



Westside Surgery

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Spring Newsletter March 2024

Welcome to our new quarterly newsletter where we will provide you with health advice and practice updates.

Top 10 health tips for the coming months

1. **Measles** – You have probably heard that there has been a recent increase in measles cases. If you were born after 1978 and are unsure if you received 2 doses of an MMR vaccine please ensure you are covered and contact us immediately for advice. If your child has not yet started school and if they are awaiting their second dose of MMR there is no need for early vaccination but if they haven't received any MMR vaccine and are over 12 months of age they need urgent vaccination.
2. **Brighter evenings - Get active** – Aerobic exercise that makes you break a sweat has hugely beneficial effects physical and mental health. Please try to prioritise exercise in your daily life. You will notice your mood, sleep and blood test results improve!
3. **Blood pressure** – You will hear from your GP and practice nurse regularly refer to your blood pressure. This is because recent studies have shown that getting your blood pressure very tightly under control is more important than previously thought. As a result, we have invested in more 24 hour blood pressure monitors. If you are taking blood pressure medication, you really should get an annual 24-hour blood pressure monitor to ensure you are taking the correct dose.
4. **Women's Health** – Please visit cervicalcheck.ie to see when your next free cervical check is due and make an appointment with us for your cervical check as required, We provide free contraception care for all patients aged 17-32 (including long term contraception). We also provide pregnancy care (including crises pregnancy) and specialist menopause management
5. **Travel**. If you are planning a trip this Summer and require vaccinations please organise this now. Many travel vaccines need a few weeks to become effective
6. **Skin health and cryotherapy**. We offer biopsy, minor surgery and cryotherapy in the practice to remove any skin lesions that are potentially nasty or unsightly. If you notice any new moles, bumps or lumps please make an appointment to get them checked.
7. **Cholesterol** – Keep heart healthy. Eat less red meat, less full fat dairy and less processed food. More fruit, more vegetables more healthy oils e.g. nuts, olive oil and oily fish. Plenty of exercise. No smoking and go easy on the alcohol.
8. **Shingles vaccine**. The shingles vaccine is expensive but is worth considering given the fact that 1 in 3 people contract shingles at some stage in their lives.
9. **Hay fever** – If you suffer with hay fever every Summer now is the time to commence treatment that will prevent this from occurring this year. If you wait for the symptoms to appear it is often more difficult to treat, Please contact us today to arrange an appointment and stay hayfever free this Summer.
10. **April is Bowel Cancer awareness month**. If you are aged 59-69 please ensure you avail of the BowelScreen test. See www.bowelscreen.ie for more details. Whatever your age, if you are experiencing any unexplained weight loss, blood in your poo or changes in bowel habit please come and see us.

Order Your prescription online!

You can request your repeat medication online at westssidesurgery.ie. This service is only available to patients requiring a repeat on their regular prescription. If you require a prescription for a medication you do not take regularly or for a medication you haven't previously been prescribed you will need to first make an appointment to see a GP in the practice.

Reception

Mary Moran – Practice Manager
Caroline Conboy - Front desk
Michelle Byrne - Front desk
Jessica McGinley - Front desk

Nurses

Saoirse Smyth - Louise Little - Roisin Roche

Doctors

Dr Sean MacGiobuin - Dr Adrienne Heerey - Dr Kieran Coleman

Evening, nighttime and weekend cover– We provide 24/7 health cover to all our registered patients. Please call 091 521666 if unwell outside working hours and you will receive details on the doctor who will see you. Please remember that in case of an emergency always call 999 or 112.

Free GP Visit Card – An additional 215,000 people became eligible for the free GP Visit Card in November 2023. You may be eligible for a card if you are aged 8 to 69. It's possible you may be entitled to one even if the amount of money you earn is quite high. If your expenses are also high you may qualify. To apply please visit mymedicalcard.ie

Practice Developments – Attempts to reduce waiting times

We are actively investing in the practice and trying to reduce waiting times through introduction of the following measures:

- **New consultation room.** Apologies for any inconvenience caused in recent weeks as we expand the practice with the addition of a new consultation room. This will allow for greater availability of appointments,
- **Additional GP.** Our practice has been chosen as a training practice on the General Practice training scheme. We will shortly be adding an additional doctor to the team who is coming to the end of their specialist training. They are a fully qualified doctor and will offer additional GP appointments within the practice
- **Nursing team.** We have expanded our nursing team and there are 2 nurses available for appointments on most days. We now have extra slots for many procedures including childhood vaccinations, dressing changes and cervical screening tests.
- **On the day appointments.** We realise that a feverish child or a bad infection cannot wait so we always keep some appointments free for such presentations. Please remember these appointments are scarce and are limited to urgent cases

Please play your part:

- If you cannot make your appointment please help us by cancelling. Someone else will be able to slot in and this will keep our waiting times shorter.
- We run off a 15-minute schedule for appointments. Please keep this in mind and be considerate to other patients.
- Please ensure the contact details we have on your file are up to date. We need a phone number and preferably, an email on file to keep you informed. If you change address and have pending hospital appointments please update the relevant hospital.

All the very best to our practice nurse Saoirse Smyth who is traveling to Southern Uganda for a few weeks to volunteer in Kisiizi Hospital. Saoirse will be sharing her expertise as she provides education sessions and support along with a group of Irish healthcare professionals as part of the charity "CHEERS – developing healthcare together" Good luck Saoirse!