

# What's up Doc'?



**BOWLING HALL  
MEDICAL PRACTICE**

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 12 WINTER 2012 / 13

## Welcome...

... to the Winter Edition of 'What's Up Doc?'. It's been a while now since we introduced our new look and we have had nothing but positive feedback. But we still want your suggestions – is there anything that you'd like us to talk about in our next newsletter? Anything that you think we should tweak or maybe change completely? We want these Newsletters to be as helpful and informative as they can be for you so any ideas for improvements would be welcome. As always, all of your comments are much appreciated.

This edition covers the Winter months. During these cold times it's important that you keep as safe and as warm as you can. We've already had days where the ice has made the roads and pavements dangerous, so take extra care.

We also talk a little about the 'Whooping Cough' Vaccination which is being offered to women during their pregnancy. We know some of our patients are worried about it and hopefully the information here will help.

And don't forget it's time for you to start your New Year's Resolutions, and why not consider stopping smoking? Smoking not only damages your health but it also eats away at your savings. Find out more about the many benefits of quitting inside. We can help!

Thank you for reading and have a happy New Year.



## Helping you to remember

**THE HASSLE FREE  
WAY TO STAY  
ON TIME**

Have you ever forgotten that you were meant to be somewhere and only realised when it was too late to make it in time? Everyone has. It would really help if there was something that reminded you about your appointment, just in case it had slipped your mind.

At Bowling Hall Medical Practice we are constantly looking for ways to make every aspect of our appointments system easier for you. That's why we've recently started to offer a completely free text messaging service.

For those of you who haven't already signed up, our text messaging service offers a convenient, hassle free way of receiving reminders for your appointments straight to your mobile phone! If you want to sign up then just fill out and sign a form. You can get this form either from the front desk at the practice, or you can print it out from our web-site and bring it in to us.

Once you have signed up for this service you'll start to receive reminders the evening before your appointments, at around 5:30pm. You'll also get messages when you book an appointment, so even if

you book it on the same day you'll still get a message reminding you when it is.

This service will only expand with time. We're already looking into sending our invitations out this way, as well as sending information about any tests that you might have had. Of course, we will never send anything sensitive out to your mobile phone.

If you do decide to take advantage of our text messaging service please make sure that if you change your mobile phone number in the future you tell us as soon as you can. Messages are sent out to whatever mobile number we have on record, so if you pass your phone on to someone else then they may receive these messages if you haven't let us know.

There are a lot of possibilities for how this service could develop in the future. If you have any suggestions or ideas about what you would like to get out of this text messaging system please let us know either over the phone, at the desk or via our practice web-site. As always, all of your comments and thoughts are greatly appreciated.



**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**

## Kick The Habit

We know that you don't like being nagged about stopping smoking. However, smoking poses a real threat to your health, which is enough reason to quit on its own. But there are other benefits as well, and not just in terms of your overall health. The longer you are smoke free the more you and your loved ones will appreciate what you have achieved.

Everyone knows that smoking is bad for your health—not only does it increase the risk of lung cancer and heart attacks but it also makes it more difficult for you to do your day-to-day work as well. You'll find that you're more breathless and have to rest more often.

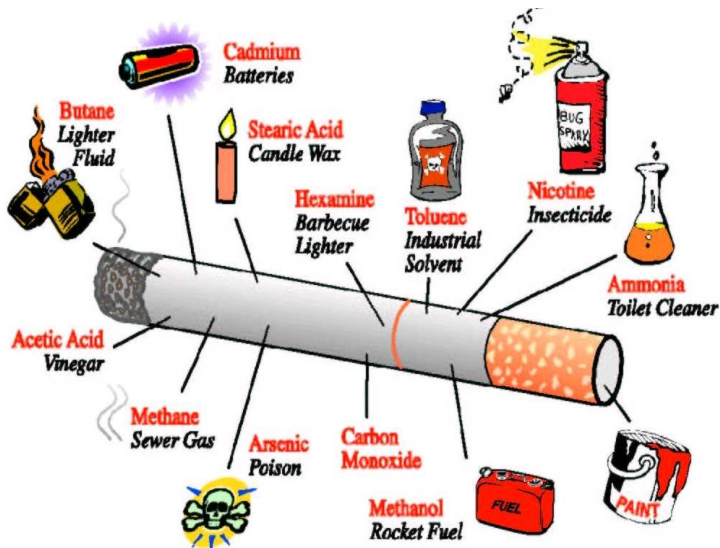
Smoking also severely damages your sense of taste and smell. If you do decide to quit, you will notice the difference pretty quickly—food and drink will start to have much more taste

than they do now.

But on top of the health benefits you should also think of all the money that you could save! You might not realise just how much hard earned money you spend on smoking.

For instance, let's say that you smoke 10 cigarettes a day, at a cost of about £3. That's £21 per week and a staggering **£1092 per year!** And if you smoke 20 a day, then that figure doubles as well.

It's never too late to stop. Bowling Hall Medical Practice offers support, help and guidance in our dedicated Stop Smoking clinics, which run each and every week on a Monday and Tuesday afternoon. We work with you at a pace that



Source: [www.learnhowtoquitsmokingfast.com](http://www.learnhowtoquitsmokingfast.com)

you are happy with and offer support and advice when you want it.

If you are interested in adding years to your life and saving a lot of money in the process then make an appointment in one of our Stop Smoking clinics.

In the meantime, take a look at our diagram of what exactly is in the average cigarette, and what else these ingredients are usually used for.

