



The Prescription

Countesthorpe Health Centre News

Issue 8

September/October 2010

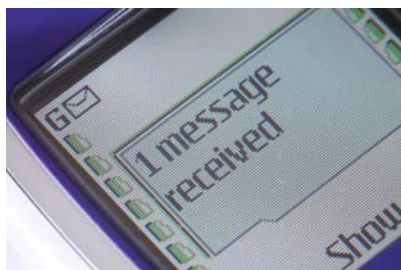


Countesthorpe
Health Centre

www.countesthorpehealthcentre.co.uk
Book your appointments online

Appointments: 0116 277 6361
Enquiries: 0116 277 6336
Prescriptions: 0116 277 9265

NEW – Text message reminders for your appointments



From **1st November** we will be sending SMS text message reminders of appointments to everyone who has given us their mobile phone numbers to include on their records.

This new addition to our computerised system means that you won't ever have to forget an important appointment – a great advantage, especially if you have booked your appointment some time in advance.

We will also send out a confirmation of your appointment at the time you book it so you can be sure that we'll be expecting you.

What information will you send in the text message?

We will only send the date and time of the appointment. We will respect your confidentiality and not send any private information about your health or the purpose of your appointment this way.

I don't know whether you have my mobile phone details – what should I do?

When you call or visit reception to make an appointment, simply give us your mobile phone number and we will include it in our records.

We recommend that you let us have these details anyway as there are occasionally other reasons why we might need to get in touch with you in a hurry.

I don't want to receive text message reminders – can I opt out?

Yes. If you don't want to receive appointment reminders in this way, simply let us know when you book your appointment and we will set our system to make sure you do not receive text message reminders.

If you receive a message please don't reply to it by text as this will not get picked up. If you need to change your appointment please ring the surgery in the normal way.

Flu Jab campaign – Are you eligible?

Flu jabs will be available from early October. You should book an appointment to have your flu jab if you are aged 65 years or over, or if you have asthma (and are prescribed brown inhalers), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes, heart disease or have had a stroke. You are also entitled to a flu jab if you are prescribed immunosuppressants.

This year's seasonal flu jab also contains protection against the H1N1 (swine flu) virus and so is also being offered to pregnant women.

If you are entitled to the vaccine you should receive a letter from us during September. Please book your appointment soon because we are keen to ensure that everyone who should have the jab does so.

Are you a smoker or ex-smoker? Do you suffer from breathlessness?

If the answer to both of these questions is "yes", then you might assume that your breathlessness is an unavoidable result of your smoking. However, there could be another cause and our current health promotion campaign urges you to take a test to find out.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a term used for a range of conditions including chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Symptoms include a cough, phlegm and shortness of breath. There is a lot that can be done to relieve the symptoms and the sooner the condition is diagnosed the better.

COPD is diagnosed using a spirometry test, a breathing test where you simply blow into a machine to see whether your airways have narrowed. We are offering spirometry tests to anyone who:

- Is aged 40+
- Is a smoker or ex-smoker
- Is not currently diagnosed with asthma or COPD
- Is not using an inhaler
- Has never had a spirometry test

If you fit these criteria and are concerned about breathlessness, please contact the surgery to make an appointment.

More useful resources

Asthma UK web site – www.asthma.org.uk

British Lung Foundation web site – www.lunguk.org

The local Breath Easy Group is part of the British Lung Foundation and offers support to people with any kind of breathing difficulty. Contact them on **0116 249 5780**.



Look After Your Health – Health Promotion Campaigns

The programme of Health Promotion campaigns continues in the Health Centre throughout this year.

Asthma/Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	September
New Year's Resolutions – Get a Head Start	November/December
Emotional Health	January

Experts will be on hand to answer your questions on the launch day of each campaign but you can call in to the Health Centre any time during opening hours to see the displays and pick up information.

Don't forget that you can also find plenty of useful health information on our web site at www.countesthorpehealthcentre.co.uk.

Patient Participation Group Survey – make your views known

Our Patient Participation Group has now devised their survey and members of the group will be in the surgery waiting room between Monday 25th October and Friday 29th October to ask for your help.

We encourage you to share your views which will be collated by the group and fed back to the practice. We'll be reporting the main points in a future newsletter so this is a great chance to make your views known.

Find out who is part of the Patient Participation Group at www.countesthorpehealthcentre.co.uk/patient_participation_group

Out of hours service

Don't forget that if you need assistance out of normal surgery hours, our Out-of Hours service can be accessed by calling the surgery on 0116 277 6336 and pressing 1 which will put your call straight through to the Out-of-Hours service.

Changes to the NHS

In our last newsletter we mentioned that we would keep you up-to-date with any news on the changes that Government is intending to make within the NHS. We are still involved in talks with other practices and the PCT but have no specific news on changes yet.

Rest assured, we will keep you informed of any developments that will affect you as soon as they come into play.