



Summer 2007 Edition

Eastham Group Practice News

A Healthier England From 1st July

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From 1st July 2007 virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England will become smokefree. A smokefree England will ensure a healthier environment, so everyone can socialise, relax, travel, shop and work free from secondhand smoke

We as a Practice are keen to help all patients who wish to stop smoking and who may now see this change in legislation as a catalyst for personal change. Some other reasons why stopping is a good idea include :

- The benefits start as soon as you stop
- Carbon monoxide clears from your body in 1-2 days
- Taste and smell return
- Breathing improves and bronchial tubes relax
- Within 3-9 months lungs clear-out mucus and tar which has accumulated over the years
- Risk of heart disease is half that of a smoker in 5 years of stopping
- Circulation improves in a few weeks
- 10 years after stopping your risk of lung cancer is half that of a smoker
- One financial incentive could be that, at today's prices, and if you are a 20 a day smoker you will spend more than £37,000 on this habit over the next 20 years. Think of all the things that money could have bought holidays, cars a home -. what a waste.

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ho can help ?

Firstly you **MUST WANT** to STOP as it will be a personal challenge, as cravings will occur at regular intervals on stopping, but usually last only a few minutes. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) reduces cravings and other withdrawal symptoms. Support is available from the following:

- ✓ We run a smoking cessation clinic so please ask at Reception for more information
- ✓ As our resources are limited and there can be a waiting list for our in-practice service Reception can also provide a list of other smoking cessation clinics in this locality
- ✓ Call smokeline 0800848484
- ✓ Log-onto www.quitnet.org, or www.gosmokefree.co.uk

Dr Steve Williams

Have your say



Our Patients Forum

As you may know we have a "Patients Forum" which is a group of patients that meets with the Practice Manager and a GP periodically to share information and feedback on the service the surgery provides. We are always looking for more patients to join this group. If you are interested please leave your contact details at Reception and Gerry Devine, the Practice Manager will then give you a call and have a chat about what is involved.

The National Programme For Information Technology(NPFIT).....

The NHS is planning a new computer system for your medical records in the near future. This programme is called NPFIT. We are keen that our patients understand the pros and cons of this and so have produced a leaflet aimed at doing this. If you do want more information please ask at Reception for a copy of this leaflet

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A warm welcome and a fond farewell.....

Christine one of the most experienced members of our Reception team has decided to retire, at the end of June, after nearly 15 years service with the practice.

I am sure that all patients would like to join, with her colleagues, in wishing Christine good luck into the future.

Our team has recently been joined by **Jackie**, who is a PCT Pharmacist assigned to this Practice. Jackie is presently doing one clinic of Medication Reviews every Tuesday afternoon

You and Choose and Book.....

This Practice is fully committed to offering patient **choice** at the point of any specialist referral.

We seek to do this by utilising the NHS's Choose and Book system. Our approach to this is that if during a consultation with a GP a GP refers a Patient to a specialist the GP ensures the patient understands they have **choice**. The patient will then be asked to discuss this further, before they leave the surgery, with one of our medical secretaries.

Awareness Raising

June sees a couple of national awareness raising events which echo themes which the Practice is keen to support these being;

Carers week 11-17 June "My life as a carer"

The purpose of this being to help raise awareness of the impact of being a carer. Especially providing information on practical considerations for carers themselves such as;

Financial - Planning, allowances and benefits

Career - Flexible hours, earnings and pension

Social life/relationships - The impact of this 24/7 commitment on energy and the potential lack of focus on self

Health - make sure you look after yourself as well - health checks for carers.

Some literature on some of the above is available on request from our Reception Team.

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National Falls Awareness Day - 26th June

The theme for this year's annual event being "**Getting out and about**". The objective being to help us all understand that as we get older we need to identify opportunities to take part in physical activity, which is essential for good health. Whilst always being aware of potential hazards inside and outside our home that can increase our risk of falling

Remembering that

- **Falls** are **NOT** an inevitable part of getting older.
- **Act** now to prevent problems in the future.
- **It's** never too late to start reducing the risk of a fall.
- **Everyone** can actively improve their strength and balance.

Some pamphlets on the above will be available from our Reception Team on request on the day

Food for thought.....

The greatest wealth is health.

Virgil

Here Comes The Sun (hopefully.....)

Nice though it is to have a Hollywood-style suntan to show off, spending hours in the sun trying to get one can do more harm than good, and leave you looking more like a lobster than an A-lister. Sun damage particularly increases your risk of developing skin cancer, especially malignant melanoma, which affects 8,000 people per year in the UK, and causes 1,800 deaths.

The best advice therefore is to:

- ✓ Stay in the shade between 11am and 2pm, when the sun is at it's hottest.
- ✓ Cover up, and wear a hat and sunglasses.
- ✓ Use at least a Factor 15 suncream, and re-apply it regularly.
- ✓ Drink plenty of soft drinks to avoid dehydration.