



# THE ACORN



## THE NEWSLETTER FROM OAKLANDS HEALTH CENTRE SUMMER 2009 (JULY–SEPTEMBER)

Welcome to the Summer 2009 issue of the Acorn, bringing you the latest news from Oaklands Health Centre along with topical information and advice for the season.

The health topic dominating all of the headlines in the spread of Swine flu. We have included some words of advice on the inside pages should you think that you might be affected.

The weathermen are predicting a hot summer for all and so we are looking at ways to enjoy the sunshine without damage to your health.

Pharmacy Prescriber, Carole Brown contributes with a fascinating article about Self Care Tool Kits and Holme Valley Transport Scheme also send greeting to our patients.

### PHEW—WHAT A SCORCHER!



We want you to enjoy your summer and the promised sunshine, but we want you to do so without damaging your health. Many of us enjoy sitting in the sun with a glass of something cool and alcoholic, but you should be aware of the effects of drinking too much alcohol when it is too hot. Drinking excessively in warmer climates is particularly dangerous due to the dehydrating effects of alcohol. Alcohol is a diuretic, which means that it forces your kidneys to excrete water. It can force them to excrete more water than you have taken in, leading to dehydration. The inevitable by-product of sitting in the sun is sweating, which in some cases, can

potentially be dangerous as this extra loss of water can, in extreme cases, lead to a heart attack or even organ failure. It is possible to drink in the sun safely though, as long as you ensure that you drink within the responsible drinking guidelines (2-3 units for women, 3-4 units for men) and alternate alcoholic beverages with plenty of water or soft drinks to keep hydrated.

It is important to protect skin from the sun. If your skin has gone red in the sun, it's sunburnt. Sunburn doesn't have to be red-raw, peeling or blistering.

A sunburn is a clear sign that ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun has damaged the genetic material in your skin cells - their DNA. Damaged DNA can cause cells to start growing out of control. This can lead to skin cancer. Getting a painful sunburn just once every two years can triple the risk of melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer. Sometimes, the sun damages skin cells so severely that they must be destroyed. Peeling after sunburn is your body's way of getting rid of these damaged cells. This is necessary because cells damaged by the sun are at risk of becoming cancerous. Although skin peels and new skin layers form, some sunburn damage may remain. This can increase your risk of skin cancer. So it is important to try to avoid burning in the first place. To avoid sunburn, cover up with a t-shirt, sunhat and glasses, use sunscreen properly; minimum factor 15, apply 15-30 minutes before going out in the sun, reapply at least every 2 hours, use generous amounts and never use sunscreen to extend your time in the sun. It is especially important to protect babies and children.

For more information visit [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk) and [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

#### Doctors' Surgery Consulting Times

Monday: 08:00 – 20:00  
Tuesday: 08:00 – 18:30  
Wednesday: 08:00 – 18:30  
Thursday: 08:00 – 20:00  
Friday: 08:00 – 18:00  
Saturday: 08:30 – 11:30

#### Nurses' Surgery Consulting Times

Monday: 08:30 – 19:30  
Tuesday: 08:30 – 18:30  
Wednesday: 08:30 – 18:30  
Thursday: 08:30 – 19:30  
Friday: 08:30 – 18:00

#### Clinics

Monday:	15:30 – 18:00	Musculoskeletal
Tuesday:	09:00 – 12:00	Podiatry
Wednesday:	09:15 – 11:30	Diabetes
	09:00 – 12:00	Minor Surgery
Friday:	09:00 – 11:00	Antenatal
	09:00 – 11:00	Baby clinic
	09:00 – 11:00	Postnatal

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## From the suggestion box

Some comments have been edited due to space constraints.

*Comment: Liaison between the pharmacy and Oaklands so the pharmacy is open at the same time as the doctors are giving out prescriptions and the pharmacist is present to administer the drugs. E.g. I collected my prescription today at 8.50am, the pharmacy didn't open until 9am, the pharmacist didn't arrive until 9.10am, and I received my prescription at 9.15am. Poor customer service!!*

Response: The opening hours of the Medicare Pharmacy are outside the control of Oaklands Health Centre, but we will pass this comment on to them.

*Comment: Water not available. Machine empty*

Response: While we always try to keep an eye on the water level, it can run out without us noticing. Should this happen to you, please advise the on duty receptionist who will be able to replace the empty bottle within minutes.

