

# Beechwood Medical Practice Newsletter Autumn 2018

## SEASONAL FLU CAMPAIGN

If you are aged 65 or over, are pregnant, are a carer, healthcare worker or you have a chronic health condition, you are eligible to attend the surgery for a seasonal flu vaccination. We are offering our patients a range of weekday and Saturday morning appointments throughout the autumn. Vaccine stock is due to arrive at the practice by mid September.



We strongly recommend that you have your vaccination if you are eligible to have one. However if you make the decision not to accept it please contact us to let us know so that someone else can be offered the vaccine and so that we do not continue to contact you to ask you to attend this year. If you are calling us to discuss the flu vaccine please try to call later in the day when the phones will be less busy. Also if you have made an appointment that you cannot then attend please don't forget to call us to rebook. Each year we have significant numbers of wasted appointments for flu vaccinations. A phone call on 0117 9082360 if you need to rebook or cancel would be greatly appreciated. If

you have access to online services you can book or cancel a flu appointment online.

The vaccine will also be made available at the surgery to children aged 2 & 3 years (birth dates 1.9.2014 – 31.8.2016). The vaccine will be given as a nasal spray. We will invite your child to attend if they fall into this targeted age range. This vaccine contains a highly purified porcine derivative product.

Children of appropriate age for school years reception, one, two, three and four will have a service commissioned by NHS England, in schools across the South West.

For further information please look at the NHS website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## NHS BOWEL SCREENING PROGRAMMES

Most people will be familiar with the national breast cancer and cervical cancer screening programmes, please see the attached links for more information or pick up one of the information leaflets from our displays in the waiting room.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-cancer/>

Less people seem to know about the national bowel cancer screening programme or what to do if you have any worrying bowel symptoms that might need checking out:

### Bowel Screening

There are 2 types of test used in NHS bowel cancer screening:

- [bowel scope screening](#) – a test where a thin, flexible tube with a camera at the end is used to look for and remove any polyps inside your bowel
- [home testing kit \(the FOB test\)](#) – a kit you use to collect small samples of your poo and post them to a laboratory so they can be checked for tiny amounts of blood (which could be caused by cancer)

If these tests find anything unusual, you might be asked to have further tests to confirm or rule out cancer.

## When it's offered

NHS bowel cancer screening is only offered to people aged 55 or over, as this is when you're more likely to get bowel cancer:

- if you're 55, you'll automatically be invited for a one-off [bowel scope screening test](#), if it's available in your area
- if you're 60 to 74, you'll automatically be invited to do a [home testing kit](#) every 2 years
- if you're 75 or over, you can ask for a home testing kit every 2 years by calling the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60

If you're too young for screening but are worried about a family history of bowel cancer, speak to your GP for advice.

Always see a GP if you have [symptoms of bowel cancer](#) at any age – don't wait to have a screening test.

## Symptoms to be aware of

The symptoms of bowel cancer can be subtle and don't necessarily make you feel ill. However, it's worth trying simple treatments for a short time to see if they get better.

More than 90% of people with bowel cancer have one of the following combinations of symptoms:

- **a persistent change in bowel habit** – going more often, with looser stools and sometimes tummy (abdominal) pain
- **blood in the stools without other piles (haemorrhoids) symptoms** – this makes it unlikely the cause is haemorrhoids
- **abdominal pain, discomfort or bloating always brought on by eating** – sometimes resulting in a reduction in the amount of food eaten and weight loss

Constipation, where you pass harder stools less often, is rarely caused by serious bowel conditions.

Most people with these symptoms don't have bowel cancer however if you have one or more of the symptoms of bowel cancer and they persist for more than four weeks, you should see your GP.

## NATIONAL PATIENT SURVEY

The most recent results of the NHS National Patient Survey were published in August 2018. These results reflected data gathered in the first quarter of this year Jan – Mar 2018. The survey is run by an independent survey organisation MORI and they send out questionnaires to a randomised sample of patients who have visited a GP surgery within the previous six months.

**Beechwood Medical Practice were very pleased to see that in the question “Overall, how would you describe your experience of your GP practice?” 96% of our patients rated us as good or very good. (local average 85%, national average 84%). This placed us as a top practice out of 88 practices in the Bristol, South Gloucestershire & north Somerset areas.**

### Other highlights were:

98% of our respondents felt their needs were met during their last general practice appointment. (local average 95%, national average 95%)

95% of our respondents find the receptionists at this GP practice helpful. (local average 91%, national average 90%)

94% of our respondents say the healthcare professional they saw or spoke to was good at giving them enough time during their last general practice appointment. (local average 88%, national average 87%)

86% of our respondents say they have had enough support to manage their long-term condition(s). (local average 81%, national average 79%)

75% of our respondents are satisfied with the general practice appointment times available. (local average 65%, national average 66%)

### Areas where we could improve

42% of our respondents get to see or speak to their preferred GP when they would like to. (local average 46%, national average 50%)

65% of our respondents find it easy to get through to this GP practice by phone. (local average 69%, national average 70%)

To read the full survey results including any other GP practice surgery you can visit <https://gp-patient.co.uk/>