
NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our third edition of the Lincoln House Surgery Newsletter. The aim of the newsletter is to keep patients up to date with events and new developments at the surgery.



FLU CLINICS

It's that time of year again where we will be running our flu clinics. These which have proven to be very popular in the past. To now make the clinics run even more smoothly, we will be booking patients into half hour slots.

The dates are now set and the clinics will be held between 9am and 11am on

Saturday 11th October &

Saturday 1st November

You are eligible for a free Influenza Vaccination, if:

- You have chronic respiratory disease
- You have chronic heart disease
- You have chronic kidney disease
- You have chronic liver disease
- You are diabetic
- You have a weak immune system/Immunosuppression
- You are over 65 years of age or are 65 prior to the 31/03/2014
- You have a history of stroke or TIA or Multiple Sclerosis or a disease of the central nervous system
- You are Pregnant
- Those who are in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the carer of an older, disabled or Immunosuppressed person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.

If you need the flu jab, please speak to one of our receptionists who will book you into one of our clinics.

Patient Participation Group

The PPG has met twice since the Spring Newsletter and there have been some significant developments. Originally, the PPG was formed as a result of an initiative by Dr's Parbat and Anwer with the support of other Surgery staff and was led by the Doctors. The aim of the PPG was to give a voice to the patients of Lincoln House Surgery and to promote cooperation between the Practice and the Patients to the mutual benefit of both. This is still the aim of the PPG but to give the Group more independence it was felt that patients would relate more willingly to the Group if it was led by patient representatives rather than Surgery staff. In view of this the PPG now has its agenda set and meetings chaired by the patients. Some of the issues the Group have discussed are:

- Improved communication generally and in particular in the waiting areas with support information on notices, TV and display boards.
- Initiatives to support patients and source equipment currently not available.
- The development of the new 111 service and the automatic transfer of prescriptions to Pharmacies using Electronic Prescribing (EPS).
- The Patient Surveys and the on-going issues of appointments, parking and extended surgeries.
- The PPG now has two members attending the Dacorum Patients Group which discusses much wider issues and the Lincoln House representatives actively put forward the views of the PPG.

For the PPG to be effective it needs to understand what you think of the service being given by the Lincoln House Surgery and this can only be achieved if you tell us. There are two main ways you can communicate with the PPG.

1. Come to the next PPG meeting at Lincoln House on Wednesday 22nd October 2014 at 12.45. All patients are welcome but please let us know if you are planning to come so that suitable accommodation can be made available.
2. Send an email to lincolnhouseppg@gmail.com

PLEASE USE THE PPG AND LET US KNOW HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE SERVICE YOU ARE GETTING FROM THE LINCOLN HOUSE SURGERY

Article by Christopher Cook (PPG Chair)

Missed Appointments

We would like to remind patients that we are still seeing quite a large proportion of patients failing to turn up for their appointments and are losing at least 6 doctor and nurse appointments on a daily basis. This significantly impacts on the ability of the surgery to provide enough appointments and also affects those patients who are subsequently unable to get an appointment.

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please let the reception team know. We can usually fill your appointment even with one hours notice.

In addition, we have started gaining consent for patients to register for our text message service where an appointment reminder can be sent to your phone. If you need further information or would like to register, please ask at reception.

Newsletter

This is the third edition of our newsletter and are hoping patients are finding it informative. We would love to hear your views and in particular your ideas on what other content you would find useful to see in future editions. If you do have any ideas, please put it in writing to Dr Parbat or email your views through the PPG at lincolnhouseppg@gmail.com

ARE YOU REGISTERED FOR ONLINE ACCESS?

We have had great feedback from patients since increasing the number of appointments we have available to book online. One of the advantages is that patients can book appointments for the following day from 7pm the night before. They can book through our website and also via a mobile phone app.

If you have not registered for online access and would find this useful, please ask for a password from the reception team

Electronic Prescribing (EPS)

Electronic Prescribing is now live at Lincoln House Surgery 2014 and is proving to be very popular amongst the patients. EPS allows the surgery to send prescriptions electronically directly to a pharmacy of your choice.