*Comment: A place to put urine samples please.*

Response: There is a black box between the two sets of sliding doors at the front of the building, labelled specimens. Specimens can be left here unless they need to have paperwork completed to accompany to sample to the pathology lab. In this instance, samples should be given to the receptionist on duty.

*Comment: Please consider switching off the radio or other music.*

Response: The radio is played in the waiting room in order to mask the voices of staff behind the glass on front desk. Conversations can sometimes be confidential in nature.

*Comment: I wouldn't use comic sans as a font for your presentation in a PowerPoint or indeed for notices - it is known in the industry as being unprofessional looking and laughable.*

Response: This comment is welcomed as a constructive point.

*Comment: A place to put urine samples, please*

Response: If you do not wish to hand your sample to the receptionist on duty at the front desk, there is a box between the main doors of the surgery where samples can be left.

*Comment: Rachel. Thank you for phoning me with a cancellation appointment. Much appreciated.*

Response: Great work Rachel—gold star!



Carolyn Hadin would like to thank everyone who took the time and effort to complete the

questionnaires that formed part of the coursework for her Foundation Degree in Medicines Management and Pharmacy Services. She is delighted to let everyone know that she was awarded a distinction for all her hard work.

Well done Carolyn!

## MESSAGES FROM THE DISPENSARY

Self care is what we do everyday to make sure that we are looking after our health and wellbeing. This includes staying fit and healthy, both physically and mentally, taking action to prevent illness and accidents, better use of medicines, treatment of minor ailments and care of long term conditions.

There is a wide range of work which supports self-care in Kirklees. We have information on all these programmes and services; there are over 40 available locally.

The dispensary staff will be actively promoting self care when patients are collecting their prescriptions and will be able to advise them on the most suitable options for them. We have

a health needs assessment form which helps us identify your needs and offer personalised support to patients with long term health conditions. This can be brought to your clinic appointment so that your health professional can signpost you to the right service.

Although you can refer yourself for many of these programmes, some need referral from a GP or health professional.

There is a wide variety of programmes available including activity & exercise, nutrition, looking after carers, self-help groups for diabetes, depression, neurological conditions and heart disease.

### WE SUPPORT SELF CARE FOR OUR PATIENTS

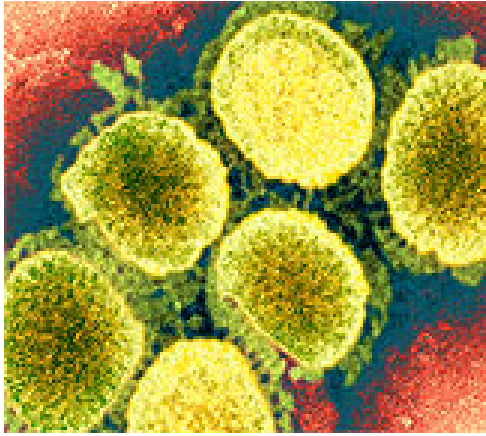
The appropriate self care can increase the confidence of people with long term conditions to lead an independent and fulfilling a life as possible.

## Staff Training Sessions

The world of medicine is an ever changing one, which is why we need to ensure that all of our team members are up to speed with the latest developments, regulations and improvements in patient care. This includes our team of receptionists, who need, among other things, to be confident in their life support training, should there be an emergency in the waiting room. To make this training really effective, we need to train the team all together at the same time. Consequently, on the last Wednesday of every month from May 2008 onwards, the surgery will be closed between the hours of 1pm and 4pm. During this period of time, a doctor will be available for advice on urgent medical matters by phoning the usual surgery number.

# **HOT TOPIC \* HOT TOPIC \* HOT TOPIC \* HOT TOPIC**

## **SWINE FLU**



### **What is swine flu?**

Swine flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus that usually infects pigs. People do not normally get swine flu but human infection can happen.

The latest outbreaks in countries around the world have been caused by a new version of the swine flu virus called influenza A/H1N1v.

### **Why is this virus such a threat?**

People have some natural immunity to flu types (strains) that are in common circulation, but not to strains that circulate in other animals.

Sometimes, humans and animals can pass strains of flu back and forth to one another, such as when people become ill with bird or swine flu. This usually occurs after a human has direct and close contact with animals that are ill.

