



## Patient Group Newsletter

March 2018

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### **70 BEATS A MINUTE. 100,000 beats a day.**

Two and a half billion beats a lifetime  
By your 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

More than 9,000 litres are pumped daily by your heart.  
Through 60,000 miles of vessels  
In an effort to transport

All the oxygen to keep you both healthy and alive.  
Plus every single nutrient  
You may need to grow and thrive.

Hormones and immune cells are delivered to your tissues.  
Waste solids, gas and fluids  
Are removed to prevent 'issues'

How amazing is the system that makes up your circulation.  
But what difference will it make to you  
Knowing this information?

I guess you spend more cash and care on central heating pumps and systems  
Or servicing your cars and tools  
So many you can't list 'em.

But which will serve you seventy years without replacing or repairing  
Electrics, valves and worn out bits  
That can take no more wear or tearing?

### **Remember!**

**Seventy beats a minute, One hundred thousand beats a day  
Two and a half billion beats a lifetime  
To reach your 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

**Look after your heart. It is the only one you have!**

**IT IS AMAZING.**

! You use the correct fuel and the most appropriate oils and lubricants. You top up your water and fluids, you look after the bodywork, have regular services and MOT when necessary. Your air pressures have to be correct. Your vehicle does not sit idling in the garage. If you treated your heart with that same love, care and consideration, you might live a longer and healthier life! You don't beat up and abuse your car, why do it to your heart?

### **DIABETES SUPPORT PROJECT**

For those of you who don't yet know, we are lucky to have Ruth Waxman running a Diabetes Support Project. This is for patients, often newly diagnosed with diabetes, who might need some extra support and information. Ruth has the time and experience to answer questions and guide patients in the coping strategies and management of their Diabetes. She attends the Practice 2 hours weekly, sees up to 5 people on a one-to-one basis in that time but patients can bring a relative, friend or carer with them. Ruth has become a very valuable member of the team led by Nurse Cathy Firbank.

In a recent survey 33 out of 35 (94%) patients said it gave them the opportunity to discuss their diabetes challenges and over 90% said that the appointment was "useful to me". Well done Ruth!

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### **COMINGS & GOINGS**

**Nurses Hazel Potter & Elaine Lardner** have left Manor View after serving the Practice for many years. We will miss them greatly. Thank you for all your amazing care, kindness and devotion. It has been greatly appreciated by all your patients.

**Dr Shermila Skandakumar** currently a locum GP for us, is joining our GP team on a permanent basis in April. She will be working Tuesday/Thursday am and Friday pm. Welcome.

**Nurse Jo Dwyer** has joined the Practice. She has special training in both diabetes (type 2) and respiratory problems. Welcome to Manor View, Jo. We hope you will be very happy here.

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### **NATIONAL DATA OP-OUT**

In 2016 Dame Fiona Caldicott – National Data Guardian – recommended a new opt-out model for data sharing. The system will offer patients and the public the opportunity to make an informed choice about whether you wish your personally identifiable data to be used just for your individual care and treatment, or also used for research and planning purposes. It is being developed by NHS Digital.

Patients who decide they do not want personally identifiable data used for the above purposes will be able to opt-out on line. For those who can't or don't use an online system, there will be non-digital alternatives.

Hopefully this will be useable from 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. More information should be available to you before that date. Look at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/national-data-opt-out>

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

Our **visitors' book** project is up and running, where we offer a **visitors' book** to patients/carers who use our medical/social services to support them in their daily lives. We have a few books remaining, so if you or someone you know can make use of one of them please let us know. You can contact Joan Manning on [mvppg1@gmail.com](mailto:mvppg1@gmail.com) or leave a message with reception. The **visitors' book** will help to keep all contact details in one place and may be a useful indication to your clinicians as to whether you are getting all the help and support you need or are entitled to.

### STILL INSISTING ON ANTIBIOTICS?

Public Health England states that **one in five** prescriptions for antibiotics given out by GPs is unnecessary. However, as the Royal College of GPs confirms, family doctors should not be blamed as they are **“under considerable pressure” from patients**. We could reach a point where infections can no longer be treated with antibiotics and even routine surgery could become dangerous. The research was carried out in General Practice in England and the results – because only a quarter of all prescriptions were looked at – are only estimates. It is possible that if all prescriptions were analysed over-prescribing rates may have been found to be higher.

