

Practice Newsletter

June 2021



Have you received a cervical screening reminder but not booked your appointment yet? There has been a recent decline in patients booking their cervical screening.

Contact the practice to arrange your appointment. Appointments can be booked up to 4 weeks ahead to work around when is best for you.

What is cervical screening?

- Cervical screening (a smear test) checks the health of your cervix. The cervix is the opening to your womb from your vagina.
- It's not a test for cancer, it's a test to help prevent cancer.
- All women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64 should be invited by letter.
- During the screening appointment, a small sample of cells will be taken from your cervix.
- The sample is checked for certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that can cause changes to the cells of your cervix. These are called "high risk" types of HPV.
- If these types of HPV are not found, you do not need any further tests.
- If these types of HPV are found, the sample is then checked for any changes in the cells of your cervix. These can then be treated before they get a chance to turn into cervical cancer.
- You'll get your results by letter. It will explain what happens next.

Cervical screening is one of the best ways to protect yourself from cervical cancer. Cervical screening is not a test for cancer, it's a test to help prevent cancer.

How cervical screening helps prevent cancer

- Cervical screening checks a sample of cells from your cervix for certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV).
- These types of HPV can cause abnormal changes to the cells in your cervix and are called "high risk" types of HPV.
- If these types of HPV are found during screening (an HPV positive result), the sample of cells is then checked for abnormal changes. If abnormal cells are not treated, they may turn into cervical cancer.

What happens at your appointment?

- During cervical screening a small sample of cells is taken from your cervix for testing.
- The test itself should take less than 5 minutes. The whole appointment should take about 10 minutes.
- Cervical screenings are carried out by our trained Practice Nurses.
- Before starting, they should explain what will happen during the test and answer any questions you have.

Please remember due to social distancing we are only allowed limited numbers in our waiting area.

Please try and attend appointments alone where possible.

Try not to attend too early as you may be asked to wait outside until nearer your appointment time.

Practice Closures - Please note the practice is closed between 1pm-2pm every Monday and closed all afternoon from 12.30pm on the following dates for staff training: - 7th June 2021 and 17th June 2021

Recent changes to staffing in the practice.

We recently said goodbye to Dr Hallasgo who has left for a new GP post in Scotland.

Dr Zamoyski left for maternity leave on 3rd June and will be returning to the practice in around Spring 2022.

We have a Paramedic called Adam who is coming into the practice, he is undertaking telephone appointments with patients and, the same as the GPs, if he feels medically necessary he can offer face to face appointments.

It's important to be aware of any new or worrying symptoms, such as blood in your pee or poo, a lump, persistent bloating or a cough for 3 weeks or more. If you have any of the symptoms please contact us to arrange a telephone review with a GP. Although it's unlikely to be cancer, it's important to speak to a GP so they can investigate. Finding cancer early means it's easier to treat. If your GP suspects cancer, they'll refer you to a specialist – usually within 2 weeks.

Coughing, chest pain and breathlessness

- Contact a GP if you've had a cough for 3 weeks or more that isn't covid.
- Symptoms such as shortness of breath or chest pain may also be a sign of a condition such as pneumonia.

Changes in bowel habits

Speak to a GP if you've noticed these changes and it's lasted for more than a few weeks:

- blood in your poo
- diarrhoea or constipation for no obvious reason
- a feeling of not having fully emptied your bowels after going to the toilet
- pain in your stomach or back passage (anus)

Bloating

- Speak to a GP if you've had bloating for 3 weeks or more.

Lump in your breast

- Speak to a GP if you notice a lump in your breast or if you have a lump that's rapidly increasing in size elsewhere on your body.
- Your GP will refer you to a specialist for tests if they think you may have cancer.

Unexplained weight loss

- You should also speak to a GP if you've lost a lot of weight over the last couple of months that cannot be explained by changes to your diet, exercise or stress.

Bleeding

You should also speak to a GP if you have any unexplained bleeding, such as:

- blood in your urine
- bleeding between periods
- bleeding from your bottom
- blood when you cough
- blood in your vomit

Moles

Speak to a GP if you have a mole that:

- changes shape or looks uneven
- changes colour, gets darker or has more than 2 colours
- starts itching, crusting, flaking or bleeding
- gets larger or more raised from the skin

Any of the above changes means there's a chance you have malignant melanoma, a form of skin cancer.