

## **Newsletter** **February 2024**

### **International Prenatal Infection Month**

There are a number of infections that can affect your unborn baby. February is International Prenatal Infection Month and it's important to raise awareness of infections that can affect your unborn child if you're pregnant, but also to be aware that if you catch an infection, that infection may pose a risk to others.

Some foods are best avoided while you're pregnant or they need to be cooked in a certain way to ensure they're safe. Making sure you check the guidance thoroughly can help keep you and your baby safe from some of the most common prenatal infections.

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/infections-that-may-affect-your-baby/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/foods-to-avoid/>

### **Keeping active when you don't feel like it**

The weather in the UK can be cold and miserable during the winter, and days are shorter so exercising can seem challenging. It's still freezing outside, but that's no reason to step back on your exercise. These helpful articles contain some brilliant hints and tips to help you stay motivated during the cold winter months.

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeand...eep-exercising-in-the-cold-dark-winter-months>

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-living/fitness/easy-winter-exercise-tips-help-you-stay-fit/>

### **Depression**

Depression is more than a passing low mood. Mild depression can mean you're unable to enjoy your normal activities, while severe depression can make you feel suicidal or as if life isn't worth living. Getting outdoors and doing exercise are some of the well-known tips for helping mood, but are there others?

If you're struggling with feelings of depression, please ask for an appointment.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/depression-in-adults/overview/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/cope-with-depression/>

### **Childhood obesity**

Overweight children have an increased chance of becoming overweight adults. Increased weight in adulthood can lead to long-term conditions such as Type 2 diabetes. There are some simple tips you

can use to help your child regain a healthy weight. Checking what their BMI is can help too.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/childrens-weight/advice-for-parents-overweight-children/>

### **Stress in children**

Children can experience stress in similar ways to adults, but they may express their stress in different ways as their ability to describe their feelings may not match the depth of their emotions.

Children often absorb more from their surroundings than we might imagine. Overhearing adults' concerns about things like money, jobs and their own education can translate into stress and worry.

<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/mental-health/what-is-stress>

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/blog/children-and-stress-whats-worrying-them-most/>

### **Cold weather and staying well in winter**

There are a number of things you can do to help keep you and your family safe and well over the winter months.

Cold increases the risk of illness and hospital admissions in the vulnerable and very cold weather over a period of time increases this risk further. Keeping an eye on the weather forecast can help you to plan for cold weather spells.

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

[https://assets.nhs.uk/nhsuk-cms/documents/Stay\\_well\\_this\\_winter.pdf](https://assets.nhs.uk/nhsuk-cms/documents/Stay_well_this_winter.pdf)

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/forecast/uk>

### **Heart awareness**

In the UK, someone dies from a heart or circulatory condition every three minutes. That's almost 500 people every day, and almost 200,000 every year. February is Heart Month, so let's raise awareness and help reduce this number.

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

### **Self-care**

Over 15 million people in the UK are living with a health condition. This helpful toolkit shows ways in which you can learn to manage your condition to help improve your overall quality of life.

<https://www.nhs.uk/planners/yourhealth/documents/self-care-toolkit-booklet-oct-10-read.pdf>

### **Wash your hands**

You should make sure you wash your hands thoroughly. It's especially important to wash your hands:

- After using the toilet or changing a nappy
- Before and after handling raw foods like meat and vegetables
- Before eating or handling food
- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After touching animals, including pets, their food and after cleaning their cages

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

### **NHS app**

Are you using the NHS app? Filled with useful information and the ability to access GP services and your health records, now is the ideal time to try it out.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>

### **Measles**

Measles can cause serious complications, such as pneumonia, meningitis, blindness and seizures. After a 30-fold increase in measles cases in Europe in 2023, increased rates of measles in the UK suggest that we may see a significant increase in the number of cases here too.

This is partly due to the reduced levels of vaccination against measles.

If you or your child hasn't received two doses of the MMR vaccination, you can ask your GP surgery to see if you can be vaccinated.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-68007804>

### **Dignity Action Day, 1st February**

If you receive care from others, you'll know how important it is that you're treated with dignity and respect. Dignity Action Day helps to raise awareness of this important issue.

[https://www.dignityincare.org.uk/Dignity-in-Care-events/Dignity\\_Action\\_Day/](https://www.dignityincare.org.uk/Dignity-in-Care-events/Dignity_Action_Day/)

### **Time to Talk Day, 1st February**

Conversations are important for our mental health. Whether that's a quick chat or something more meaningful, let's make Time to Talk!

<https://timetotalkday.co.uk/>

### **World Cancer Day, 4th February**

Across the globe, there's inequality of access to cancer treatment. In the UK, we're lucky to have access to healthcare free at the point of need. Let's help to raise awareness.

<https://www.worldcancerday.org/>

### **Tinnitus awareness, 5th-11th February**

Tinnitus is a condition that affects the noises individuals hear. Some sufferers hear buzzing, running water or ringing in their ears. The effect of constant noise on mental health can be significant.

<https://tinnitus.org.uk/join-the-cause/tinnitus-week-2024/>

### **Children's Mental Health Week, 5th - 11th February**

'Express yourself' is the theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week. Children should be able to express their thoughts and feelings, and have their thoughts and feelings considered.

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

### **National HIV Testing Week, 5th - 11th February**

5th February marks the start of National HIV Testing Week. Testing is free and confidential and you can find out more here:

<https://www.tht.org.uk/news/national-hiv-testing-week-returns-2024>

### **International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, 6th February**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is procedures that involve altering or injuring female genitalia for non-medical reasons. If you know someone who may be at risk, there are steps you can take to protect them.

<https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-m...olice-if-you,who's-already-been-taken-abroad>.

### **Safer Internet Day, 6th February**

'Together for a better internet' is the theme of this year's Safer Internet Day. If we work together, we can protect our children and each other from the harm that can be done on the internet.

<https://www.saferinternetday.org/>

### **Chinese New Year, 10th - 24th February**

Happy Chinese New Year! Chinese New Year is a time for celebration. You can find out more about how Chinese New Year is celebrated here:

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/how-do-people-celebrate-chinese-new-year>

### **International Epilepsy Day, 12th Feb (the 2nd Monday of February)**

Anyone can have a one-off seizure. If you have a seizure, you may be diagnosed with epilepsy if your doctor believes there's a high risk that you'll have further seizures. Around one in 100 people in the UK are living with epilepsy.

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

### **Eating Disorders Awareness Week, 26th February - 3rd March**

This year, Eating Disorders Awareness Week focuses on Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID). People with ARFID eat very restricted diets and have few 'safe' foods. They may fear trying new foods and, over time, this can affect their health and wellbeing.

<https://edaw.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>



## In January 143 patients failed to attend appointments here

**24 HOURS  
WERE  
MISSED**

**Equivalent  
to  
7 GP Clinics**

**143  
PATIENTS DID  
NOT ATTEND**

If you are unable to attend **always** cancel your appointment



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Contact us @ [www.somercotesmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.somercotesmedicalcentre.co.uk)



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