

THE BLACKDOWN PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2010

Triage

In September 2010 we introduced a new system for telephone triage.

This was to manage appointments with the doctors to ensure we get the correct balance between on-the-day and routine appointments, but also to be able to accommodate you if you need a 'soon' appointment i.e. within 2-5 days.

It may be that you will not need an immediate appointment and talking to your usual doctor over the telephone might result in him or her arranging for you to have relevant tests or a referral to another service or clinic. This will speed up the overall process for you.

We would be very interested to hear your feedback, either positive or negative, about your experience of our new telephone triage system as it will help us to develop this service. Please contact Karen Button, Practice Manager.



Flu

All of our seasonal flu clinics have now taken place. If you received a letter inviting you to attend but you have not yet done so, please contact Hemyock Surgery on 01823 680206 as soon as possible.



Christmas & New Year

The Practice will be closed on the following days over the Christmas and New Year period:-

Fri 24th December	Open as usual
Sat 25th December	Closed
Mon 27th December	Closed
Tue 28th December	Closed
Wed 29th December	Open as usual
Thurs 30th December	Open as usual
Fri 31st December:	Open as usual
Sat 1st January	Closed
Mon 3rd January	Closed
Tues 4th January	Open as usual

Should you need to contact a Doctor when the Practice is closed, please telephone Devon Doctors on Call on:

0845 671 0270

You can also phone NHS Direct on **0845 46 47** for healthcare advice.

Repeat Prescriptions at Christmas

Please help us during this busy time by ordering your medicines early.

Please allow at least 3 working days before collection.





Requests for repeat prescriptions over the telephone

It is not standard practice for the dispensary to accept repeat prescription requests over the telephone unless this has been previously agreed or there are exceptional circumstances.

Telephoned requests have been shown to lead to errors when there is confusion about the medication needed and, at busy times, these errors become more likely.

Prescription requests can be made by:

- **Post** (pre-addressed envelopes available on request)
- **Fax** Hemyock: 01823 680680
Churchinford: 01823 601348
Dunkeswell: 01404 891871
- **On-line**
www.theblackdownpractice.co.uk

Quantities issued on prescription

A repeat prescription consists of one month's supply of medication and this is only increased in specific circumstances.

Having more than one month's supply in the home is potentially dangerous, especially if a patient's medication is changed as there is a chance that patients continue taking both medications together.

If your reason for requiring more than one month's supply is financial, you should check if you are entitled to an exemption certificate.

If you do need to pay for your prescriptions and you require more than 14 items in 12 months or 4 items in 3 months, you will save money by applying for a pre-payment certificate.

Please enquire at the dispensary if you would like to know about medical exemptions or pre-payment certificates.

Please return all unused medicine to the dispensary for safe destruction.

Unfortunately, any unused medication returned to us cannot be reused. It is estimated that there is 70 tons of medicine waste produced in Devon each year. Help us to reduce this waste by only ordering the medication you need for each month.

Hearing Aid Batteries

The Practice no longer keeps a supply of hearing aid batteries as there are too many sizes to be able to accommodate everyone's needs.

Batteries can be obtained from Musgrove Park Hospital - if you send in your record book, stating which type of battery you need plus a stamp for the return delivery.

Musgrove will then send you the batteries by return post.

The address is:

Audiology Department
Musgrove Park Hospital
Taunton TA1 5DA



Telephone Calls

Our branch surgeries at Churchinford and Dunkeswell are not open all the time, they are closed at lunchtimes and some afternoons:

- Churchinford is closed on a Wednesday afternoon
- Dunkeswell is closed on Monday, Thursday and Friday afternoons.

We feel that it is important for patients to be able to speak to someone in an urgent situation when the branch is closed and have therefore made the decision to automatically divert the telephone calls to the main site at Hemyock when the branch surgeries are closed.

Appointments can be made by Hemyock reception for any of the branch surgeries.