

Patient Newsletter

Issue 13
Christmas 2011

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Christmas will soon be here and the days are getting colder

The doctors and staff here at Rosemary Medical Centre would like to wish all our patients 'a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year'.

The practice also sends it's warmest wishes to Dr Rebecca Carron who will sadly be leaving us in December. The practice wishes her all the best for the future. In the New Year we will be welcoming the return of Dr Emma Evans who will joining the practice as our new Salaried GP.

Flu Vaccination Programme 2011

Our flu vaccination programme is coming to an end. All those entitled to free 'flu vaccinations are also entitled to free pneumonia vaccine.

This is a single dose vaccine which gives life-long protection. You will be offered this at the same time as your flu injection. If you have missed one of our main clinics please contact the surgery for an appointment as soon as possible.



Christmas & New Year

Opening Times

23rd Dec—8.00 – 6.30pm
24th & 25th & Dec—Closed
26th & 27th Dec—Closed Bank Holiday
28th –30th Dec 8.00 – 6.30pm
31st & 1st —Closed
2nd Jan— Closed Bank Holiday
3rd Jan—8.00 – 6.30pm

Our Service to You - Can you help us?



In our last newsletter we asked for your help to see how we could improve our services here at Rosemary Medical Centre and we wanted to hear your views and for you to have a say about the services we currently provide. To find out the opinions of as many patients as possible we asked if you would like to provide your email or postal address so that we could contact you every now and again to ask you a question or two.

We would like to say a big 'Thank You' to all our patients who have signed up as we really appreciate your support. We have received a number of suggestions and we will shortly be sending out a survey to discuss those suggestions in more detail.

Donations

The Doctors and staff would like to say a special thank you to those patients who very kindly continue to support us by making financial donations. Your continuing generosity has enabled us to purchase two bike racks (a suggestion from one of our patients). These are located to the side of the building as you enter the practice car park and the racks fold into the wall when not in use. We appreciate that many of you donate funds at a time of personal bereavement; which makes it even more poignant that you should be thinking about us at a time of great sadness. Our heartfelt thanks are extended to you all



Medical Students

As a training practice we continue to support medical students within the practice. The medical students undertake a 6 week course. 4 weeks of this takes place at the hospital and for the other 2 weeks they are attached to a General Practice. During their attachment with us Dr Pugh and Dr Garland will be oversee their stay and provide them with access to all areas of the practice so that they have a good feel for the types of patients we have and the services we provide. When a medical student is with the practice a notice will be displayed and reception will inform should a medical student wish to be present in your consultation. This is entirely your option. Please let reception know if you would prefer to see the GP alone.



Cancelling Appointments (DNA's)

If you cannot keep an appointment please remember to telephone the surgery giving as much notice as possible.

In 2010 a total of 1038 appointments were lost due to patients not turning up. That equates to approximately 4.1 appointments a day that could have been offered to other patients.

For 2011 we have lost 1006 appointments so far which equates to approximately **4.3 appointments a day** that could have been offered to other patients. This means:

- An increase in the waiting time for appointments
- The inability of other patients to make an appointment
- Frustration and inconvenience for both staff and patients
- A waste of resources
-

If a patient fails to attend a pre-booked appointment on more than three occasions in the last 12 months an informal warning letter will be sent, advising the patient that a further occurrence could risk removal from the Practice.

Suffering from Gastroenteritis

- **What is most likely to be causing my diarrhoea and vomiting?**

The most likely cause is a virus called Norovirus. This virus that can make you become ill suddenly with vomiting and/or diarrhoea, you may also experience a headache, stomach pains, aching muscles and a fever. The symptoms can be severe, and whilst distressing usually resolves within 1-2 days, however you may feel generally unwell for a few more days.

- **How can I make myself better?**

Norovirus is not a bacterial infection, it is a viral infection, this means that antibiotics will not help, and they could make you feel worse. The virus has to run its course. You will lose a lot of fluid through vomiting and diarrhoea. It is important that you replace the fluid you lose. Frequent sipping of water, dilute juice or a rehydration mixture (such as Dioralyte, available from pharmacies). An alternative to Dioralyte is mixing one glass of water + flat teaspoon of sugar + pinch of salt, this should then be mixed thoroughly and taste like tears. You can sip this as much as possible to replace fluid and will help to stop diarrhoea. Do not drink too much in one go as this may make you vomit. You can take paracetamol to help the headache and general aches, but always read the instructions on the packet.

- **How do I make sure my friends and family do not catch this from me?**

The virus is found in the vomit and faeces of infected people. If someone has diarrhoea or vomits and does not clean their hands properly, any surface they touch is a source of infection for a short while afterwards. You should not prepare food while you are ill. Often people may then touch that surface and because people unknowingly put their hands or fingers near their own mouth, they are then likely to catch the virus. Also if you vomit near someone, the droplets in the air might find their way onto surfaces (for example a carpet) a few feet away from where you were sick and therefore be the source of infection if someone touches it (and then puts their hands in their mouth). Hard surfaces that are near the source of vomit or faeces (toilet pans, bowls, sinks, taps, toilet flushes etc) can be cleaned with a general detergent (washing up liquid), and then disinfected with a diluted bleach solution; the cloth used for cleaning must then be thrown away.

- **When do I need to seek medical advice?**

- if the stomach pains do not go away or get worse;
- if you notice blood in the vomit or diarrhoea;
- if you are unable to keep fluids down and this is lasting more than 4-6 hours;
- if you have an underlying health problem which may be affected by not keeping the tablets down;
- if you have underlying health problems which may be affected by not eating and drinking e.g. diabetes.

