

New.... Rotavirus Vaccine for Babies

A new vaccine has been introduced by the Government to protect new babies from Rotavirus. Rotavirus is the most common cause of severe diarrhoea in babies. Babies will now be given this vaccine (orally) along with their other routine immunisations, by the Practice Nurse at their 8 week checks.



The rotavirus vaccine will only be given to new babies and not backdated for older children.

Just to remind parents/carers that you must bring your child's red book to every immunisation appointment, or we may be unable to vaccinate your child.

MMR Update

Measles is a highly infectious and unpleasant illness that can lead to serious complications, including blindness and even death.



Due to a health scare, there was a low uptake of MMR in a generation of children. The scare was based on a discredited piece of research that claimed MMR could trigger autism. As a result, there have been outbreaks of measles in schools and towns across the country.

A catch-up programme is being introduced to protect children, born between 1997 and 2003, who are unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated against measles. If you receive a letter or you think your child hasn't been vaccinated against measles, then please make an appointment with a practice nurse. If your child is under 6, you can bring them along to Thursday's baby clinic. There are also plans to set up temporary 'vaccine clinics' in schools.

The programme will also be publicised in schools and on Facebook: Get Vaccinated England and Twitter at #gethemmr. The government hopes that the catch-up programme will be completed by the start of the new school year in September.

Telephone Access



We are constantly looking at ways to improve our service to you. A major issue patients tell us about, is getting through to the surgery by telephone. We have already increased the number of receptionists available, invested in a 24 hour telephone booking system and an online booking system (once you've registered your details with us).

If you are calling the surgery with a general enquiry, or non-urgent appointment, we urge you to avoid calling at the peak times of 8am-10am.

Unlike some other surgeries, we currently don't close for lunch, so a receptionist will always be available to take your call up until 6.30pm on weekdays and 8pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

To efficiently deal with the volume of calls we receive, we will be changing the options available on the recorded message. **Please listen carefully to all the options, or you may be asked to call back and select the correct option.**

- Option 1**—Appointments (incl. automated booking)
- Option 2**—Hospital Referrals
- Option 3**—Test results
- Option 4**—Insurance and medical reports
- Option 5**—General Enquiries

Free Cholesterol Tests for over 40's

If you are between the ages of 40-74 and would like to receive a FREE cholesterol test, why not check and see if you are eligible for an NHS Health Check?

Pick up a leaflet or check with reception for more information and to book your mini MOT.

Exclusions apply.

New Consulting Rooms – Open

We are pleased to declare our new consulting rooms open! Our local MP, Mike Penning officially opened them back in June and the feedback on the quality of the rooms has been overwhelming. Rooms 14 and 15 and a new waiting area, are located upstairs. Just follow the bright new colour coded signage to direct you upstairs.

If you are unable to manage the stairs, for whatever reason, please let us know. You can complete the slip at the bottom of this page, or collect a form from reception. We will then add a note to our computer system that will alert us each time you make an appointment. Please remember to add anyone in your household this applies to.

Surname:	Forename:	Date of Birth:	Address:
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

The patients listed, would prefer to be seen by doctors / nurses on the ground floor. Signed.....



Heatwave Dangers

The recent heat wave has seen a huge surge of heat related illnesses and even deaths. The very young, elderly and people with chronic illnesses are most at risk of developing a heat related illness. Vulnerable people are not always able to regulate their own body temperature and therefore they can overheat and dehydrate very quickly.

It's important to be aware of friends and neighbours during a heat wave and to let people know if you are on your own and have any concerns. Consider visiting older people twice a day and ensure they are drinking plenty of cool (non alcoholic) fluids.

The symptoms of heat exhaustion can develop rapidly. They can include: very hot skin that feels 'flushed', heavy sweating, dizziness, extreme tiredness (fatigue), feeling sick (nausea), being sick (vomiting), a rapid heart-beat, mental confusion, urinating less often and much darker urine than usual.

A person with **heat exhaustion** should be moved quickly to somewhere cool and given fluids (preferably water) to drink. They should then begin to feel better within half an hour.

The symptoms of heat stroke can develop over a number of days. They can include: high body temperature, inability to sweat, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, muscle cramps, mental confusion, anxiety, difficulties understanding others, fits, lack of co-ordination, headaches, loss of consciousness.