As an example of over-prescribing we show you the following little table. It might help you understand when an antibiotic may or may not be effective:

Patients given antibiotic prescription:	<u>CONDITION</u>	Number of prescriptions experts think would have been appropriate:
41%	Acute cough with no complications	10%
82%	Bronchitis	13%
59%	Sore Throat	13%
88%	Sinus Infection	11%
88%	Middle ear Infection (in 2-18 year olds)	11%

**Please do not insist on your GP giving you a prescription for antibiotics if he or she thinks this may be inappropriate. Antibiotics are only effective against BACTERIAL infections, and not VIRUSES.**

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### INTEGRATED MUSCULOSKELETAL SERVICE

Herts Valleys CCG has commissioned a company called Connect Health to run a new Integrated Musculoskeletal Service for people with muscle, joint, pain problems. A lot of patients are being transferred over from the previous provider (Herts Community NHS Trust) and there is a bit of a ‘log jam’ on their telephone lines because of the high number of patients trying to contact the service. Their telephone number is:

01442 913 356

and this is also the number you should contact if you have any comments or complaints about the service. The present waiting time for someone to answer your call (as at end of Feb) is about 30 minutes!

(information obtained from HVCCG website)

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### WEST HERTS HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

We are delighted that our hospital has been moved out of ‘special measures’. Congratulations to all the staff and the executive who have worked so hard under such difficult conditions.

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### **ANTIDEPRESSANTS VS PLACEBO**

In a recent review of 522 studies covering 116,477 patients, researchers from a group of prestigious universities and hospitals in both Europe and the US, found that all 21 antidepressants included were more likely to work than placebo (a 'dummy' or 'pretend' pill). The message from this review have been described as 'encouraging'.

But remember – if you have been taking an antidepressant for 4 weeks or more and it doesn't seem to be helping, talk to your doctor. Another, different type of medicine, may work better for you.

**HOWEVER**, before you start chasing your GP for more pills, you should note the following:

1. It shouldn't be concluded that antidepressants are 'better than' or should be used instead of talking therapies like CBT. This was not investigated.
2. The review did not look at side effects of the medications.
3. The results of the trials were reported after only 8 weeks of treatment – so we don't know if they apply to long-term use of antidepressants.

from: nhs.uk/news/medication

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### **LOW-CARB or LOW-FAT DIET?**

In the US 609 adults were recruited to follow either a low-carb or low-fat diet, to see if either was more effective with regard to weight loss. Over a period of 12 months the researchers found people lost an average of 5 to 6kg (11 to 13 pounds), regardless of which diet they followed. In fact, both groups cut their intake by about 500 – 600 calories a day.

**HOWEVER**, interestingly those on the low-fat diet reduced their 'bad cholesterol' more and those on the low-carb diet improved their 'good cholesterol' and reduced their triglyceride levels more. If these are of concern to you, please take note!

from: nhs choices

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### **SMOKING CAN DAMAGE YOUR HEART**

Research covering more than **12 million** people showed that those who think that 'light smoking' (1-5 cigarettes a day) is harmless, are wrong. Among both men and women smoking just **1 cigarette** a day increased their risk of heart disease by 57% (women) and 48% (men), their risk of stroke by 31% (women) and 25% (men)

nb: The study did not look at lung cancer, but previous work shows that your risk of lung cancer does reduce when you cut down on cigarettes.

**BUT NOTE**, Heart disease and stroke are much more common than lung cancer, so it does make sense to aim to cut cigarettes out completely, even if you do so by cutting down first.

## **BEWARE OF MIXING HERBAL REMEDIES WITH PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

Many people believe herbal remedies are safe, so they think they don't need to tell their doctor that they are taking them. However, all medicines, whether herbal or conventional, can have side effects. Herbal remedies can affect the way drugs act on the body, either blocking their action or increasing their potency. Some problems may be quite serious.

For instance, St John's Wort can be dangerous if taken with antidepressants or may stop the contraceptive pill from working. The most common herbal interactions are with warfarin and statins. **ALWAYS READ THE INFORMATION THAT COMES WITH YOUR MEDICINE.**

Your doctor or pharmacist should tell you whether the herbal remedy you are taking (or wish to take) might interact with a drug or make a medical condition worse. **So please tell your doctor if you are taking a herbal remedy.**

If you are interested there are a number of scientific reports available on line.

