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MMR Vaccinations: Measles Outbreak

There have been many confirmed cases of Measles in Swansea, and the GPs strongly recommend that all patients who are not fully vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella, particularly children, should make every effort to be vaccinated. To be fully immunised against measles, mumps and rubella you need to have had TWO MMR Vaccinations.

Normally, these vaccinations are given as part of a child's routine immunisation schedule:

The first vaccination at 12-13 months

The second vaccination at 3 years 4 months

However, there are children and young adults who remain unimmunised against Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Consequently, we have recently written to this group of patients who from our records have not had a full course of the MMR Vaccination. However, if you haven't received a letter, but are concerned that either you or your child have not been fully immunised, please contact the Surgery who will check the medical records and arrange any an appointment for you with one of the Practice Nurses.

The vaccine is also being offered to any adults who may not be fully immunised. The immunisation schedules have changed several times historically and due to this, depending on the year of your birth, there is likelihood you are not fully immunised:

- People born between 1970 and 1979 may only be vaccinated against measles and not mumps and rubella
- People born between 1980 and 1990 may not be protected against mumps
- People over the age of 45 are considered to have immunity; although you are still eligible to receive the vaccine if you should wish to.

By ensuring that you have had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine in your lifetime you are protecting yourself against all 3 diseases. If you would like to know your immunisation status, or would like to book in to have vaccination, please contact Reception who will arrange any necessary appointments and liaise with our Practice Nurses.

CAUTION—If you think EITHER you OR your child has caught measles:

- Due to its infectious nature avoid attending your local GP Practice, or Walk in Centre, instead telephone for advice and further information, or call NHS 111— by dialling **1-1-1** and explain your concerns.
- Anyone who is very unwell should attend A&E but on arrival must tell staff immediately that they may have been in contact with measles

Hay Fever Advice

Hay fever is an allergy that is caused by wither pollen or spores. It can affect the nose, sinuses, throat and eyes. The symptoms of hay fever occur as the immune system reacts to the pollens, and it is most common between the months of March to July.

The most common symptoms of hay fever include: runny and itchy nose, blocked nose, sneezing, itchy and watery red eyes and an itchy throat. There are other less common hay fever symptoms such as: loss of smell, face pain, sweats and headaches. You may also find that any respiratory conditions that you already have, such as asthma, worsen during this period of time.

It is impossible to avoid pollen and spores in the atmosphere, however keeping an eye on the news, internet and TV can help as they often publish the pollen counts. On the worst days try to avoid your exposure to pollen by staying indoors. It is also best to avoid cutting the grass or going into large grassy areas, and keeping car windows closed is always helpful.

The best treatment for hay fever can be purchased in the pharmacies: antihistamines. These come in many different forms such as sprays, tablets and eye drops. Visit your pharmacy for advice, and if they think it necessary they will redirect you to your GP

Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

The NHS and Social Care Act of 2012, came into full effect in April 2013. The Act abolishes Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and they have been replaced with GP led clinical commissioning groups.

GPs in Herefordshire, along with other colleagues from their GP practices, have agreed to come together in a single county wide clinician-led commissioning model called the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Herefordshire has been chosen by the government as a pathfinder and is leading the way on these changes. The Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group is now a statutory organisation from April 2013. During the coming year, HCCG will continue to work closely with partners to make sure that patients continue to get the best healthcare results both during the transition and in the future.

Not all GPs are directly involved in commissioning services and patients will see no difference when they visit their local surgery. Every GP will however be part of a wider forum and will be able to highlight any issues to the CCG, making sure that the concerns and needs of patients are being met.

Whooping Cough Vaccinations for Pregnant Women

It is recommended that all pregnant women should be vaccinated against whooping cough (pertussis) when they are 28-38 weeks pregnant. This is a new recommendation as there has been a sharp rise in the number of whooping cough cases in the UK; it is advised that you have this vaccination even if you were already vaccinated as a child yourself.

Getting vaccinated while you're pregnant may help to protect your baby from developing whooping cough in his or her first few weeks of life. The immunity you get from the vaccine will pass to your baby through the placenta. In the current immunisation schedule babies are not vaccinated against whooping cough until they are 2 months old. There is no evidence to suggest that the vaccine is unsafe for mother or baby but if you are concerned please discuss this further with your midwife.

Wasted Appointments for the Doctors and Nurses

In April despite having booked them, there were appointments not used by patients. This figure amounts to over **1 1/2 days** of clinical time wasted. If you are unable to attend an appointment you have booked with either the Doctor or a Nurse please telephone the surgery to cancel it as we are often able to fill these appointments at very short notice.

Appointment confirmation by Test Message

We can now send a text message directly to your mobile phone when you make an appointment. You will then be sent a further text message 48 hours before to remind you of your appointment.

The receptionists will therefore be asking you for your mobile phone number. Should you not wish to receive text messages please inform one of the receptionists

QUICK CONTACT GUIDE

Colwall Surgery: 01684 540323

NHS 111 (Out of Hours Service): 111

NB: this number replaces Primecare & NHS Direct

District Nurses Team: 01531 638414

Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)

Ledbury: 01531 632488

Malvern: 01684 612619

Walk-in-Centre

Hereford (Asda): 0330 123 9309

Worcester: 01905 879100

Hospitals:

Alexandra Hospital Redditch: 01527 503030

Gloucester Royal Hospital: 01452 528555

Hereford:County Hospital: 01432 355444

Ledbury Community Hospital: 01531 632488

Malvern Hospital: 01684 612619

Worcester Royal Hospital: 01905 763333

Carers — Do you look after someone who is ill, frail, disabled or mentally ill?

If **'yes'** then you are a carer and we would like to support you.

Please ask one of our receptionists for a form to complete telling us that you are a carer and who you care for. If you are agreeable, we can pass your details onto Herefordshire Carers Support or Worcestershire Association for Carers, which are countywide organisations providing relevant information advice and local support services for carers. Alternatively you can contact them directly on the telephone numbers below.

We could also refer you, with your permission, to have your needs assessed by Adult Care Services, which is part of the Social Services. A Carers Assessment is a chance to talk about your needs as a carer and the possible ways that help could be given. It can also look at the needs of the person you care for. Also, as a carer, you are also entitled to a 'flu jab' as part of the annual flu campaign, so please do make an appointment with the nurse.