



Budleigh Salterton Medical Centre

Patient Group

NEWSLETTER: SUMMER 2021 – ISSUE 60

OPENING HOURS: Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm, Tel: 01395 441212
OUT OF HOURS: Dial **999** for life-threatening problems and Dial **111** for non-urgent advice
WEBSITE: www.budleighsaltertonmedicalcentre.co.uk

IN THIS ISSUE: Message from PPG Chairperson; Blood Pressure; What Can I Do To Reduce My Blood Pressure?; Covid-19 Services; NHS App; Community Pharmacy Consultation Service; Bereavement

So many people in the town have been saddened by the sudden and tragic loss of Nurse Sam Horne. She was well known, not only through her work at the Medical Centre, but also through her many acts of kindness to those who needed help. Her cheery smile and caring approach will be sadly missed.

The Budleigh Medical Centre team has, like so many GP practices over the past 18 months, had to flex and respond to many changing demands. The Covid vaccination programme has been very successful but has relied upon significant commitment from the team to both schedule and deliver the programme as well as continue to provide day to day care for patients. This commitment will continue as both the booster and flu jab programmes are now being planned. The Medical Centre team have endeavoured to cater for the many and varied needs of our town's residents with cheerfulness and patience in spite of being the recipients of a significant rise in verbal abuse. Concern has been expressed by the Devon Local Medical Council at the impact this abuse is having upon GP services across the county as it is resulting in unprecedented staff resignations which of course leads to further pressure upon the service.

e-Consult, the electronic system to help patients contact GPs, has been more successful for the younger residents of the town but can be challenging for those of us who are of more mature years! The system has its place as one of the means of getting medical advice but the Centre still offers face to face consultations with a GP and 50% of contacts are still face to face. However, I think it is fair to say that we will not go back to the days of simply booking an appointment as the first means of contact, the triage systems currently in place will probably remain. In addition for more minor advice it may be suggested that you book an appointment with the local pharmacist of your choice. This is presently being piloted in Exmouth and more widely across the country, so far with good results. You will still be able to see a doctor if you feel it necessary but sometimes a pharmacist is well qualified to help you and this may prove to be faster or more convenient for you.

The PPG is always glad to hear from patients registered at the Medical Centre, our email address is d-ccg.budleighppg@nhs.net or just drop a letter into the white postbox by the Surgery entrance.

With good wishes for the summer,
Sue Lake Chairperson, Budleigh Medical Centre PPG

PATIENT GROUP COMMITTEE

Sue Lake
Chairperson

David Forward
Vice Chairperson

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Secretary

Peter Frean
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Michael Rice
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Richard Waller
Judy Wright
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CONTACT US

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BLOOD PRESSURE

WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE? When your heart beats, it pumps blood round your body to give it the energy and oxygen it needs. As the blood moves, it pushes against the sides of the blood vessels. The strength of this pushing is your blood pressure. If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your arteries (and your heart) and this may lead to heart attacks and strokes.

The pressure of the blood flowing through your arteries changes as your heart beats. The pressure in your arteries will be at its highest when your heart is contracting and pumping blood around your body and lowest as it relaxes while it fills with blood before pumping again. These highest and lowest numbers are recorded as your blood pressure.

WHAT DO THE NUMBERS MEAN? Every blood pressure reading consists of two numbers or levels. They are shown as one number on top of the other.

The first (or top) number is your systolic blood pressure. It is the highest level your blood pressure reaches when your heart beats. The second (or bottom) number is your diastolic blood pressure. It is the lowest level your blood pressure reaches as your heart relaxes between beats.

Normal blood pressure is between 90/60 and 140/90. If you have a reading of 140/90 or more, you have high blood pressure. People with a blood pressure reading under 90/60 are usually regarded as having low blood pressure.

WHAT IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE? High blood pressure – or hypertension – means that your blood pressure is consistently higher than the recommended level.

It is not usually something you can feel or notice, but over time if not treated, your heart may become enlarged making your heart pump less effectively. This can lead to heart failure.

There isn't always an explanation for the cause of high blood pressure, but these can play a part:

- not doing enough physical activity
- being overweight or obese
- having too much salt in your diet
- regularly drinking too much alcohol or
- having a family history of high blood pressure
- stress

Even if you don't have high blood pressure, making some simple lifestyle changes may help prevent you developing it in the future.

