

Western Avenue Surgery

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Newsletter Date :

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In this issue:

1. **Breast cancer awareness (1st – 31st October)**
2. **Stoptober (1st – 31st October)**
3. **National Cholesterol Month (1st – 31st October)**
4. **Child minor illness/accidents**
5. **Flu vaccination**
6. **Household emergency kit**
7. **Reducing alcohol consumption**
8. **Shingles**
9. **Baby loss (9th – 15th October)**



Breast cancer awareness (1st – 31st October)

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The risk from breast cancer varies between individuals. Many people have been diagnosed during the pandemic, and we need more research into prevention and treatments. For some people, they will be diagnosed at a young age. CoppaFeel, founded by a sufferer Kris, and her sister, is a charity dedicated to the awareness of breast cancer. Kris was diagnosed at the age of 23, and CoppaFeel is making a huge difference. They'll even send you a reminder text to check your boobs or pecs each month.

If you're concerned about breast cancer, or have recently been diagnosed, Cancer Research UK has some really useful information.

<https://breastcancernow.org/get-involved/breast-cancer-awareness-month>

<https://coppafeel.org>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer>

Stoptober (1st – 31st October)

Quitting smoking could be the best thing you ever do for your health. Many people who smoke think it's too hard to give up. If you manage to quit for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good. 28 days is manageable, and with the cost of cigarettes at a high of around £10 per pack of 20, you could find yourself almost £300 better off by the end of the month. Just think what that £300 would buy! It's not only that, after one year, a quitter has halved their risk of a heart attack compared to a smoker.



<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

<https://www.blf.org.uk/take-action/campaign-with-us/stoptober>

National Cholesterol Month (1st – 31st October)

If you're overweight, a smoker, you drink alcohol, or have a sedentary lifestyle, you could be at risk of high cholesterol. Having high cholesterol can make you more at risk of a stroke or heart attack.

Foods can help you to lower your cholesterol naturally. Making small changes to your diet can make big changes to your health.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-cholesterol/>

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/healthy-living/cholesterol-lowering-foods>

Child minor illness/accidents

It can be difficult to know whether your baby is just under the weather or seriously unwell.

The brilliant Baby Check app by the Lullaby Trust helps parents to know when they need to seek help.



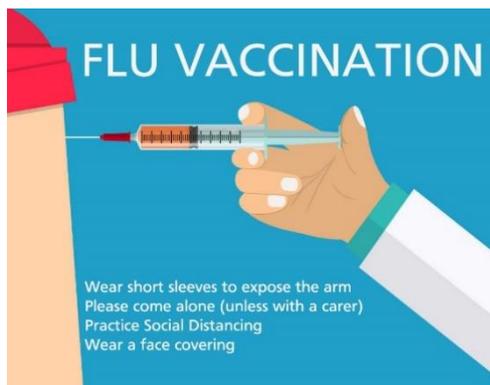
If your children are no longer babies, it can be difficult to know when you need to be seriously concerned about their health. Devon CCG have developed the HANDi Paediatric App to help parents develop confidence in managing minor conditions.

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/baby-check-app/>

<https://devonccg.nhs.uk/health-services/children-and-young-people/handi-app>

Flu vaccination

With COVID-19 still circulating, it's important to try and reduce the number of cases of flu in the community. It's possible to catch both flu and coronavirus at the same time, and this



can

increase your risk of serious consequences.

There are several groups who are eligible for a free flu vaccination from their GP. If you're unsure whether you qualify, please ask us.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53847025>

Household emergency kit

It's much easier to deal with emergencies when you're prepared. If you've never thought about what should be in your first-aid kit, now might be a good time to check.

First aid isn't the only type of household emergency that might present itself; the Red Cross has a comprehensive list of emergency supplies.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/what-should-i-keep-in-my-first-aid-kit/>

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/prepare-an-emergency-kit>

Reducing alcohol consumption

If you've ever worried that you may be drinking too much alcohol and some of the following signs seem familiar to you, you might want to consider cutting back on your alcohol consumption.

If you've decided that now would be a good time to cut down on your alcohol

consumption, the NHS has some handy hints and tips to help you succeed:
<https://riahealth.com/2020/06/16/signs-you-should-cut-back-on-drinking/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/tips-on-cutting-down-alcohol/>

Shingles

Shingles is caused by the chickenpox virus, and while you can't give shingles to someone else, you can give them chickenpox if they haven't had it before.



Shingles appears as a painful rash and can vary between individuals depending on their skin tone, but if the rash appears on both sides of the body, it's unlikely to be shingles. Shingles can be extremely painful, and vaccination can help you to avoid the worst side effects. If you're currently in your 70s, you should be eligible for the shingles vaccination if you haven't already had it.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/shingles/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/shingles-vaccination/>

Baby loss (9th – 15th October)

The impact of losing a baby can be enormous. It can be incredibly difficult to talk about. Join Tommy's in a wave of light to remember families who have lost much-wanted babies.



If you've lost a pregnancy through miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancies, during birth or shortly afterwards, the Miscarriage Association and Tommy's can be fantastic sources of support.

<https://www.tommys.org/get-involved/campaigns/baby-loss-awareness-week>

<https://www.tommys.org/baby-loss-support>

<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk>