

# Cherrymead Chat



Spring 2020

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**STAY AT HOME**

**PROTECT THE NHS**

**save lives**

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## Easter Bank Holidays

We'll be open as usual on Good Friday and Easter Monday this year due to the Coronavirus Emergency. Consultations are now normally by telephone or video.

## Repeat Prescriptions

Please try to re-order routine repeat prescriptions by email or via Patient Access Online during the lockdown. You should also nominate a pharmacy to which prescriptions can be sent electronically.

## Extended Hours

Please speak to the receptionist if you need a late evening appointment.

## Call 111 if:

- you have been self-isolating for suspected COVID-19 and are not better after 7 days or become more unwell or can't cope
- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service

## CORONAVIRUS SPECIAL ISSUE

This Spring has seen us all taken by surprise by a Global Pandemic of Coronavirus infection. It emerged from the Wuhan area of China and rapidly spread around the world. It causes a mild upper respiratory tract infection in most people.

In others it may cause a severe respiratory condition and eventual failure of multiple organs in the body. These people mainly have underlying medical conditions. A few do not. People with severe COVID-19 illness need emergency hospital admission. That may result in intensive care and life support.

Vaccine trials are now under way. Currently none are being given generally, as safety and effectiveness testing needs to be done first.

There are limited numbers of hospital beds, suitable trained staff and ventilators to look after extremely ill people with COVID-19 disease. The aim of the lockdown is to prevent the virus from spreading. It does that in droplets through the air from infected people to surfaces from which they can be picked up by other people. Some of these people may then develop severe illness resulting in death.

The droplets normally travel about a metre before dropping onto a surface. Keeping two metres away from another person is important. So is not touching surfaces such as counter tops, railings, and handles in public places. If you then touch your eyes, ears or mouth you may transfer germs to yourself. Wash your hands when you get home.

Clean shared surfaces such as table tops, door and flush handles, crockery and cutlery. Soap and water for 20 seconds is the preferred way of detaching coronavirus from your skin. If you don't have soap and water then use an alcohol-based sanitiser. Follow this link for more advice on hand washing:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

If you have to cough or blow your nose, do it into a sleeve or tissue. Roll the tissue up and bin it. Wash your hands afterwards.

**Catch It, Bin It, Kill It.**

# Coronavirus: What To Do If You Are Unwell

## **SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE COVID-19 DISEASE** **HOW LONG SHOULD YOU SELF-ISOLATE**

include :

- a high fever which you can feel by putting your hand on your cheek or chest which will feel hot
- coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more episodes in 24 hours or coughing more than usual if you already have a cough.

If you have these symptoms do not attend your GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital as you risk spreading the infection. Stay at home and visit the **NHS 111 Online Coronavirus Service**.

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

You will be taken through a series of questions and at the end advised on what to do next. **If you do not have internet access, then ring NHS 111.**

If you are worried about a **baby or child**, call 111 for advice. If you think they seem very unwell, something is seriously wrong or they are getting worse, ring 999.

**SELF-ISOLATION** is what you must do if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or live with someone who does.

- You must not leave your home except to exercise once a day – but stay at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from other people. You can use your garden if you have one.
- You must not go out to buy food or collect medicine – order them by phone or online, or ask someone else to drop them off at your home
- You must not have visitors, such as friends and family, in your home.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection you must self-isolate for at least 7 days and then until any fever has gone. The cough may go on for some weeks afterwards. So if you have a cough but no fever after 7 days then you no longer need to self-isolate.

If you do not have symptoms but live with someone who has, you must self-isolate for 14 days from the day *their* symptoms started. This allows a week for the virus to remain in your body before you then get symptoms.