More information from the NHS about blood pressure can be found online at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/>

WHAT IS LOW BLOOD PRESSURE? Low blood pressure - or hypotension - is where blood pressure in your arteries is abnormally low. Naturally low blood pressure is unlikely to cause symptoms and is normally nothing to worry about. But if your blood pressure drops too low, it can restrict the amount of blood flowing to your brain and other vital organs, which can cause unsteadiness, dizziness or fainting.

See your GP if you experience any symptoms of low blood pressure and are concerned.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET MY BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKED? If you don't have high blood pressure you should get your blood pressure checked at least once every five years. However, as you get older your blood pressure is likely to increase and you should be checked more often.

If you are already being treated for high blood pressure and have concerns about it, you should arrange a telephone consultation with your doctor.

WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY BLOOD PRESSURE?

If your doctor or nurse says you have high blood pressure, they are likely to encourage you to make some lifestyle changes to help reduce it.

If your blood pressure is very high or these lifestyle changes do not reduce it enough, your doctor is likely to prescribe you medication to control it and to reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

If you are already taking medication for high blood pressure then it is important that your blood pressure is monitored annually to ensure it is maintained at the target level.



If you would like to explore these lifestyle changes, such as weight loss and moving more, please do have a look at: <https://onestep.org.uk/> or scan the QR code using your smartphone.

COVID-19 SERVICES

You can **BOOK AND MANAGE** your vaccination appointments through this website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

An **NHS COVID Pass** shows your coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination details or test results. This is your COVID-19 status. You may be asked to show your pass to travel abroad, or at events and venues in England asking for proof of your COVID-19 status.

<https://covid-status.service.nhsx.nhs.uk/>

An **NHS COVID Pass Letter** can be requested after having your 2nd dose of the vaccine, or after a single-dose Janssen vaccine. You may need to wait 5 working days so your record will be up to date. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-pass/get-your-covid-pass-letter/>

Always check the entry requirements for the country or the venue you're visiting:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-pass/>

If you do not have access to the internet then please contact 119 who will be able to assist you.

If 119 are unable to help then the **Devon CCG Vaccination Support** can be contacted via email at d-ccg.devonvaccinationsupport@nhs.net or via telephone on 01752 398836



If you have access to the internet via a smartphone or tablet, please **download** the **NHS APP** so you can manage appointments, order repeat prescriptions, get health and safety advice, view your medical record securely.

A smear test
lasts **5** minutes.

5

The impact of cervical cancer
lasts a lifetime.

Attend your smear test.
Reduce your risk.



COMMUNITY PHARMACY CONSULTATION SERVICE

The practice is pleased to announce that we will be taking part in a new service from 23rd August 2021 which will offer our patients personal appointments with a local pharmacist to treat minor health conditions.

When you contact the surgery regarding a minor condition, where appropriate, our receptionist will offer you the option of having an appointment with your community pharmacist.

Community pharmacists are highly qualified and experienced in providing clinical advice and care (including recommending over the counter treatments) for minor injuries and conditions. They will offer you a consultation via the phone, or in person, which can be arranged quickly and at a time to suit you

In a private area of the pharmacy the pharmacist will take your medical history, ask about your symptoms and any current medication you might be taking. Following the consultation, the pharmacist will offer you self-care advice and if appropriate, offer you an over-the-counter product. The pharmacist will make a record of the outcome of your consultation and send it to your GP.

If having given you advice/treatment, your pharmacist identifies you need further specialist help your pharmacist, will be able to refer you back to your GP, or onto another health service for support.

Advantages for patients using the new GP Community Pharmacy consultation service are:

- Community pharmacies are local and can offer you the same consultation outcome at a time that is more convenient for you either on the phone, in person or through a video consultation
- If the pharmacist thinks you need to see the GP or other health professional, they will help arrange an urgent appointment for you
- This will help ensure as patients you receive the right care, in the right place, with the right person and at the right time
- Introducing this new service, frees up GP appointments for those people with more complex symptoms who really need to see a GP



If you have suffered a recent bereavement, please take time when you are ready, to visit our website where you will find practical advice and also information on support available.

SAM HORNE



The medical centre and many people in the town have been saddened and shocked by the sudden and tragic death of our colleague, Sam Horne, on 9th July 2021.

She was known not only through her nursing role at the medical centre but for her many acts of kindness in the community. We will miss her immensely.

Sam's funeral took place on Friday 6th August and it was apparent at just how many lives Sam had touched with her energy, enthusiasm and passion for life.

Many of our patients have contacted the surgery wanting to donate to a charity in Sam's name. At her family's wishes this money was donated to the Devon Air Ambulance on the day of her funeral.