long-term heart or respiratory disease)

Anyone in these risk groups is more likely to develop potentially serious complications of flu, such as pneumonia (a lung infection), so it's recommended that they have a flu vaccine every year to protect them.

You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you:

- are 65 years of age or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- Please speak to the nurse if you think that you may be eligible

Over-65s and the flu jab

You are eligible for the flu vaccine this year (2015-16) if you are aged 65 and over on March 31 2016 – that is, you were born on or before March 31 1951. So, if you are currently 64 but will be 65 on March 31 2016, you do qualify.

Pregnant women and the flu jab

If you're pregnant, you're advised to have the injectable flu vaccine, regardless of the stage of pregnancy you've reached.

That's because there's strong evidence to suggest pregnant women have an increased risk of developing complications if they get flu.

If you're pregnant, you will benefit from the flu vaccine because:

- it reduces your chance of getting serious complications of flu, such as pneumonia, particularly in the later stages of pregnancy
- it reduces your risk of having a miscarriage or your baby being born prematurely or with a low birth weight because of the flu
- it will help protect your baby as they will continue to have some immunity to flu for the first few months of their life

It's safe to have the flu vaccine at any stage of pregnancy from conception onwards. The vaccine doesn't carry any risks for you or your baby. Talk to your GP or midwife if you are unsure about the vaccination.

Flu nasal spray vaccination

The flu vaccine is recommended for:

- Children over the age of six months with a long-term health condition. Children aged between six months and two years of age who are eligible for the flu vaccine should have the flu jab. Children eligible for the flu vaccine aged between two and 18 will usually have the flu vaccine nasal spray.
- healthy children aged two, three and four Born on or after 1/9/2010 and on or before 31/8/2015.
- (Children in school years one and two aged 5-7 Born on or after 1/9/2008 and on or before 31/8/2010 **will be done at school not in the surgery**).

The flu jab for 2015/16

Each year, the viruses that are most likely to cause flu are identified in advance and vaccines are made to match them as closely as possible. The vaccines are recommended by the World Health Organization.

The WHO has announced that the 2015/16 flu vaccine will protect against three types of flu virus:

- **A/H1N1** – the strain of flu that caused the swine flu pandemic in 2009
- **A/H3N2** – a strain of flu that can infect birds and mammals and was active in 2011
- **B/Phuket/3073/2013**

The nasal spray flu vaccine offers protection against four strains of virus, as it includes a virus strain that was active in 2008.

PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINATION

A pneumococcal infection can affect anyone but some people are at higher risk of serious illness and are therefore eligible for NHS pneumococcal vaccination. These include:

- babies
- adults aged 65 or over
- children and adults with certain long-term health conditions, please speak to the nurse if you think that you may be eligible

How often is the pneumococcal vaccine given?

Babies receive the pneumococcal vaccine as three separate injections, at 2 months, 4 months and 12-13 months.

People over-65 only need a single pneumococcal vaccination, which will protect for life. It is not given annually like the flu jab.

People with a long-term health condition may need just a single one-off pneumococcal vaccination or five-yearly vaccination depending on their underlying health problem.

SHINGLES VACCINATION

A vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to certain people:

Age on 1st September 2015	Patient's date of birth is
70	2/9/44 to 1/9/45
71	2/9/43 to 1/9/44
72	2/9/42 to 1/9/43
73-77	not currently eligible
78	2/9/36 to 1/9/37
79	2/9/35 to 1/9/36
80 and over	eligibility is lost from the day of their 80 th birthday

The shingles vaccine is given as a single injection. Unlike the flu jab, you'll only need to have the vaccination once and you can have it at any time of the year.

The shingles vaccine is expected to reduce your risk of getting shingles. If you are unlucky enough to go on to have the disease, your symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter.

Shingles can be very painful and uncomfortable. Some people are left with pain lasting for years after the initial rash has healed. And shingles is fatal for around 1 in 1,000 over-70s who develop it.

It's fine to have the shingles vaccine if you've already had shingles. The shingles vaccine works very well in people who have had shingles before and it will boost your immunity against further shingles attacks

You can have the shingles vaccination at any time of year, though many people will find it convenient to have it at the same time as their annual flu vaccination.

Online Access

Did you know that you can now order your repeat prescriptions, view your repeat medications and book (a limited number) of appointments online? If you are over the age of 16 and you provide photographic ID at reception (in person) then we can set this up for you.

Maple View Welcomes Patient Feedback

If you have had a positive experience today perhaps you might like to share this with others on **NHS Choices**.

Please visit www.nhs.uk, search for **Maple View Medical Practice** and leave your feedback under 'leave review'.

Alternatively you can type: <http://bit.ly/1MH5g55> in your browser and go directly to the page.

You may wish to consider completing a **Friends and Family card** – these are situated in front of reception on the table. Completed cards can be placed in the Friends and Family box next to the cards.

We wholeheartedly appreciate your time and effort in feeding back your experience to us.

ORDERING REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS VIA EMAIL

Did you know that you can order your repeat prescriptions via email? Simply send your request to: mv.prescriptions@nhs.net

PRACTICE WEBSITE

Why not visit the practice website for the most up-to-date information? You can visit us at:

www.mapleviewmedicalpractice.co.uk

Medication or Health Reviews

Your Doctor has a responsibility to ensure that when they prescribe medication for you (including repeat prescriptions) that they are aware of your current health status in order to prescribe safely. This is why you will be asked to attend the surgery for blood tests, blood pressure checks, weight, smoking status etc. If you have ongoing medical problems and are on regular medication it is most important that you attend for your tests and reviews to ensure the most effective way of managing your condition safely.

Get Involved!

Would you like to contribute to any future issues of this newsletter? We would welcome input from a patient's perspective. Please contact Judy Langford, Assistant Practice Manager.