



October 2009 Edition

Eastham Group Practice News

Welcome to our latest newsletter which we publish periodically in an effort to ensure all our patients are fully aware of the services we provide and our continuous efforts to improve them.

If you have any suggestions for items you would like included in future editions, or any suggestions, as to how the service we provide could be improved even more, then please do not hesitate to share your thoughts with any member of the Practice team

Here's hoping you stay warm and well this winter

Dr Karalie Bush, Dr Michael Burke, Dr Jane Pigott,

Dr Maragaret Porteous, Dr Karen Cooke and Dr Paula Cowan

Seasonal Flu Clinics

Our annual invitations for patients to attend for seasonal flu vaccinations have recently been mailed to those patients who meet the following criteria;

- ✓ Are aged over 65

Are aged under 65 but who are in one of the following "at risk" groups;

- ✓ Have any ongoing lung disease
- ✓ Have chronic heart disease
- ✓ Have a serious kidney disease
- ✓ Have a serious liver disease
- ✓ Have diabetes
- ✓ Have a poor immune system
- ✓ Live in a nursing home or long stay residential care accommodation
- ✓ Are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person.

If you receive such an invite letter then please book yourself into a clinic for your vaccination ASAP

National Patients Survey

Some of you may shortly receive, at home, an NHS survey asking for your views on the service we provide.

The results from the previous survey conducted in April shows that;

- ✓ 7 out of 10 of our patients surveyed were able to get an appointment within 48 hours
- ✓ 5 out of 10 were able to book an appointment in advance.

For Information, of the 850 Doctors appointments we offer each week, whilst most are book on the day, a number can be booked in advance. In particular this applies to those appointments we now offer on Monday nights from 6.30-8.30 and on Saturday mornings from 8.30-12.30.

Swine Flu

Please be aware that the seasonal flu vaccine is **NOT** a vaccination against Swine flu.

Our understanding is that whilst the progress of Swine flu slowed over the summer months, in recent weeks reported cases have shown an accelerated increase.

The Department of Health has plans, if the spread of Swine flu continues to accelerate, for a mass vaccination programme that would start with "Vaccinations for the vulnerable" which would seek to vaccinate people in the following groups

- ✓ Between 6 months and 65 years who are in a seasonal flu "at risk" group
- ✓ Pregnant women
- ✓ Household contact of people with compromised immune systems
- ✓ Aged over 65 **AND** are in a seasonal flu "at risk" group

Prevailing advice is that whilst the virus has so far been mild for most people, for others it has been more serious. Whilst, we can not predict the virus will develop history shows us that such virus start as mild before changing into something far more serious.

Our present understanding is that the vaccination will be two jabs each administered a number of weeks apart.

Our Doctors Strongly Recommend that any patients in these at risk groups receive these jabs, if and when any Swine flu vaccination programme begins

More information should be available in November and we will then communicate those details to those patients in the "at risk" groups. So, if you are in an "at risk" group please keep visiting our website for further information. We will also have information posters in the surgery and we will also include messages with repeat prescriptions.

Website - easthamgrouppractice.co.uk