British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology, Jan 24, 2018

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### **THINKING OF HAY FEVER TIME AGAIN**

This is being written with snow on the ground and freezing temperatures. But now that March is here, the days are getting longer and warmer temperatures cannot (surely) be that far off, we are fast approaching hay fever season, so here is a reminder of the 'what' and 'when' of the pollens that may affect you:

#### **TREES:**

Feb/March	Hazel, Yew, Elder
March/April	Alder, Elm, Willow, Poplar, Birch
April/May	Birch, Ash, Plane, Oak
May/June	Pine
June/July	Lime

#### **GRASS:**

June/July	All
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#### **WEEDS & OTHERS:**

June/July	Dock, Nettle
July/August	Nettle, Oilseed Rape

These are only PEAK months – the pollens may be in the air for a month or more on either side of these dates.

If you usually take medications make sure you have your antihistamines and other medicines a couple of weeks BEFORE you need them.

If your symptoms are very severe and debilitating you may wish to investigate the use of immunotherapy – details are available on the AllergyUK website ([www.allergy.uk.org](http://www.allergy.uk.org)).

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### **PALS**

The **Patient Advice and Liaison Service** is available to patients who wish to raise any issues regarding their stay in hospital. At Watford General Hospital you will find their office near Main Reception. They have a drop-in service between 10am – 4pm, can be contacted by phone: 01923 217198 or by email: [pals@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@whht.nhs.uk). They are very helpful and understanding – even if you have been discharged from the hospital.

## HERTFORDSHIRE NHS SERVICE CHANGES

We made you aware in the last newsletter of some services which have been withdrawn or deferred within our area. These include:

1. Obese people being requested to lose weight before receiving routine surgery.
2. Smokers being required to quit smoking before being referred for non-urgent surgery.
3. Withdrawal of prescriptions for gluten-free foods.
4. Many previously prescribed items will be available over the counter only.
5. No more female sterilization

Please note that as previously advised these restrictions are not set in stone. If they cause you serious problems – either financial or medical – please speak with your GP.

There has also been national concern regarding some of these changes, including that of the Royal College of Surgeons. Watch this space.

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### FOR YOUR INFORMATION WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO RE-ISSUE THE CURRENT DOCTORS' SCHEDULE:

<u>DOCTOR</u>		<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>
Davis	am	Surgery	Surgery		Surgery	
	pm	Surgery	Surgery		Surgery	
Harris	am	Surgery	Surgery	Surgery	Surgery	Surgery
	pm	Surgery		Surgery		Surgery
Gordon	am	Surgery	Surgery		Surgery	
	pm	Surgery	Surgery		Surgery	
Bhatt	am	Surgery		Surgery		Surgery
	pm	Surgery		Surgery		Surgery
Shah	am	Surgery	Surgery			Surgery
	pm	Surgery	Surgery			Surgery
Moore	am			Surgery	Surgery	
	pm			Surgery	Surgery	
Rauf	am		Surgery	Surgery	Surgery	Surgery
	pm		Surgery	Surgery	Surgery	Surgery

**USEFUL CONTACTS:**

This is a list of useful contact numbers & email addresses:

**→111:**

This number is our Out of Hours service for when you want medical help or advice and the situation is not 'life threatening' – when of course you should dial 999 or attend A&E. For any medical need during our opening hours please phone the surgery.

**→HERTS HELP:**

If you need help and don't know where to turn, if you have a question or a problem – you can contact **HERTS HELP:**

*Telephone number is: 0300 123 4044*

*Email address is: [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)*

*Post: HertsHelp, Hertlands House, Primett Road, Stevenage, Herts SC1 3EE*

**→CARERS IN HERTFORDSHIRE:**

Gives support and information to unpaid family & friends who look after someone\*.

Contact **CARERS IN HERTFORDSHIRE:**

*Telephone number is: 01992 586 969*

*Email address is: [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)*

*Post: The Red House, 119 Fore Street, Hertford, Herts. SG141AY*

***\*IF THIS IS YOU PLEASE LET THE RECEPTIONIST OR YOUR DOCTOR KNOW YOU ARE A CARER BECAUSE IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE LOOK AFTER YOU TOO.***

**→RED CROSS MOBILITY AIDS:**

**IS NO LONGER AT THE OLD HEALTH CENTRE.**

Nearest depot for wheelchairs etc is now at:

Community Way, Croxley Green, Croxley, WD3 3HB.

