

Lambton Road Medical Practice

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NO. 9 | MAY 2019

Hayfever

Hayfever season is starting. Hayfever is an allergic reaction to pollens. It is very common and estimated to affect one in four people.



There is no cure and you cannot prevent it but there are things you can do to help and treatments for symptoms available from community pharmacists. Please see our website which links to information supplied by NHS Choices.

From 2018 our CCG guidance is that patients should seek advice from community pharmacists and purchase anti-histamine tablets, eye drops and nasal sprays. GPs will no longer be routinely prescribing these for any patients. If your symptoms are not settling with over-the-counter therapy, please see our in-house pharmacy team or see a GP.

Vaccinations

MMR

Sadly, measles is re-emerging as a serious childhood illness. Last year, the number of measles cases in England trebled as the uptake of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine fell for the fourth year running.

Many of us have not seen a case of measles but the 'measles is misery' line sums it up. Children with measles can be very unwell and can actually die or suffer life-changing, long-lasting sequelae.

Before the introduction of the vaccine in 1968, there were up to 800,000 cases per year and about 100 deaths. The disease was effectively eradicated in the UK after the introduction of the vaccine.

Measles, like the Ebola virus, affects every single organ in the body including the brain. Initial symptoms include red sore eyes, fever and small greyish-white spots in the mouth followed by a blotchy rash. Most children recover in 10 days (but are very ill for 10 days) but complications include pneumonia, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and deafness. Experts believe that 95% of children need to be vaccinated to protect

the wider population through 'herd immunity'.

In 2016 and 2017, 95% of 5 year olds had had one dose of MMR but 10% of children do not develop immunity after one injection, so two doses are required for full protection. Last year only 88% nationally had had a second dose.

Our uptake figures show a similar trend. We are very concerned and note recent reports blaming scare stories on social media as the main cause, with some parents also saying that they have had difficulty getting an appointment for the vaccination. All the GPs and nurses at our surgeries have had their children vaccinated.

PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR CHILD AT RISK.

As a result of this decline in vaccinations, we have decided to have a catch-up measles campaign over this summer. **We are proposing additional vaccination slots with our nurses from 10-11am on the first Saturday of every month.**

As a practice, we call, write to and text the parents of those who appear to have missed vaccinations. Please ensure we have your correct contact details.

Pneumococcal

Our second vaccine campaign is for the pneumococcal vaccine. Last month we were shocked to hear of the death of the husband of one of our patients from pneumococcal sepsis. He was fit and well but over 65. His wife, who had been vaccinated, was fine. Her husband had felt he was so well that he did not need the vaccine.

Babies are now routinely vaccinated with pneumococcal vaccine. Adults over 65 are offered a one-off vaccine which protects against this unpleasant illness. Anyone from 2 to 64 at high risk should have the vaccine (this is generally the same group who are eligible for flu vaccination). People considered 'at risk' are in the following groups:

- spleen removed or not working properly (e.g. sickle cell)
- long term respiratory condition (e.g. COPD)
- heart disease
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease (e.g. cirrhosis)
- diabetes
- a suppressed immune system (e.g. HIV)
- a suppressed immune system caused by medicine such as chemotherapy or steroids
- those with a cochlear implant (a hearing device)

The pneumococcal vaccine comes to us in small batches. Over the summer months, we will also be running a campaign to maximise uptake. If you feel you qualify for this vaccine, please check with us and book a slot with one of our nurses. If you receive an invitation by phone, letter or text, PLEASE come for this vaccination which could save your life.

Men ACWY

Last but not least, the third vaccine we are actively promoting is the Men ACWY vaccine which protects against four strains of meningitis. See the article below taken from a daily newspaper on April 27, 2019:

Tragedy as 'bubbly and talented' estate agent, 23, goes to bed 'with a cold' but never wakes up due to undiagnosed meningitis infection: <https://dailym.ai/2Lh9r6f>

This really sums up why this is so important. Sadly, there are similar articles every year. We are actively contacting those eligible for the vaccine (particularly school leavers heading to university) but anyone up to 25 is eligible. Please read this article and encourage your son, daughter or friend to have this vaccination. Meningitis kills or can leave horrible complications. We have reserved evening and Saturday slots for the vaccination and encourage you to attend.

Patient Survey

We believe that there is an NHS England Patient Survey which will be sent out randomly shortly. Last year, the response rate from our patients was very low and we suspect that it was mainly completed when people had problems with our services.

We would encourage all patients to please complete this. Our own feedback from the NHS's Friend and Family Test shows that the vast majority of our patients are very happy with our services and it would be wonderful if the NHS England poll reflected this.

Practice Survey We will also be running an in house Survey for all patients visiting or accessing the practice during the first week of February. This will be available in consulting rooms and at the reception desk. We ask that you complete the forms and return them to the box on the main reception desk. These Surveys are completely anonymous and provides us direct feedback on what we can improve. We have also compiled an electronic version which is available through a link on our website.

The results of this survey will be available late February/early March and will displayed in the waiting area.

Text messaging

In addition to our text appointment reminder service, we are also using a new text messaging system called AccuRx, so do not be alarmed if one of our clinicians or admin team sends you a text message. For example, to inform you of a missed appointment, informing you of a test result or advising you to book a follow up appointment. This saves valuable time for all of us and is also recorded in your medical record. After feedback from our PPG (Patient Participation Group) we have modified the message so AccuRx does not appear, you should now see 'LambtonRdGP'. We feel this is an excellent service which also records the message in your records. **It is essential that you let us know if you change your mobile number.**

Appointments

We start 2019 with the usual winter pressures affecting all of the NHS from GP services to the Acute Trusts. Please consider seeking advice from a local Pharmacist for minor illnesses and try to use our services responsibly.

Every day the number of patients booking an appointment and then not turning up is astonishingly high. Please cancel using option 1 on our phone system or by replying CANCEL to your text appointment reminder. Alternatively you can call our cancellation line on 0203 883 5908. Rates for non-attendance in the last three months were as follows:

October	462
November	477
December	302

At the end of the year, we said goodbye to Nurse Caroline Merritt and Dr Rashmi Pattekar, and Dr Susie Earle has started her maternity leave. We wish them all the very best.

We are delighted that Dr Stephen DeWilde will be increasing his sessions at Lambton Road & also welcome Jacqueline Simon an Advanced Nurse Practitioner who will be a great asset in helping to deal with the urgent, on the day problems. We also welcome two Foundation stage GPs, Dr Parvis Sorooshian and Dr Priyankan Sivanatha who will spend 4 months with us in Practice. Dr Mehreen Tahir will be re-joining us at the end of February 2019.

From February 2019 our in house Pharmacist Anne Lim will also now be able to offer Travel vaccinations with day time and evening and some Saturday appointments available.

All the team at Lambton Road remain committed to helping you and your family to stay fit and healthy and wish you a happy, healthy 2019.