

# Colwall Surgery

## Spring Newsletter April 2011



### Thanks and Goodbye

Dr Nicky Smith would like to thank everyone for the kind messages and cards that she has received regarding her retirement. Whilst feeling sad about leaving her role as GP at the Surgery behind, she is looking forward to ventures new, starting with a trip to Australia with her husband, Graham. We all wish her well in her adventures and hope she enjoys a long happy retirement.



### Appointments to see a Doctor

From 4th April 2011, the appointment system will change slightly and we would like to take this opportunity to inform all our patients. Please see over the page for full details

### Specimens

Specimen bottles can be obtained from our reception. Please ensure that you inform the receptionist of the type of specimen so the correct bottle can be given to you. We ask that you bring in samples before 11.30am.

Please ensure that any specimens you hand in have your full name, date of birth and the date the sample was done. If these details are not completed the sample may have to be disposed off and a new sample done.

If you have brought a specimen in or have been to the surgery and had any tests sent to the laboratory, please will you phone the surgery for the results. It would be helpful if you could phone after 2.30pm for your results. The receptionists will be able to give you a timescale of how long it takes for the results to be sent back

Should you have symptoms of a **urinary tract infection** (frequency in going to the toilet, burning sensation etc.) you do not need to make an appointment to see the doctor. We ask that you bring in a urine sample before 11.30am.

The nurse will then test the sample for signs of infection and the Doctor may then prescribe some medication or send the specimen to the laboratory to be tested. When the results come back from the laboratory, should the specimen show an infection a prescription will be issued for you.

### Holiday Vaccinations

Should you be going away and you think you will require some vaccinations you will need to fill in a Travel Health Questionnaire. These can be obtained from one of our reception team or from our website. Please complete the form and return at least two months prior to travelling to ensure that there is sufficient time for you to have any vaccinations that may be required.

Once this form has been completed and returned, please allow ten working days for the Practice Nurse to access what vaccinations are required for your holiday destination.

After ten days we would ask that you contact the surgery and we will arrange for an appointment with the Practice Nurse to discuss the vaccinations required and begin your course of treatment.

Please be aware that some travel vaccines are ordered on a private prescription and these incur a charge over and above the normal prescription charge. This is because travel vaccination is not included in the services provided by the NHS and therefore is a chargeable service.

## Have you had a pneumococcal vaccination?

Everybody under 65 'at risk' and over 65 should now be immunised to help protect them against pneumococcal infection which can cause diseases such as pneumonia, septicaemia (blood poisoning) and meningitis.

### What is pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is the term used to describe a range of illnesses such as pneumonia, septicaemia (blood poisoning) and meningitis (inflammation around the brain), when these are caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

### How is it spread?

The bacteria (germs) that cause pneumococcal disease are spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact between people. The bacteria get into the nose and throat and they may stay there without doing any harm. But sometimes they can invade the lungs or bloodstream causing pneumonia and septicaemia, or they can reach the brain and cause meningitis.

### How can it be prevented?

Immunisation with pneumococcal vaccine helps prevent pneumococcal disease. This vaccine has been used successfully in a number of countries, including the UK where it has been used for more than 10 years.

### Who is at risk?

Everybody is at risk of getting pneumococcal disease, but the older you are, the greater the risk. You are particularly vulnerable if you: also have a heart or lung condition; have diabetes mellitus; have no spleen; or have a weakened immune system, for example, if you are having treatment for cancer.

### Do people under 65 need the vaccine?

People who are at a higher risk from infection, such as those with other illnesses and medical conditions, are also recommended pneumococcal vaccine. These are people with: serious breathing problems, such as chronic bronchitis or emphysema; serious heart conditions; severe kidney disease; long-term liver disease; diabetes that needs medication; immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, for example, chemotherapy or radio therapy for cancer; longterm steroid for conditions such as asthma; and problems with the spleen.

### How often will I need this vaccine?

Most people will only need to have the vaccine once. You may need a second dose if you have certain conditions such as: a damaged spleen or no spleen; or problems with your kidneys. Talk to your doctor or practice nurse if you think this applies to you

So, to provide the best protection, patients under 65 considered to be 'at risk' or over 65 are entitled to a routine pneumococcal vaccination. Please ask one of our receptionists about booking an appointment .

### Appointments to see a Doctor

From the 4th April 2011, Dr Pearce will be reducing the number of appointments available with him as he will no longer be working on a Tuesday.

Dr Alex Brennan will be working every Tuesday and will have a morning and afternoon clinic. There will be a small number of pre-bookable appointments with her on the morning and the remaining appointments will be kept for emergencies on the day. The afternoon appointments are pre-bookable.

We will also be joined on a temporary basis by Dr Amanda Lacy and Dr Martin Lane who will both be taking clinics. We are still in the process of recruiting a new Doctor on a permanent basis.

There will also be an early morning clinic for workers only on a Monday and Wednesday from 7.30-8am. These appointments are to be booked in advance. Please note that reception will not be open during this time and you will still need to ring at 8.30am to make an emergency appointment to be seen that day.

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Colwall Surgery:**  
Phone: 01684 540323  
Fax: 01684 540805

**Primecare Out of Hours:**  
0330 123 9309

**Hospitals:**  
Hereford: 01432 355444  
Worcester: 01905 763333

**District Nurses**  
01684 541047

**NHS Direct:**  
0845 4647

**Websites:**  
colwallsurgery.co.uk  
www.herefordshire.nhs.uk