*Telephone: 01923 720 485 – Monday/Friday 10am – 4pm.*

**→HERTFORDSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE:**

Free Home Fire Safety visit – including free fire detectors:

*Telephone: 0300 123 4046*

**→A1 OPTICIANS:**

If you need an eye test but can't get out to an optician, A1 Opticians in Hemel Hempstead is providing free eye tests to all elderly and housebound residents in Hertfordshire.

*Telephone number is: 0800 023 4964*

*Email: [info@A1optician.co.uk](mailto:info@A1optician.co.uk)*

**→HERTFORDSHIRE NEUROLOGICAL SERVICE:**

If you have been diagnosed with a neurological problem, you can self-refer into the above service for help with self management or physiotherapy. For more information:

*Telephone: 01923 299 100*

*Address: Hertfordshire Neurological Service, Jacketts Field Rehabilitation Unit, Jacketts Field, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire. WD5 OPA*

*Email: [www.hertsdirect.org/fire](http://www.hertsdirect.org/fire)*

**→HERTS SPECIAL CARE DENTAL SERVICE:**

A dentist can visit at home if you are housebound. For a referral form call:

*Telephone 01582 714 190*

**→LUPUS UK (HERTS & BEDS LUPUS GROUP):**

If you are interested in attending 3-monthly meetings:

Telephone: 01923 801 107

Email: [hazel.wood1@gmail.com](mailto:hazel.wood1@gmail.com)

**→RESTLESS LEGS SUPPORT GROUP:**

This is a National Group – but for information contact:

Email: [www.rls-uk.org](http://www.rls-uk.org)

**→KIDS (West Hub)**

Independent support for parents/carers of disabled children with additional needs.

Includes a free toy library. For more information:

Telephone number is: 01923 676 549

Email: [hub.herts@kids.org.uk](mailto:hub.herts@kids.org.uk)

**→HERTFORDSHIRE HEALTH WALKS:**

Offers great walks around Hertfordshire – free – with trained walking leaders. All levels of fitness and ability catered for. For more information:

Telephone number is: 01992 588 433

Email: [healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**→WEIGHT MANAGEMENT/FITNESS/LIFESTYLE – MEN ONLY!**

Watford Football Club are offering FREE weight/fitness/lifestyle courses for men only. Initially 12 sessions – either referred by your GP or you can contact them personally. Give it a go! For more information:

Telephone number is: 01923 496 391

Email: [andrew.garlick@watfordfc.com](mailto:andrew.garlick@watfordfc.com)

Address: Watford Football Club, Vicarage Road, Watford.

**→PATIENT TRANSPORT:****- WATFORD COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME:**

For the elderly or disabled who have to attend hospital/doctor's appointments.

It costs 45p a mile to cover expenses and they appreciate one week's notice of journey details.

Telephone: 01923 216 955

**→BARBARA BUS FUND:**

Set up to help people who cannot get out or use public transport because they cannot transfer from a wheelchair. There is a fleet of specially adapted vehicles which can be hired. Based at Stanmore.

For more information:

Telephone: 020 8416 0733

Email: [office@barbarabus.com](mailto:office@barbarabus.com)

Address: The Barbara Bus Fund, Louis Fleischmann Building, RNOHT, Brockley Hill, Stanmore, HA7 4LP

**→FOOD BANK IN BUSHEY**

The Red Trust have opened a food bank in Bushey for people who may be having problems accessing enough food. It is open on a Friday morning 10 – 12noon. Coffee & a chat available at the same time.

Email: [www.redtrustbushey.org](http://www.redtrustbushey.org)

Address: Church House, by St James' Church, Bushey High Street, WD23 1BD

**→HEARTSTART IN BUSHEY**

You never know when you may be called on to save a life. Learn CPR with Danny Phillips. Training is free, but you can always make a donation. Email: [dannyphillipsUK@gmail.com](mailto:dannyphillipsUK@gmail.com)

**A Note from your Patient Participation Group**

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Do you live alone, or are you the sole carer for someone?  
Have you just come out of hospital?

If you are lonely, feel isolated or cannot get out very often  
would it help if a member of our Patients Group telephoned occasionally  
just to see if you are OK?

If so please leave your name and telephone number  
at the bottom of this leaflet and  
we'll get in touch with you.



Name .....

Phone/contact number .....