## The Whooping Cough Vaccination During Pregnancy



The National Health Service now recommends that, for the time being, all pregnant women should be vaccinated against whooping cough when they are between 28 and 38 weeks pregnant. There has been a sharp rise in the number of whooping cough cases in the UK recently. In the first seven months of this year 235 babies under 12 weeks old had whooping cough. Sadly, ten of these babies died from the infection.

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a serious bacterial infection that causes long bouts of coughing and choking, making it hard to breathe. After each bout of coughing the person gasps for breath,

making the distinctive 'whoop' noise. Babies do not always make this noise, which makes it harder to spot when they have whooping cough. Other symptoms include a raised temperature, runny nose and vomiting after coughing. Whooping cough lasts for around two or three months.

Babies who get whooping cough can sometimes develop severe complications such as pneumonia and brain damage. Most babies who catch whooping cough will need hospital treatment, and when it is extremely severe they may die.

The vaccine is being offered to pregnant women because getting vaccinated while you're pregnant may help to protect your baby from developing whooping cough in their first few weeks of life, because the immunity you get from the vaccine will pass from you to your baby. Normally babies are not vaccinated against whooping cough until they are two months old because it is unsafe to give them the vaccine directly

when they are younger.

The best time to get vaccinated to protect your baby is between 28 and 38 weeks of pregnancy, with the ideal time being before you get to 32 weeks. When you're vaccinated against diseases such as whooping cough your body produces antibodies to protect against the disease. Being immunised between 28 and 38 weeks offers the best chance of your baby receiving as many anti-whooping cough antibodies as possible.

You should still have the vaccine if you are later than 38 weeks but this may not protect your baby from whooping cough, as your body might not have enough time to produce the antibodies before your baby is born. However, being vaccinated after 38 weeks will help protect you from getting whooping cough and stop any chance of you passing it on to your baby.

Whenever you have the vaccine, your baby will still need to be vaccinated as normal when he or she reaches two months old.



## All these wasted appointments...

Some of you might be shocked at just how much time is wasted because people don't contact us to let us know when they can't get to an appointment.

In 2012 over **780** doctor's appointments were wasted because of people not letting us know that they couldn't get here. This works out at around 152 hours worth of wasted doctor's appointments.

Our nurses aren't spared either—over **900** nurses appointments were wasted, which is over 200 hours worth.

That means that in total we've had over **350 hours worth of wasted appointments!**

That's the equivalent of a clinician sitting in a room from 9am to 5pm with no patient to see for **over 45 days this year!**

***It is really important that if you can't make an appointment you let us know***, giving us as much notice as you possibly can. Appointments with any clinician are in high demand, and we know that it frustrates people when they struggle to get an appointment when they need one. If we could cut out some or all of this waste then it would free up a lot of extra time for our sick patients.

It only needs to be a quick call to let us know and it could make a world of difference.

## LOGGING ON...

Our web-site is a great place to learn more about your GP Surgery. It not only holds a wealth of information and news about the practice, it also offers convenient services to you.

Our Online Prescriptions service has been running for a while now, but we know that some of our patients are still unaware of it. It is an easy way of ordering your prescription from the comfort of your own home.

You can also send us your comments and questions from the 'Comments' page. We would love to hear from you.

## A DAY WITH DR CARIS **Facts and Figures...**



Dr Caris joined the Bowling Hall Medical Practice team in September 2006 as one of the GP partners.

When asked to describe his role in the Practice, Dr Caris says "My primary role is to provide high quality patient care, but I also have other responsibilities. These extend to ensuring the Practice is a safe place to work, our targets are achieved and in providing assistance to our Business Manager whenever required".

Despite this extensive list, he is quick to point out that "none of these responsibilities are sole ones—we work well as a team".

Dr Caris's typical day starts at around 8:15am to 8:30am. "I sign prescriptions and read the mail for thirty minutes", he says, "before doing a morning surgery until lunchtime followed by emergency visits if required.

"Lunch is always a working one either at my desk, responding to patient queries or at meetings.

"Afternoon surgery starts at 3:00pm and finishes at 5:30pm to 6:00pm, and on Mondays this is followed by a short evening surgery starting at 6:30pm and lasting until 8:00pm. On other days, I do paperwork until about 6:30pm when I race home to put my children to bed".

Dr Caris takes great pleasure in his role, which he continues to develop. "I really enjoy the absolute privileged position of being allowed into patients' lives and trying to help them through difficult or challenging times. A close second is working with such a dedicated and committed team who are constantly impressing me with their 'never-say-never' attitude".

- On average, we issue, print and sign around 1320 prescriptions each week.
- In total we offer around 330 face to face appointments with a Doctor each week. 70 of these are available to book up to two weeks in advance.
- We offer around 20 pre-bookable face to face appointments with our Nurse Practitioner per week, and a further 31 which are book-on-the-day.
- Our Nurses and Healthcare Assistants offer around 270 appointments per week, all of which are book in advance.
- We offer around 65 telephone appointments with doctors each week.
- On average, our doctors go out on 21 home visits per week.
- We receive and process around 300 letters per week – these include letters from hospitals, from patients or from other clinics. These need to be read and acted upon, and we also need to add a copy to that person's records.
- Our doctors and our nurse practitioner receive and interpret around 255 pathology (blood or urine) and radiology (x-ray and ultrasound) results each week.

## We'd like to hear from you...

Bowling Hall Medical Practice and our Patient Forum would like to hear from you, with any suggestions or advice you may have to help improve our services.

There are lots of different ways to send us your comments and suggestions. You can let us know over the phone, over the desk, via our practice web-site, and we now have a suggestion box next to reception.

Don't forget you are also very welcome at our Patient Forum meetings. The date and time of our next meeting is displayed on posters around the building. Have a natter, a cuppa and tell us your thoughts and ideas. Together we are making a difference to our Practice.