

# COOMBE MEDICAL PRACTICE

## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016/17

### **Emergency contact**

Some patients have tried to contact me via the pager during office hours or when I am not on call. **Please always call the landline (0208 605 0044) first.** The message will inform you who is on call and the appropriate number to call. Colleague doctors may be on call.

A fee is charged for missed appointments, and for those cancelled less than six hours. Details on our website.

### **Meningitis B (not to be confused with Meningitis C)**

We offer this vaccine (Bexsero) to protect against Meningitis B. **Meningitis B** is responsible for 90% of meningococcal infections in the UK. It is fatal in one in 10 cases. It remains a serious threat to children, teenagers and young adults. The vaccine will help protect against meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia. I do consider it important to make parents aware that there is a vaccine which prevents against this devastating disease.

### **Coughs and colds**

Winter is here and with it the viruses that cause coughs and colds. A diet rich in vitamin C – so lemons, oranges etc will boost the immune system. Or vitamin C supplements. A low vitamin D level impairs our ability to fight viruses: with less sunlight over winter it might be sensible to take a vitamin D supplement. This is especially important in children – the best is the DLux vitamin D spray.

### **Prescriptions**

When a repeat prescription is required for on-going medication, it is appreciated if at least five days' notice is given. I need to check the medical records to see whether the medication is intended to be repeated; whether a blood pressure or blood test is required; and to ensure safe clinical monitoring. This also allows enough time for us to post the prescription to you.

### **Travel health**

Summer holidays may seem a distant dream at present, but don't forget to plan ahead when it comes to travel jabs. Some need to be given a few weeks before travel to be effective. We stock all the required immunisations and are a recognised Yellow Fever Vaccination Centre. Call Roopal and she will email you a travel form for you to complete.

### **Referral**

A number of patients pre-book an appointment with a specialist and then contact me requesting a referral letter. This is poor clinical practice – I need to see a patient first to ensure that the correct diagnosis is made and the appropriate specialist is then chosen. Insurers insist that the referral has been sanctioned by the GP – this should be prior to the appointment. Notice is required - especially for lengthy referral letters.

### **BCG**

This remains out of stock due to a national shortage.