A person with **heat stroke** requires immediate emergency treatment, keep them cool and give fluids until assistance arrives

Hay Fever Misery

Hay fever is a common condition that affects up to 1 in 5 of us and can develop at any age, although it usually starts in childhood or during the teenage years.



The symptoms of hay fever are caused when a person has an allergic reaction to pollen.

Symptoms include: sneezing, a runny nose or itchy eyes. Hay fever does not pose a serious threat to health.

You can have an allergy to:

- * **tree pollen**, released during spring
- * **grass pollen**, released during the end of spring and beginning of summer
- * **weed pollen**, released any time from early spring to late autumn

Currently there is no cure for hay fever, but most people are able to relieve their symptoms with over the counter treatment, from pharmacies or supermarkets. Products available to buy can be significantly cheaper, than on prescription. Your local Pharmacist (we have one on site in Rowlands) is qualified to give you advice on the types of treatment suitable for you.

Prevent some of the symptoms of hay fever by wearing wrap-around style sunglasses, keep windows closed at home and in the car.

Change your clothes and shower when you get home. Try and stay indoors when the pollen count is high (over 50). The Met Office provides a pollen forecast.

Staff Changes.....

We are listening to our patients and know that you have been asking for more appointments. As an expanding practice, we realise this, so we have recruited a prescribing Nurse Practitioner, Lesley Stone. Lesley worked with us some years ago and we are delighted to welcome her back. Lesley and Nikki are able to deal with most minor illnesses, aches, pains and bites (see our website for a full list).

We are thrilled that Dr Rebecca Asquith and Dr Hannah Bowles are both returning from their maternity leave this August.

We say farewell to Dr Sanjay Pawar. He has been offered a great new opportunity in Northampton and we wish him all the very best in his future venture.

Reception team members Marion Proctor and Gill Edwards, have also moved onto to pastures new and we welcome Tanya Wildman and Jackalyn Morrice to Fernville. Both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience with them.

Students

Fernville prides itself on being a training practice, helping to introduce quality doctors to General Practice. We will soon have new student doctors arriving in September (from Cambridge and Kings College).

They will be working under supervision until April 2014. If you are offered an appointment with a student doctor and you would prefer to decline, please be assured this will not affect your medical care in anyway.



In Focus...John Carlton Ashworth (Patient)

5 Minute Q&A with John Carlton Ashworth

John Carlton Ashworth is a patient at Fernville who is a member of our Patient Participation Group, here he explains more about himself and his role.....



Prior to taking early retirement I had been a Biology teacher in Yorkshire for 11 years and then had joined a pharmaceutical company in 1968, remaining in its employ until 1995. I retired from the position of Head of Human Resources. The above company had moved me down to Hertfordshire in 1971 and in 1974 my wife and I registered with Fernville Surgery, by whose staff we have been extremely well served ever since. When I read on the Surgery website that patients were being sought to volunteer for membership of the Patient Participation Group, I offered to join its ranks and was accepted at once.

The PPG has been formed to offer advice to the Practice Manager [Mark Jones] and his team on many aspects of surgery life, where patients are directly involved. Some examples might be; how long it takes a patient to get through to the surgery on the telephone and whether the response to a call always results in the patient being given access to an appropriate person. If members of the group flag up problems the management team reports back on what remedial action is likely to be [or is being] taken, and so on.

The PPG meets bi-monthly on average on a Wednesday evening after surgery and for about 90 minutes. Tea & coffees are available but the positions are voluntary. I find it most interesting to learn of the many problems which are encountered by surgery staff and patients and those of us in the group enjoy the challenge of trying to help find reasonable answers. It is rewarding to know that if there are issues that are brought to our attention in patients contacting or using surgery facilities, then to a large extent the rectifying of these is in our hands by bringing them to the notice of the surgery team.

One final matter, have we got sufficient members? The answer is no, not quite, we could certainly use a couple more, and we need a bit more diversity. If you have been interested in what I have written here and can spare the time, do call the surgery and ask to talk to Patient Services Manager, Claire Houlihan.

Triage

We have been successfully operating a 'triage' system since the end of last year, but we have noticed some patients are not receiving the full benefits of this service.

If you have a pressing medical condition or require advice, you can be put onto the 'triage list'.

Doctors have instructed the receptionists to ask you the nature of the problem, so that the Triage Doctor can deal with your query more efficiently.

