

Haltwhistle Medical Group

Coronavirus Patient Newsletter

April 2020

This CORONAVIRUS PATIENT NEWSLETTER contains important information about what we are doing and how you can help

Stay at home to stop coronavirus spreading

Everyone must stay at home to help stop the spread of coronavirus

You should only leave the house for 1 of 4 reasons

- 1. Shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible**
- 2. One form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk or cycle – alone or with members of your household**
- 3. Any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person**
- 4. Travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home**

Important – These 4 reasons are exceptions – even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside your household

- [staying at home if you're at high risk of getting seriously ill from coronavirus](#)
- [staying at home if you or someone you live with has symptoms of coronavirus](#)

Symptoms of Coronavirus and how to get advice

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

To protect others, **do not** go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home.

Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do. Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

Simple advice such as taking regular paracetamol, rest and plenty of fluids are all that our GPs can offer for this disease. Antibiotics do not work on viruses. Please use NHS 111

Is the GP Surgery still open ?

Yes, we remain open. BUT we ask that you DO NOT attend the surgery unless you have been advised to do so by a member of our team. Appointments are being done via telephone and when helpful GPs and Practice Nurses can use video consulting.

When you request a GP or Practice Nurse call back we cannot specify which doctor or nurse will ring you or give an exact time due to workload demands but will specify which day the call will take place. Please help us by ensuring we have your up-to-date telephone number and keep your phone to hand to take the call.

The past few weeks have been extremely challenging and no doubt the weeks ahead will be too. We are working hard to provide our patients with a safe and good service.

Please bear with us if the phones are busy or there are delays in returning your calls.

Should I come to the Surgery ?

Please do not arrive unannounced as you will not be seen. While most people with COVID-19 will have symptoms such as new persistent cough or a fever, some people will have no symptoms at all but will be spreading the virus.

We are trying to ensure our team can stay healthy so we can help our patients. We also do not want to inadvertently pass on the virus to our patients. So we have to weigh the risks to you and us of face to face consultations, versus the risk of you not being seen face to face. The fewer patients we see, the less chance there is of the virus being passed on.

However, there are some people who have to be seen such as those who are on medication that requires them to have regular blood tests. Babies and some adults still need to have immunisations.

What about ordering medication ?

We are processing medication requests as normal. All of the pharmacies are experiencing very high workloads and are asking for longer to have your medication ready for collection/delivery.

Please note paper prescriptions requests usually handed in at the surgery should be left in the letter box on the outside of the building.

How can patients help ?

Currently the best and most important thing you can do is **STAY AT HOME**.

If you do have to attend the surgery, for example for an appointment such as a blood test, please keep your visit brief, use the hand sanitizer provided in the waiting room and stay 2 meters apart from other patients and staff where possible.

Even if you have a booked appointment do not attend if you have symptoms of COVID-19. Please help us to stay healthy so we can help others.



Finally, the team at Haltwhistle Medical Group would like to thank people for their kind messages of support, it means a lot during these difficult times