



Compass House
Medical Centres

Patient Newsletter

Welcome to our patient newsletter which we publish every other month. Our aim is to keep you informed of services at Compass House and give you important insights into getting the most out of the Practice.

Serving Brixham, Galmpton, Kingswear, Churston and parts of Paignton

October 2019



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Flu season

Influenza, or flu, is a viral infection that mainly affects the respiratory system. It is usually characterised by fever, chills, headache, aching muscles, joint pain and fatigue. Flu is very contagious meaning it can easily be spread to others. Some people with flu do not have any symptoms however they may still be able to pass the virus to others. In most people, flu is a self-limiting illness, however for some people, particularly those in what we call 'at-risk' groups, flu can result in a serious infection and in some circumstances death.

The vaccine remains the best defence we have to protect against the spread of flu and we encourage everyone eligible to get it each year.

You should have a flu vaccine if you:

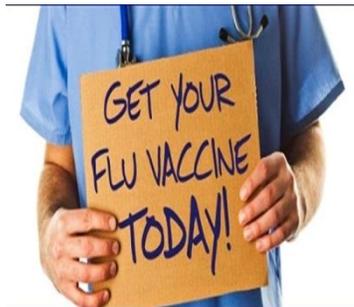
- ✓ Are 65 years old or over
- ✓ Are pregnant
- ✓ Have certain medical conditions, including Diabetes, Liver Disease, weakened immune system, COPD, chronic Asthma, BMI over 40
- ✓ Are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- ✓ Receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill.

We encourage **all** eligible patients to have a flu vaccine. We have purchased enough stock for all our eligible patients to be vaccinated. Having your vaccine at your GP surgery enables you to have your medical records updated there and then and means you are getting the most suitable vaccine.

To support patients and make having the vaccine more accessible we will be offering drop in clinics at our Brixham surgery from 8am-1pm & 2pm-6pm every Monday to Friday. In addition to this we will also offer booked appointments during the week at both Brixham & Galmpton.

After the success of last year we will also run a Kingswear flu clinic on Friday 18th October between 9am -12pm.

Children over the age of 6 months with long term health conditions & those aged 2-3 years (born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2017) are also eligible. We will be contacting parents when vaccine stock arrives. Children of primary school age will receive their vaccine at school.



Staying healthy this winter

As people get older, changes to our bodies mean that cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to.

Immune systems don't function as well as you age

What can you do?

Ensure you have the relevant seasonal vaccinations, like flu or pneumonia.

Wash your hands regularly - Simple but effective, washing your hands helps stop germs spreading.

Stock up on cold and sore throat remedies - Your pharmacist can give you advice if you're feeling under the weather.



Cold weather puts more pressure on your heart and circulatory system

What can you do?

Wrap up well when out in the cold - Including scarfs, hats, gloves & thick socks.

Make sure your home is warm enough - The ideal room temperature you should be aiming for is about 21 degrees in your living room and about 18 degrees in your bedroom.



Bodies lose muscle mass so don't keep as warm

What can you do?

Keep moving - Try not to sit still for more than one hour at a time. Even if just moving your arms and legs.

Eat well - Aim for at least one hot meal every day as well as warm drinks throughout the day.



It's not unusual to feel a bit blue in the winter months. When the weather's miserable and the evenings are darker, it can be harder to get out and about and do the things you enjoy.

To try and beat the winter blues try the following:

Stay connected

Do something you enjoy every day

Keep moving

Don't ignore your feelings

For more information on how to stay well this winter visit -

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/stay-healthy-in-winter/>



Red box project

Over the last year we have been supporting the Red Box Project. The projects aim was to provide schools with free sanitary products in the hope of ending period poverty.

Many of our patients have kindly donated sanitary products over the year with great appreciation from the project.

The Red Box Project have been campaigning with the government and we are pleased to announce that from early 2020, our government in England plan to implement a scheme across schools and colleges that provides free menstrual products to those that need it. The same has already been implemented across Wales and Scotland.



So that the government can get the scheme set up, the Red Box Project will now be winding down and so will no longer be accepting donated products.

They would like to thank patients who have supported the project. While it was running the donations you have made have helped so many young people.

Medications issued by hospital

Our PPG have asked us to share some information regarding medication issued by consultants at the hospital.

In some circumstances the hospital will issue you with a prescription to go home with. If you feel the medication is working and you haven't had any side effects, then we are able to add this to your repeat prescription list and you are able to order future prescriptions directly from us and have these sent to your designated pharmacy.



To do this we recommend calling our prescriptions team on our designated telephone option between 10am-1pm. Please be aware in some circumstances the consultant may only have issued the medication as a one off, our team will be able to advise you if this is the case. Once the repeat prescription has been added you are able to order your medication via Patient Access, the NHS app or by ticking your repeat prescription card and dropping this into the surgery as well as by phone.

We also receive lots of hospital letters advising us of medication changes or additional medication the hospital would like you to try. Patients may also receive a copy of this letter, so please be sure to read clinic letters carefully. If you have received a letter from the hospital asking you to start a medication, please be sure to call the surgery to order this. The GP would have added this to your repeat prescription list but you will be required to order this in the first instance so we know which pharmacy to send the medication to.

Please be aware there is sometimes a delay in the hospital sending us these letters so please ensure you have received your copy (sent at the same time) before calling us for a repeat otherwise it will not have been added to our system.

Screening Programmes

Screening is a way of identifying apparently healthy people who may have an increased risk of a particular condition. The NHS offers a range of screening tests to different sections of the population. The aim is to offer screening to the people who are most likely to benefit from it.



