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Newsletter

October 2023

National Cholesterol Month, 1st-31st October

If you're aged 40-74, at risk of familial hypercholesterolemia, are at high risk of heart disease, have had a previous diagnosis of heart disease, or are taking cholesterol-lowering medications, you should find out what your cholesterol levels are like.

If you're looking to reduce your cholesterol levels, there are some gentle diet modifications and lifestyle changes you can make to give you the best chance of ensuring healthy cholesterol levels. To find out more, see the Heart UK website below.

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/cholesterol/getting-a-cholesterol-test>

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/healthy-living/introduction>

Stoptober, 1st-31st October

Smoking causes 7/10 cases of lung cancer. Stoptober (or stop during October) is the month when people come together to try to quit smoking. Quitting smoking is not only good for your health, but it will also save you significant amounts of money.

If you smoke ten a day, you could save over £180 if you didn't smoke during October. If you smoke 20 a day, that increases to almost £360. With the cost of living increasing all the time, there's never been a better time to quit. After a year, you could be almost £4,400 better off if you currently smoke 20 a day and make the decision to quit. You might be surprised at how the cost adds up over your lifetime.

If you quit smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to stop smoking altogether. 28 days is manageable, isn't it?

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/what-are-the-health-risks-of-smoking/>

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

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/stopping-smoking/calculate-my-savings>

<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/living-with/stop-smoking>

Breast cancer awareness, 1st-31st October

We often think that the sign of breast cancer is a lump on the breast, which it can be; however, there are



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also other signs that could indicate something is wrong. These changes could be as simple as a rash or a slight change in the appearance of the nipple.

There are 12 symptoms of breast cancer. Do you know what all 12 would be? Know Your Lemons has a fantastic and easy-to-understand set of graphics which explain what's normal in breast tissue. Breast cancer is rare in men, but can occur – more often if you're over the age of 60.

If you're a trans-man, trans-woman, or identify as non-binary, your risk of cancer and screening for some cancers may be affected. You can help to ensure you don't miss any vital screening opportunities. This guidance from Cancer Research is helpful in determining any altered risk or screening changes.

If you notice any changes, it's important to make an appointment with your GP practice.

<https://breastcancernow.org/information-support/check-your-breasts/learn-signs-breast-cancer>

<https://knowyourlemons.org>

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

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/ab...reening/trans-and-non-binary-cancer-screening>

Dyslexia awareness, 3rd-9th October

If your child is struggling with reading, writing or spelling, it might mean that they have dyslexia. If you're concerned, you can speak to the SENDCO at your child's school as the first step towards supporting them.

If you've ever wondered if dyslexia may be the cause of your, or your child's, difficulties with reading or writing, you may be able to gain some insight into whether this is likely here:

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

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/adults/am-i-dyslexic/signs-of-dyslexia>

World Menopause Day, 18th October

18th October is World Menopause Day. This year the focus is on '**Menopause: Misinformation and Management**'. There will be a programme launching on the 18th about the misinformation surrounding the menopause. To find out more and to access the programme, you can click the link below.

Menopause symptoms are wide-ranging and can affect your daily life. Some women will notice no symptoms while others will experience debilitating symptoms. Let's shine a light on the effect of the menopause on women and support them through this time and beyond.



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<https://thebms.org.uk/publications/world-menopause-day-2023/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqol5x3MXjU>

World Osteoporosis Day, 20th October

Osteoporosis increases the risk of broken bones (fractures). Do you know whether you're at risk of osteoporosis? Risk factors include age, disease, sex and medication.

Women are more prone to osteoporosis than men, but that isn't the only thing that increases your risk. Medication, your lifestyle and family history can affect your risk of osteoporosis. In the UK, osteoporosis affects over 3,000,000 people, so it's important to check the symptoms and contact your GP practice if you're worried that you may be suffering from osteoporosis. You can assess your risk of osteoporosis with this quick quiz.

<https://riskcheck.osteoporosis.foundation>

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

Psoriasis awareness, 29th October

Psoriasis affects 2% of the UK population. Psoriasis is more than just dry skin; it causes flaky patches of skin which form scales. Treatments vary and sufferers may find the condition painful or embarrassing to live with. If you have psoriasis or are worried that you may have symptoms, you can check the NHS website to find out more information.

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

World Stroke Day, 29th October

One in four people will have a stroke in their lifetime, so it's important that you know the signs of a stroke and what you can do to help. 90% of strokes could be prevented by addressing the risk factors associated with strokes.

<https://www.world-stroke.org/world-stroke-day-campaign/world-stroke-day-2023>

The importance of childhood immunisation

Vaccinations against some diseases are provided for free by the NHS. Ensuring you have the vaccinations you're eligible for means you'll have the best possible protection against illness. You can help by ensuring you have the vaccinations you need, and ensuring that anyone you care for has them too. Vaccinations provided by the NHS follow a schedule to ensure the best long-term protection against disease.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>



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<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/why-vaccination-is-safe-and-important/>

Childhood minor illnesses / accidents

Most childhood illnesses are self-limiting and resolve within a few days. But it can be hard to know what steps to take if your child has an illness or accident. You can use the NHS website to try and identify what steps you may need to take, and you can use the online NHS 111 service for more personal advice.

The Lullaby Trust have an app you can download which will help you determine whether you need to seek help for your baby's illness.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/...aid/what-to-do-if-your-child-has-an-accident/>

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

Mental health and keeping in touch

If you're struggling with your mental health, there's plenty of support available. We're ready and willing to listen, but we understand you may want support from elsewhere or when we're closed. If you follow the link below, you can access several websites or online chats that you can use when you're feeling down.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/looking-after-your-mental-health>

Preparing for winter

Those under the age of five, or over 65, on a low income, who have a disability, are pregnant, or with a health condition are more vulnerable during cold weather. There are simple ways to help you stay safe, warm and healthy. This page provides a list of suggestions and provides links to available help with the cost of heating during the winter.

With ongoing climate change, it's likely that extreme weather will occur again this winter. Ensure you're prepared by thinking about the types of things you might need to see you through a storm if the power is cut off at home.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well/>

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

Flu and COVID-19 vaccination

Influenza will shortly be circulating. If you're eligible for a flu vaccination, please make an appointment with us to have yours early in the season.



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We've contacted patients who are eligible for a flu vaccination. If you've previously had a flu vaccination provided by the NHS and we've not contacted you yet, please get in touch to check whether you're eligible.

Additionally, some patients will be eligible for a vaccination against COVID-19. If you're eligible, we'll be in touch to arrange your appointment. If you haven't heard from us, you can check your eligibility here.

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

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination/getting-a-covid-19-vaccine/>

Shingles

If you're aged 70 to 79, you're eligible for a shingles vaccination if you haven't already had one. Shingles can be very painful, so if you're eligible for vaccination and haven't yet had it, please contact us so that we can book you an appointment.

Shingles can be very painful, and it can be dangerous to others if they have low or no immunity to shingles. If you think you may have shingles, please contact NHS 111 or your GP practice.

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

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