

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

We are all rather pleased to see the back of another 'covid' winter. Hopefully the Spring will bring better things for us all. Most of us know people that have developed covid 19. We have all tried extremely hard at the Surgery to keep safe, so that we can continue to do our jobs and have the surgery open for business.

We know that several of our patients are frustrated that they cannot book a face-to-face appointment with a GP via the receptionists. Unfortunately to keep covid out of the surgery we must take as many steps as we can, to decrease the risk of a patient with covid being examined by a GP. Many surgeries do not allow patients to walk into the waiting area, you must phone from outside and wait to be called in. Please remember we are a very small team here at Silton and therefore staff absence due to Covid causes a staffing nightmare.

You can book a telephone appointment with Dr Harding or Dr Graham via the receptionist. If you need to be seen, you will be offered a face-to-face appointment by the GP. They will be able to assess the risk before you attend. If you are suffering with a rash, wound, lesion etc, you can email a picture into the surgery before your telephone appointment which will be attached to your computer record. This enables the GP to have a better idea of the problem. Please be aware that any pictures emailed in will be processed by an administrator at the surgery.

A spring COVID-19 booster vaccination will be offered to those aged 75 and over, as well as anyone over the age of 12 who is immunosuppressed. This can be given round six months after the patient received their last vaccine dose. We do not yet know details of where our patients can access the booster. Please look out for an update in one of our newsletters, or on our website.

Please continue to wear face coverings when attending the surgery unless you have a valid exemption certificate.

We are still having a lot of patients not attending their appointments with the Practice Nurses. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend an appointment at the surgery so that the appointment is not wasted. Last month **10 patients** failed to attend their appointment at the surgery. This wasted 150 minutes as some of them were 20- or 30-minute appointments!

We have also recently had a few incidents when patients have booked in for a blood test with a nurse, but then required dressings to be done at the same time. If you need more than one thing dealt with, you must explain this when booking the appointment so a suitable time slot is booked, or you may even need to book two separate appointments. A patient who has booked a 10-minute appointment, but then stays for 30 minutes is obviously going to result in the nurses running late and upsetting their other patients.

Many thanks to those who contribute to the Silton Surgery fund. We have purchased 12 more Home Blood Pressure Monitors for our patients to borrow and use at home for a week. We needed to replenish our supply, as unfortunately a few have gone missing.

Can we remind patients that verbal orders for medication should NOT be given at Reception. We have had occasions when a member of staff was given a verbal request at

the reception desk and the request was not put on the computer. Staff often get interrupted during their work, especially in Reception. If you do not have a medication slip with you, ask for a piece of paper to write down your name, address, and the items you require. This will ensure that your request is dealt with.

You can also request your medication by phoning 01747 840950, using the on-line ordering service, or posting your repeat slip in the box provided outside the surgery door. When collecting medication from the Surgery please call in **after 10.30am** if possible. The reception area is very busy until then and you may have to wait before the receptionist can deal with your request. Phone calls take priority first thing in the morning, as we are sure you will all appreciate.

Please note that the practice has a strict policy regarding confidentiality and data protection, and we will only release test results to the person to whom they relate, unless that person has given prior permission, in writing, for the release of this data, or they are not capable of understanding the results. You can obtain a consent form to authorise the surgery to discuss confidential medical information with a third party, either at reception, or on our website: siltonsurgery.nhs.uk

It is your responsibility to check your results have been received and to make an appointment to discuss them with your doctor if you are advised to do so.

Covid Vaccinations: The Vaccination centre at The Michael Herbert Hall in Wilton has now closed. All patients who have still not received a full course of covid vaccinations will need to book through the nhs.uk website or by calling 119 to attend one of the national centres.

On-Line ordering of repeat medications

If you have an email address and would like to sign up for on-line ordering of **repeat** medications, please ask at Reception for your personal log-in. Please use the SystemOne Online Service (airmid), not the NHS app, to order your medications as the NHS app does not always work when using it to order meds. The booking of appointments, using systemOne online, is currently suspended. When the facility is available again, we will let patients know via a newsletter and our website.

Please be aware that if your medications need reauthorizing by the GP, the on-line service will not allow you to re-order, although there is a facility to send a 'free text' message asking that the medication be reviewed and scripted. Most medications need to be re-authorized every 12 months, this does not usually require you to attend the surgery, the GP just needs to review your record and assess that the medication is still appropriate. Some medication may need more frequent re-authorization, especially if the patient needs monitoring i.e., regular blood tests and/or blood pressure checks. If you have a message written on your bag of medication asking you to book an appointment with a GP or Practice Nurse, try and book an appointment before ordering again.

Travel Vaccinations:

If you require any vaccinations relating to foreign travel you need to complete and return a travel questionnaire to the Surgery. One of the Practice Nurse's will process your

questionnaire and a receptionist will contact you back to arrange an appointment if it is necessary. Please ensure you complete and return your questionnaire **at least 8 weeks** before you travel, so the vaccination course can be completed in time. A helpful website is www.fitfortravel.com

Health Checks:

If you are aged 40-74 years old and haven't had a stroke, been diagnosed with heart disease, kidney disease or diabetes then you are eligible for a free health check, which will better prepare you for the future. The check takes approx. 20-30 minutes – you will be asked a few questions about your family history and lifestyle. The Practice Nurse will note your weight, age, sex, and ethnicity before taking your blood pressure and doing a simple blood test to check your cholesterol level. Both men and women can develop conditions like high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes at any point in their lives, but the risk increases when you are 40 years and older, plus having one could increase your risk of developing another. It can also lead to more serious illnesses in the future. The Practice Nurse will talk through the results with you and offer advice on lowering your risk and staying healthy, e.g., you may need to do a little more exercise, cut down on how much you drink or go on for further tests.

Smoking - Some initial facts and figures:

About 100,000 people in the UK die each year due to smoking. Smoking-related deaths are mainly due to cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart disease. About half of all smokers die from smoking-related diseases. If you are a long-term smoker, on average, your life expectancy is about 10 years less than a non-smoker. Put another way, in the UK about 8 in 10 non-smokers live past the age of 70, but only about half of long-term smokers live past 70. The younger you are when you start smoking, the more likely you are to smoke for longer and to die early from smoking.

If you are thinking about giving up smoking, our Practice Nurses are here to help. Book an initial 30-minute appointment with either Jessica or Claire.

Flu - Coughs - Colds and sore throats:

These diseases usually get better by themselves and last only a few days. They are commonly due to viral infections. Coughs, colds, sore throats, aches and pains, fevers, and nausea all usually improve without any need to see a doctor. Continued overleaf/.....

If the symptoms are uncomfortable then you can take simple measures like bed rest, Paracetamol and/or Aspirin, fluids, or simple foods.

- It is best to use Paracetamol for children under 12 years old.
- Antibiotics are of no benefit in the treatment of common virus infections.

Gastroenteritis (Diarrhoea with or without vomiting):

This is normally caused by an infection (usually a virus) in the stomach and/or bowel. Diarrhoea (the runs) and vomiting may be unpleasant and uncomfortable but are nature's way of flushing infection out of the system. Unless symptoms are prolonged or very severe, it is usually better not to take any medicines or tablets. These may only interfere with your body's natural responses, possibly 'bottling everything up' which can lead to further problems. The symptoms usually get better by themselves within 24 - 48 hours.

The best remedy is to take sips of plain fluid (water not milk-based), sugar and salt solutions (which you can get over the counter from the chemist) or breast milk for breast fed babies. If the problems continue, or a young baby is affected, the surgery will be pleased to give advice on appropriate treatment.

If you are attending the surgery and suspect you may be 'contagious' please advise the Receptionist so that, if necessary, you can wait in a separate area of the Surgery.

Baby Clinic:

We offer a baby clinic on the second and fourth Thursday of each month between 2pm and 3pm **by appointment only**. This is for immunisations only. Only well babies can come to baby clinic, un-well babies need a doctor's appointment in surgery time.

OPENING HOURS

The normal opening hours for Reception at The Surgery are: -

Monday	8.30 to 16.00
Tuesday	8.30 to 19.00
Wednesday	8.30 to 13.00 (Afternoon closed)
Thursday	8.30 to 18.45 (Closed 12.15 -1.45 2nd Thursday each month)
Friday	8.30 to 17.00

Silton Surgery, Gillingham Road, Silton, Gillingham, Dorset. SP8 5DF.

Reception: 01747 840226

Dispensary: 01747 840950 (Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri: 09:15 -10:30 and 14:00 – Closing
And Weds: 09:15 – 12:00)

Email: silton.surgery@nhs.net

www.siltonsurgery.nhs.uk