



# Nevels Road Surgery Patients Newsletter

Issue 13: June - August 2020

## Welcome

This quarterly newsletter is produced by volunteers on the surgery's Patient Participation Group (PPG). We hope you will find it useful and interesting.

## Surgery gradually reopening

If you or your family have any medical problems or concerns, please do get in touch – the surgery is still there for you. Make your first contact by phone or online. You will get a call back offering a consultation by phone or video.

If you need to be seen face-to-face, and you do not have Covid-19 symptoms, you will be invited into the surgery at a fixed time. You will need to wait in the front car park until you are escorted in.

You will be seen by someone wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and the consultation room will be cleaned before and after you are seen.

## Long-term conditions

The surgery is also starting to resume routine checks for patients with long-term conditions including diabetes, asthma, COPD and cardiovascular conditions.

These patients are being asked to consider buying a home blood pressure monitor to reduce the time they are in the surgery. You can buy one online for as little as £20, or at a pharmacist or supermarket.. The British Hypertensive Society has an approved list at: [https:// bihsoc.org/bp-monitors/for-home-use/](https://bihsoc.org/bp-monitors/for-home-use/)

The surgery's clinical pharmacist is also contacting patients for medical reviews via a telephone consultation.

## Name your pharmacy and save your legs

Patients are no longer being asked to collect their prescription from the surgery. Instead it will be sent straight to the pharmacy of your choice. It's quicker, and it cuts down the chances for the virus to spread.

## Online access

You can send a question to the surgery via [www.nevelsroadsurgery.co.uk/](http://www.nevelsroadsurgery.co.uk/) - click on the heading 'Online Requests' and scroll down.

Or you can send an email to [e82008.nevelsroadsurgery@nhs.net](mailto:e82008.nevelsroadsurgery@nhs.net)

Also, there is a new eConsult area at [nevelsroadsurgery.webgp.com](http://nevelsroadsurgery.webgp.com).

The screenshot shows a blue header with the text "Contact your doctors to get advice for your problem now". Below this are four white boxes with blue borders and right-pointing chevrons. The first box is "I want help for my condition" with subtext "Get advice about specific conditions like back pain, coughs, mental health concerns and more". The second box is "I want general advice" with subtext "Get advice about general symptoms like tiredness, bleeding, pain or weakness". The third box is "I want administrative help" with subtext "Request sick notes and GP letters or ask about recent tests". The fourth box is "I want help for my child" with subtext "Get help for common childhood problems like rash, earache, cold, flu, vomiting and diarrhoea".

This NHS-approved service will take your enquiry and make sure you are put in touch with the right person to help you. They support over 1,900 surgeries across the UK.

## Staying safe during the pandemic

Everyone should follow the Government's advice and play their part in helping to stop the virus spreading. For the latest advice visit: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

If you need help such as collecting shopping or just a chat, there is a local support group on 01462 530360; or you can email [support@lethworth.com](mailto:support@lethworth.com).

### **Covid-19 symptoms**

If you have a dry cough, fever or loss of taste or smell, you and household should self-isolate. If you need to be seen face-to-face, for this or any other condition, you will be given an appointment at The Ernest Gardiner Treatment Centre.

### **Covid-19 testing**

The surgery cannot test or treat you for the virus. Please go online and visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or ring 111.

### **Blood tests**

The clinics at Baldock and Lister Hospital are beginning to offer a limited service.

### **Hay fever – self help**

Hay fever is usually worse between late March and September. This is when the pollen count is at its highest. It can last weeks or months, unlike a cold, which usually goes after 1 to 2 weeks. There's currently no cure for hay fever but you can ease the symptoms. Here are some suggestions to try:

- put Vaseline round the nose to trap pollen
- wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting into the eyes
- shower and change your clothes after going outside
- stay indoors with windows and doors shut as much as possible
- vacuum regularly and dust with a slightly damp cloth
- buy a pollen filter for the car and vacuum cleaner
- ask your pharmacist to recommend a treatment to suit you and your symptoms

If your symptoms persist, ask the surgery for a phone consultation with the nurse.

### **Surgery on the move**

Plans for a combined surgery in the former Argos building in Commerce Way are currently on hold.

### **Vitamin D supplements**

Vitamin D helps us to stay healthy and keep our muscles and bones strong. In the summer we get plenty of it from sunshine on our skin, although less so with darker skin.

In this country we often don't get enough sun exposure. And it is difficult to get much extra vitamin D from a normal diet.

This means that many people would benefit from taking supplements, as follows:

1. **From birth to 4 years old** - 10 micrograms (mcg) of Vitamin D supplement to be taken **all year round** (except formula fed babies, as the formula contains the supplement already)
2. **Everybody aged 4+** should take a supplement of 10mcg of Vitamin D a day from **October to the end of March**.
3. You are advised to take the **supplements all year round** if you:
  - aren't often outdoors – for example, if you're frail or housebound
  - are in an institution like a care home
  - usually wear clothes that cover up most of your skin when outdoors
  - have dark skin from an African, African-Caribbean or Asian background.

Vitamin D supplements should be bought at a pharmacy or supermarket and are not available on NHS prescription.

### **Thank you goes a long way**

This has been a very stressful time for everyone working at the surgery. Many patients have realised this and have sent lots of thankful and supportive messages.

This has been a huge help for staff morale.

If you want to leave feedback online, go to [www.nevellsroadsurgery.co.uk](http://www.nevellsroadsurgery.co.uk) and click on Administration Office. Thank you!