Once you've left your details with us, you will receive a telephone call from the surgery within 2 hours. The triage GP will decide if you need to be seen urgently, telephone you with advice or make an appropriate appointment with a Nurse Practitioner.

Saturday Appointments

We currently offer **pre-booked** appointments on Saturday mornings. Triage and walk-ins are only available Monday-Friday. If you require an urgent appointment or advice, you can go to the Urgent Care Centre and wait to be seen **OR** dial 111. You will be triaged over the telephone and if necessary an appointment can be made for you to be seen by a GP at the Urgent Care Centre. (Located in Jubilee Wing, Hemel Hempstead Hospital)

Bath oils and gels for dry skin conditions

There are lots of bath oils and shower gels (also known as moisturisers or emollients) available for people to use to treat large areas of dry skin, such as eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis. However, its actually more effective to apply moisturisers and ointments directly to skin soon after bathing or showering, rather than relying on bath oils and shower gels. By using only bath or shower oils, there is a real risk that people will under-treat the problem areas.

As well as being less effective at moisturising the skin, oils and shower gels coat the bath or shower tray and make it dangerously greasy and slippery. Its strongly advised to use a bathmat or grab rails to reduce the risk of slipping, as well as cleaning the bath or shower properly after use. Use moisturisers applied directly to the skin instead of soap (as soap strips the natural oils out of your skin).

GPs in Hertfordshire will not normally provide prescriptions for these products, because of concerns about the risk of falls and the evidence that these are less effective moisturisers than those applied directly to the skin. People who choose to continue to use them can buy them from their local chemist or supermarket where they are readily available.

For more information on moisturisers for dry skin visit www.nhs.uk

Paperwork

Please allow 72 hours for GP's to process medical certificates (such as sick notes) and 48 hours for non-urgent prescriptions.



Please do not call the surgery to check the progress of the paperwork, as this causes unnecessary extra calls and lengthy queues in reception.

Toys in waiting Area

Due to health and safety issues, we have removed the children's toys out of the waiting room area.



We encourage parents/carers to 'bring your own' toys and books in case you incur a wait.

Avoid the queues!

Please don't forget to use our automated check-in machine (located next to reception) whenever possible. It's really simple to use, just enter your gender and date of birth, finally press 'ok' to confirm your details are correct.



Valuables

Following a recent, but rare theft in the waiting area, we urge you to keep bags, phones and valuables with you at all times whilst visiting the surgery.



Fernville are unable to take any responsibility for items that are lost or stolen in the premises.

Carers Champion

A carer is someone of any age, who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.

Many people feel they are doing what anyone else would in the same situation; and just 'getting on with it'.

Claire Houlihan is our appointed Carers Champion. Her role is to ensure carers can gain access to information and support, receive carers health checks and annual flu vaccinations. As well as increasing awareness of carers' needs among GPs and within surgeries. For more details, please collect a carers pack from reception or speak to Claire.

Our Usual Opening Hours

Monday	8am-6.30pm
Tuesday	8am-8pm
Wednesday	8am-6.30pm
Thursday	8am-8pm
Friday	8am-6.30pm
Saturday	8am-12noon*

*For booked routine appointments only

Tel: 01442 213919
Fax: 01442 216433
www.fernillesurgery.org

Herts v Beds annual cricket match

The Annual 'friendly' one day cricket match was played on a lovely sunny evening back in June. Fernville's GP Partners and sons (and the only lady player Dr Priya Mangat) played in the Herts Doctor's Team. We brought home the cup again after another victory win.

Baby Congratulations!!

Fernville congratulates Dr. Anna Whiteford on the safe arrival of a little boy .



I O F Y Q B V C L H Y
Y P M P H V H C O N K
S H A Y F E V E R H B
E F X Y N A C C E S S
L Y S U R I V A T O R
S Y A D R U T A S P T
A W V O I W B Y E J O
E O E G A I R T L Z V
M R F V G O Z Y O I R
M B E D P S A P H K M
C N O I P M A H C O J

Waiting room WORDSEARCH:

Measles	Rotavirus
Cholesterol	Access
Hayfever	Heatwave
Saturdays	Triage
PPG	Champion

Doctor, Doctor.....

Patient – Doctor, Doctor! I think I've a little bit of lettuce sticking out of my ear

Doctor— Oh dear, I'm afraid it looks like just the tip of an iceberg.....