If you collect prescriptions from the surgery, you will not have to do this and we can send the script electronically directly to a pharmacy, saving you time. The pharmacy may be one that is close to where you live, work or shop.

You will need to choose a pharmacy for us to electronically send a prescription to. This is called a nomination. To set up your nomination, you can speak to your pharmacy, doctor or a member of our reception team. You can also amend or cancel your nomination at any time.

For more information about electronic prescribing, please ask for an information leaflet at reception. You can also find information about this online.

Back Pain

Back pain is common and affects most people at some point in their life. It usually feels like an ache, tension or stiffness in your back. The pain can be triggered by sitting badly, bending or sitting awkwardly, or lifting incorrectly. Back pain is not generally caused by a serious disease and, in most cases, gets better within 12 weeks.

It can usually be treated successfully by taking painkillers and keeping mobile.

Causes of Back Pain

Your back is a complex structure made up of bones, muscles, nerves and joints, so pinpointing the exact cause of the pain can often be difficult. However, most cases of back pain are not caused by serious damage or disease but by sprains, minor strains, minor injuries or a pinched or irritated nerve. Back pain can be triggered by everyday activities at home and at work, or it can develop gradually over time as a result of sitting, standing or lifting badly.

Back pain causes include:

- Bending awkwardly
- Lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling incorrectly
- Slouching in chairs, poor posture
- Standing or bending down for long periods
- Twisting
- Over-stretching
- Driving in a hunched position
- Driving for long periods without taking a break
- Overuse of the muscles, usually due to sport or repetitive movements (repetitive strain injury)

Sometimes the pain develops suddenly for no apparent reason. Some people just wake up one morning with back pain and have no idea what has caused it.

Some risk factors increase the likelihood of developing back pain. These include:

- Being overweight – the extra weight puts pressure on the spine.
- Smoking – this could be due to tissue damage in the back caused by smoking.
- Being pregnant – the excess weight of carrying a baby can place additional strain on the back.
- Long-term use of medication that is known to weaken bones, such as corticosteroids.
- Stress – it is thought that stress can cause tension in the muscles of the back, which can result in back pain.
- Depression – back pain can make people feel depressed, which can sometimes then result in weight gain leading to more severe pain and worsening depression.

Treating Back Pain

If you have back pain, try to remain as active as possible and continue with your daily activities. In the past, doctors advised rest for back pain, but most experts now agree that being inactive for long periods is actually bad for your back. In fact, moderate activity, such as walking or doing everyday tasks, will help recovery. Take painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, if you feel the need to. Hot or cold compression packs may also help reduce the pain - these are available from your pharmacy, or a bag of frozen vegetables and a hot-water bottle will work just as well.

Your state of mind can play an important role too. Living with the pain can make it hard to be cheerful, but research has shown that people who remain positive tend to recover faster than those who get depressed.

Some people choose to have manual therapy, such as physiotherapy or osteopathy, as soon as the pain starts. Private appointments cost around £40.

For back pain lasting for more than six weeks (which doctors describe as chronic), treatment typically involves a combination of painkillers and either acupuncture, exercise classes or manual therapy.

Spinal surgery is usually only considered when all else has failed.

When to see your Doctor

Most cases of back pain get better on their own and you don't need to see a doctor. However, you should contact your GP if you're worried about your back or struggling to cope with the pain. You should seek immediate medical help if your back pain is accompanied by:

- fever
- unexplained weight loss
- swelling in the back
- pain in other parts of your body
- loss of bladder or bowel control
- numbness around your genitals
- pain that is worse at night

These are known as red flag symptoms and may be a sign of something more serious.

Preventing Back Pain

How you sit, stand, lift and lie down can have an important effect on the health of your back. Regular exercise, such as walking and swimming, is an excellent way of preventing back pain. Activities such as yoga or pilates can improve your flexibility and the strength of your back muscles.