If you get a normal result (a screen negative result) after a screening test, this means you are at low risk of having the condition you were screened for. This does not mean you will never develop the condition in the future, just that you are low risk at the moment.

If you have a higher-risk result (a screen positive result), it means you may have the condition that you've been tested for. At this point, you will be offered further tests (called diagnostic tests) to confirm if you have the condition. You can then be offered treatment, advice and support.

See below information about the NHS screening programmes and what to do if you have missed your screening appointment.



Diabetic eye screening

From the age of 12, all people with diabetes are offered an annual diabetic eye test to check for early signs of diabetic retinopathy.

If you have missed your screening appointment call 01803 241000

Cervical screening

Cervical screening is offered to women aged 25 to 64 to check the health of cells in the cervix. It is offered every 3 years for those aged 26 to 49, and every 5 years from the ages of 50 to 64.

You will usually be sent a letter when you are due your cervical screening, you will then need to call us on 01803 855897 to book in for your smear appointment. If you think you maybe overdue then please contact us and we can look into this for you.



Breast Screening

Breast screening is offered to women aged 50 to 70 to detect early signs of breast cancer. Women over 70 can self-refer.

If you have missed your screening appointment call 01803 655353



Bowel cancer screening

There are 2 types of screening for bowel cancer:

- 1 - A home testing kit is offered to men and women aged 60 to 74.
- 2 - Bowel scope screening uses a thin, flexible tube with a tiny camera on the end to look at the large bowel. It is offered to men and women at the age of 55 in some parts of England.

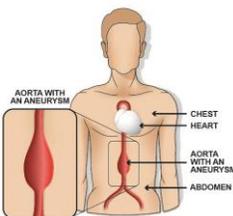
If you have misplaced your test kit call 0800 707 6060



Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening

AAA screening is offered to men in their 65th year to detect abdominal aortic aneurysms (a dangerous swelling in the aorta). Men over 65 can self-refer.

If you have missed your screening appointment call 01803 655441



Join our Compass House Patient Participation Group

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are a unique partnership between patients, GPs and their practice. They work together to:



- Help patients to take more responsibility for their health
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of services and quality of care
- Improve communication between the practice and its patients
- Provide practical support for the practice and help to implement change
- Fundraising for practice equipment
- Help with patient events such as flu clinics.

Compass House PPG group has over 130 members. Most of these are “virtual members” where contact is largely through email. We also have a dedicated group of 12-15 members that meet every couple of months and we are always seeking new members, whether to join our face-to-face or virtual groups. We are particularly keen to involve younger people to identify and resolve health concerns that are relevant to this group. Our next PPG meeting is being held at the Galmpton Surgery on Monday 4th November, 6pm – if you would like to come along, get involved or find out more please email compasshouse.ppg@nhs.net



Sowing the Seeds for Good Health.....Volunteers needed for Compass House “Gardening Club”!

We are currently looking at setting up a “Gardening club” at our Galmpton practice. This would be a great opportunity for patients to form a Community Group and meet up, using this space to plant flowers or even grow their own vegetables. It would provide a space and reason for people to socialise, learn and grow together. People who participate in such schemes improve their own health and wellbeing, feel less isolated and better in themselves. Similar schemes have already been set up elsewhere around London and we are working with them to look at setting up our own group. See www.lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk for further details.



We are looking for volunteers that have gardening experience who would like to lead a group or just to get involved with this project - please get in touch via email compasshouse.ppg@nhs.net or speak to our Patient Care Advisors.



September Practice Stats - Did you know?

In September we dealt with:

- 18,447 incoming calls
- 6750 face to face consultations
- 2225 telephone consultations
- 130 Home visits
- 3145 paper prescription items
- 38,364 electronic prescription items
- 4,533 items of clinical post / email
- 3065 lab reports assessed
- Referred 913 patients
- 159 patients did not attend pre-booked appointments



Did you know you can follow us on Facebook and twitter? Please like and share our pages to keep up to date with our latest news and useful Health Care tips.

<https://www.facebook.com/compasshousemedical/>

<https://twitter.com/CompassHouseGP>

Digital Health Devon Champion

We are delighted to announce that Luli, our IT administrator, has now completed her training to become a Digital Health Devon Champion.

What does this mean for our patients?

Luli is now able to help patients get online and offer support and advice when doing any of the following:

- Accessing the internet and email – Create an email address, access the internet and importantly stay safe online.
- GP Online Services – Access online GP services and perform basic tasks from logging in, booking appointments and ordering prescriptions through to creating an E-Consult and viewing your medical record. Luli can also help patients register for Patient Access or other providers, use the NHS App (If you would like to register on the day please bring Photographic ID)
- Online self-referral services – Use local self-referral services like the NHS e-referral service, Depression & Anxiety Service (Talkworks) and Patient Knows Best.
- How to provide your feedback or make a complaint – Share your feedback about the health and social care services you've used in Devon.
- Online self-help services and useful links – Some of the more widely used self-help and self-care services online in Devon.
- Finance, Debts and Benefits – learn about benefits you may be entitled to and how you can apply for them online.

We will be running sessions at Brixham and Galmpton Surgery on the following dates:

- 29/10/19 Tuesday– 9AM to 1PM (Brixham)
- 26/11/19 Tuesday – 9AM to 1PM (Galmpton)
- 17/12/19 Tuesday – 9AM to 1PM (Brixham)

Call our Patient Advisors on 01803 855 897 to book your session. Please let our advisors know what in particular you would like to learn so we can plan your session.