Mixing of human and animal flu viruses can lead to the development of new, changed viruses, such as the one that is currently circulating. Because they are new, people may have little or no immunity to them and they may have the ability to cause infection and spread quickly.

### **What are the symptoms of swine flu?**

The symptoms of this swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal flu and include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, coughing, sore throat, pain in muscles and joints, headache and chills. Some people with swine flu have also reported vomiting and diarrhoea.

### **Can I catch it?**

The virus is contagious and can spread between people, although it is not known how easily. Transmission of this new flu virus is thought to occur in the same way as seasonal flu:

- From person to person by coughing or sneezing.
- From touching an object such as a door handle which has virus on it from someone infected with flu.

There is no risk of catching the illness from eating properly handled and cooked pork or pork products. Swine flu viruses are not transmitted by food.

General hygiene can help to reduce transmission of all viruses, including the swine flu virus. This includes:

- Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible
- Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully
- Maintaining good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to your face or to other people
- Cleaning hard surfaces (such as door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.

### **I think I may have been exposed to the swine flu virus - what should I do?**

If you suspect you have been in close contact with someone with Swine Flu or have developed flu like symptoms, you should stay at home and **check your symptoms on [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk), by phoning NHS Direct 0845 4647 or the Swine Flu Information Line 0800 1513513.**

**If you develop flu-like symptoms, you should stay at home.**

**PLEASE DO NOT COME DOWN TO THE SURGERY**

**If a health professional decides that you need to have Tamiflu, please ask someone to pick up a prescription on your behalf.**

For more information visit [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

## Travel Vaccinations

You've saved up, you've read the brochures, chosen your destination and booked your exotic holiday. Your brochure and/or your travel agent should tell you if you need vaccinations to protect yourself from common diseases in the country or countries to which you are travelling.



When you are planning a trip abroad, please make an appointment with the practice nurse at least two months before your trip, or earlier if you are visiting more than one country or are away for a long time. Your nurse will discuss disease prevention, immunisations and anti-malarial medication with you.

You may need to start taking anti-malarial medication before you leave.

If you are leaving in less than two months, it is still worth getting some medical advice, as some protection is better than none.

## Travel Vaccination Price List

Please note that all vaccines must be paid for before they can be ordered.

Japanese Encephalitis (Course of 3)	£81.00
Rabies (Course of 3)	£126.00
Tickbourne Encephalitis (Course of 2)	£112.80
Yellow Fever	£45.00
Meningitis ACWY	£40.00
Hepatitis B (For travel—course of 3)	£90.00

If you require anti-malarial medication, please speak to our practice nurse to ensure that you are given the correct course. The price of anti-malarial medication for a two week holiday varies from £2.00 to £78.00

## Magazine Appeal

After you have read your magazines from cover to cover and before you recycle it, please think of your fellow patients. We are always in need of fresh publications for our waiting room and would be very grateful if you could let us have them.



**Starters & leavers.** David Shutt, who has been our register over recent months, will be moving on in August for the next part of his training. Sam (dispensary) will be going off on maternity leave in September and a new receptionist will be starting to cover her hours. Leah and Rebecca (reception) will be starting university in September and Sam (reception) will be off for his second year. We hope that they will all be back during the holidays. **Good luck everyone!!**

## The Holme Valley Transport Scheme

The Holme Valley Transport Scheme is still running, but only on a morning, as this is all our current finances will allow. The scheme is designed to transport those patients in the Holme Valley who have a problem accessing Primary Care Services because of poor public transport links. The patients of Oaklands Health Centre have made significant donations to the scheme and, on behalf of the transport scheme I would like to thank them for their support.

Work is ongoing as we continue to look for further funding in order to keep the service on the road, but in these difficult economic times this is proving difficult. Nevertheless, we are committed to the scheme as are the patients who we are here to help.

*Helen Kitching*

The Holme Valley Transport Scheme



## Students home for the holidays

After months of arduous study, late nights at the 'library' and endless gourmet meals, we are happy to welcome Holmfirth's student population home for the summer vacation.

Glad though we are, please only come to see us for **urgent** health problems. We can only see you as a temporary resident, as your University currently holds your medical records.

So Mum or Dad if you are reading this before the end of term, please make sure that your little darling has been to see the campus surgery for any repeat medication, travel advice, review of a long term condition or referrals that they may need to tide them over until the start of the new academic year.

**This includes the contraceptive pill for the girls.**

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