



# The Swanage Medical Practice

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**Welcome to our Autumn/Winter Newsletter!** As the season of over indulgence looms this issue will focus on health promotion in particular Diabetes and Lead Practice Nurse, Jane Haysom, highlights the role of the Practices Nurses & Healthcare Assistants who form part of her team. We are also going to mention some of the changes that have occurred at the practice in the last year. Finally we would like to emphasize that as a practice, we are committed to improving 'the patient experience', and work hard to meet the needs & expectations of the community.

*The Doctors & Staff would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Happy Christmas & a healthy, prosperous 2016! During the past year we have striven to offer excellent medical care to all our patients, & we have continually reviewed the access & delivery of this. We have seen a number of talented colleagues come & go, and we are very grateful for the patience & support you have shown us. Looking back over the year reminds us what a privilege it is to be attending to your needs at often challenging moments in your lives. Very best regards to you all!*

**New GP Partner & Dr Evans Maternity Leave** We would like to offer a warm welcome Dr Ciara Murphy who joined us as a Partner in November to replace Dr Dennison; She will be working 5 sessions a week on Tues, Thurs & Friday. Dr Katie Evans is now on maternity leave & we are delighted to report that she has safely delivered a son! During her absence Dr Peter Blick will be helping to look after her patients. We wish her all the very best & look forward to meeting the new addition.

## Diabetes - The Facts

**Diabetes is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high.**

There are two main types of diabetes – type 1 diabetes & type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1. Many more people have blood sugar levels above normal range, this is known as pre-diabetes & indicates high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

### What causes diabetes?

The amount of sugar in the blood is controlled by insulin, a hormone which is produced by the pancreas. When food is digested & enters your bloodstream, insulin moves glucose out of the blood & into cells, where it's broken down to produce energy. However, if you have diabetes, your body is unable to break down glucose into energy. This is because there's either not enough insulin to move the glucose, or the insulin produced doesn't work properly.

### Type 1 diabetes

In type 1, the body's immune system attacks & destroys the cells that produce insulin. Without insulin, your glucose levels increase, which seriously damages the body's organs. Type 1 diabetes is often known as insulin-dependent diabetes, juvenile diabetes or early-onset diabetes as it usually develops before the age of 40, often during teenage years. Type 1 diabetes is less common than type 2. You will need insulin injections for the rest of your life based on the amount of carbohydrate you consume, this is known as 'carbohydrate counting'. Carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, rice, and potato turn to glucose once consumed. You'll also need to pay close attention to your activity levels.

### Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is where the body doesn't produce enough insulin, or the body's cells don't react to insulin. This is known as insulin resistance. If you're diagnosed with type 2, it's possible to control your symptoms simply by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, & monitoring your blood glucose levels. However, as type 2 diabetes is a progressive condition, you may eventually need medication, usually in the form of tablets. This type of diabetes is often associated with obesity. Obesity-related diabetes is sometimes referred to as maturity-onset diabetes because it's more common in older people although increasingly due to poor diet & lack of exercise more children are being diagnosed.

### Living with Diabetes

With either type of diabetes, you need to look after your health **very carefully**. Caring for your health will also make treating your diabetes easier, cutting your risk of developing complications. It is essential to eat a healthy, balanced diet and exercise regularly this will lower your blood glucose levels. If you smoke, stopping smoking will also reduce your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Your eyes are at risk from diabetic retinopathy, a condition that can lead to blindness if not treated. Everyone with diabetes aged 12 or over is invited to have annual eye screening. If diabetes is left untreated, it can cause a number of different health problems. Large amounts of glucose can damage blood vessels, nerves and organs and in extreme cases cause amputations. Even a mildly raised glucose level that doesn't cause any symptoms can have damaging effects in the long term.

### Diabetes symptoms

Typical symptoms include: feeling very thirsty; passing urine more often than usual, particularly at night; feeling very tired; weight loss and loss of muscle bulk. The symptoms of type 1 diabetes usually develop very quickly in young people (over a few days or weeks). In adults, the symptoms often take longer to develop (a few months). Many people have type 2 diabetes for years without realising because the early symptoms tend to be general.

### Prevention

Type 1 Diabetes cannot be prevented. The good news is that we can all make changes to help us reduce our risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes. Whether pre-diabetes expands into full-blown type 2 is largely up to the individual patient. Losing weight, exercise and a balanced diet can not only prevent pre-diabetes from becoming diabetes, but can also return blood glucose levels to the normal range.

**For further information & advice about how to avoid developing diabetes & or to manage the condition go to [www.diabetes.or.uk](http://www.diabetes.or.uk)**

**Flu Vaccination** - It's not too late to have your vaccination if you haven't done so already. Arrange an appointment soon by telephoning the surgery on 01929 422231.

This year, the Government initiated a local Pharmacy scheme which enabled patients to have their vaccinations done at the Chemists. Whilst this can offer some patients more flexibility it means that the Practice loses money as we have to achieve vaccination targets to receive maximum funding for the clinical needs of our patients. You may not be aware that if you can't come to our vaccination dates we are always able to fit you in elsewhere; **So next year, please do not hesitate to contact us to make an alternative arrangement with us.**

#### **Please keep us informed.....**

It is important that the Practice has the correct information recorded on your medical notes. Please inform the Practice of any changes to your name, address or phone number. We are also able to record work & mobile phone numbers, if you are happy for us to keep this information & use it when necessary to contact you. To change your details download a form from our website or pick one up from Reception.

#### **Text Messaging**

An increasing problem for us is the number of appointments with clinicians that are missed by patients without them cancelling. In recent newsletters we have produced 'Did Not Attend (DNAs)' statistics which were shocking! In an attempt to reduce DNAs we have started sending text booking confirmation & appointment reminders. Therefore it is even more important that we have up to date contact details for you.

#### **Cancelling your unwanted appointments**

PLEASE, please ensure you cancel your appointment if it is no longer necessary or you are unable to attend. Ours is a VERY busy surgery, with high patient demand; Even an appointment cancelled on the day is likely to be filled.

*It is perhaps worth noting that, apart from leading a healthy lifestyle, cancelling unwanted appointments is one of the most important contributions a patient can make to the smooth running of our surgery and the NHS. It is your NHS, use it wisely, don't abuse it.*

#### **A day in the life of: A Practice Nurse**

Hello, I am Jane Haysom, Lead Practice Nurse of the treatment room (room 11!). I was asked to write a 'day in the life of 'the Practice Nurses (PN) but our role is so varied it seemed better to give an overview.

My team includes 7 PNs & 6 Healthcare Assistants. Our job as PNs is very varied & we are extremely busy.

As well as the general nursing skills used in the Duty Nurse clinics, like wound management, ear syringing, injections, venipuncture & health monitoring, we all have individual extended specialities.

As demand on primary health care services has increased the role of the PN has expanded & developed. We have all done further training & PNs have become front line providers of care & management of patients with long term conditions like Asthma, COPD, cardiovascular disease, diabetes & ulcers.

We also run nurse led clinics such as warfarin monitoring, child immunisations, foreign travel, family planning, healthcare checks, and smears. We also assist GPs' during procedures & deal with any emergencies that may occur at the surgery.

I cannot finish without mentioning that the PNs have amazing support from a team of Healthcare Assistants who also have specialised training and do blood tests, venipuncture, ECGs, blood pressure & support the ulcer clinic. We could not manage without them & our fantastic receptionists, Liz Pond & Janette Pearce.

*I am very proud of the service that my team provide.*

#### **Staff Antics & News .....**

Drs' secretary Gail Taylor thanks everyone who supported her MS Society stall at the flu clinics this year. With your help she raised a wonderful £351.56 & an additional £150 on raffle tickets!

The Doctors & Staff would like to offer a warm farewell to Abby Lock who is moving on to new pastures. Starting as an apprentice, she has been with us since she was 17 & has flourished into a talented and dynamic individual whose contribution to the practice has been invaluable. We shall miss her very much. *Good luck Abby!*

#### **Answers to Frequently asked questions**

**Q: Why do the doctors want me to sign up to a chemist for my prescriptions—I'm not convinced its best for me?**

**A:** *The surgery can process up to 400 prescriptions a day (more at peak 'panic' times like Easter, Christmas & Bank Holidays). This large volume of paperwork, despite our great efforts, greatly increases the chance of error & prescriptions being missed. The secure electronic prescription service eliminates almost all margin for error. Furthermore, some patients queue 3 or 4 times to obtain their medication— 1. at the surgery to deliver the request; 2. at the surgery again to collect the signed script; 3. at the chemist to deliver the script; 4. at the chemist again to collect the medication. We think this is bonkers! With the secure electronic service, and if you have signed up with your preferred pharmacy's automatic repeat system and/or 'Batch Prescribing', potentially you only queue once— i.e. at the pharmacy to collect your medication.*

*It is also worth bearing in mind that the less time the Doctors & surgery have to spend on unnecessary paperwork & admin, the more time & money can be spent on the clinical needs of our patients. We know what we'd prefer to focus on! Finally there is an environmental element to our request; we are very keen to reduce our carbon footprint by limiting the amount of paper we use. We are very grateful for your support with this.*

**Have your say:** If you have any comments or feedback about our services, please use the 'Friends & Family Test' touch screen in the waiting room & we can respond to the queries raised via this newsletter. Your opinions are of great value to us & can sometimes lead to change within our practice. For major concerns & queries please contact Natasha Ritchie, Practice Manager or speak to your GP.

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**View our website for more information about our services: [www.swanagemedical.org.uk](http://www.swanagemedical.org.uk)**