Once you get symptoms, the beginning of a further 7 days of self-isolation begins even though it may go on beyond the 14 days you had planned. The person you live with and from whom you may have caught symptoms can stop self-isolating when their fever has gone.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SELF-ISOLATING**

You must still stay at home during the lockdown but may go out for the following limited reasons:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle – alone or with members of your household
- any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

You can find more information on self-isolation and staying at home by visiting

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

# Changes We've Made Due To COVID-19

Our surgery team and those at GP surgeries, hospitals and other healthcare providers across the country have been receiving a constant stream of information about COVID-19 from NHS England, Public Health England, Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the Care Quality Commission and the Local Medical Committee among other organisations. We have made some rapid changes to meet the clinical needs for managing this terrible disease. Thank you to all of our patients who have understood the need to do this. It is for the longer term good of the community.

The Reception Team, led by Penny Stanmore, has learnt a new way of **screening your calls** as they come in to surgery. This is essential to keep the surgery running as long as possible. It means we do not have to close down due to staff illness or the need to deep clean the surgery.

The **front door is now locked** to reduce the number of patients coming into the surgery. **If you have an appointment, please wait outside until you are called in.** Otherwise please ring the bell to the right of the door. Our receptionist will speak to you to make sure you need to come in.

The GPs and our Paramedic will continue to assess all calls or online requests for appointments as they have before. **They will now normally be by telephone or, if you have a smartphone, by video consultation which will not be recorded.**

**We will only ask you to come in to the surgery for a face to face appointment or visit you at home if essential.** Then we will be wearing Personal Protective Equipment even if you do not have coronavirus symptoms. This is to reduce transmission of the virus through the community.

**.Non-urgent blood tests, check ups, family planning and screening appointments in**

**surgery have been cancelled until further notice.**

**We still hold antenatal clinics, seeing mothers and babies for postnatal checks. We also continue to hold childhood immunisation clinics. These are essential for health and well-being.**

**As few prescriptions as possible should be requested or collected from surgery in person.** You can email requests through our website or Patient Access Online. Make sure that you nominate a pharmacy to which we can send prescriptions electronically. This should be as near to your home as possible. Then you do not need to make a long trip or use public transport. We will only prescribe as much medication as we have issued for you before. We may only prescribe a small quantity. The guidelines which we follow are issued by NHS England.

**Our prescription turnaround time is now 5 days** due to the increased volume of requests and problems pharmacies are now experiencing in sourcing medication. Please order a week before you are due to run out of medication to be on the safe side.

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19, please visit the NHS 111 Online site, where you can follow the symptom pathway and have an electronic **Isolation Certificate** issued to send your employer.

We will SMS you other sickness certificates as an attachment. Please give us consent to send you SMS messages as this is now the easiest way for us to send you information including attachments.

**Wash Your Hands Regularly With Soap And Water Or Alcohol-Based Rub For At Least 20 Seconds. And Dry Them Thoroughly**

Due to cancellation of routine outpatient appointments, we **cannot refer patients to hospitals for non-urgent conditions.** Whenever possible we will send you self-care advice. We understand how frustrating this is. Please do not be abusive towards members of our team when they explain this as it is beyond their control.

**There will be a delay in completing private work, for example reports and holiday cancellation forms.** We will complete these as soon as possible after NHS work is completed.

We will try to respond to your complaints within our normal period. However in the event that we can't do this due to increasing clinical workload, we will inform you of this in advance.

Once again thank you for co-operating with us in this national effort to prevent Novel Coronavirus from spreading and to save lives.



## NOT CORONAVIRUS NEWS

Any McMillan recently joined us as our Practice Manager. Any has over twenty years of experience in Management and also in Accountancy. She has worked in both hospital and general practice settings. We are enjoying working with her and learning new and better ways of working from her.

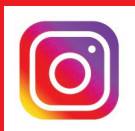
# Social Media

We're now on three social media platforms which are updated daily with information which we think will be useful to you.

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



<https://twitter.com/CherrymeadS>



cherrymead\_surgery

For more information on how you can get involved with the Patient Reference Group come and meet us at one of our regular Meet The PRG sessions or email us : [prgatcherrymead@gmail.com](mailto:prgatcherrymead@gmail.com)

**WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY SAFE AND HEALTHY EASTER.**