

**Woodlea House Surgery**  
**A guide to the Practice**



**Woodlea House Surgery**

**2A Bradpole Road**

**Bournemouth**

**BH8 9NX**

**TELEPHONE**      **01202 300 903**

**FAX**                **01202 304 826**

**WEBSITE:**        [www.woodleahouse-surgery.co.uk](http://www.woodleahouse-surgery.co.uk)

# Welcome to our Practice

## Complimentary information pack

In this pack you will find information on the following:

- The Doctors
- Surgery Times
- The Practice Staff
- The Practice Area
- How to join our list
- Out of Hours Service
- Nursing Services
- Specialist Services
- Carers
- Your Medical Records
- Patient Access
- The Complaints Procedure
- Woodlea House Surgery Patient Charter

# The Doctors

(Woodlea House Surgery is a partnership practice – not ltd)

## Dr Andrew Rowland MbChb

Dr Rowland qualified at Sheffield University in 1987. He joined the practice in 1995. His interests are in dermatology, orthopaedics, joint injections and weight control.

## Dr Lucy Johnson MBBS, BSc (Hons) MRCGP MRCP

Dr Johnson qualified at Imperial College, London in 2010.

## Dr Nikola Madalieva

## Kirsty Slater – Nurse Practitioner

## Christine Morgan – Nurse Practitioner

## Surgery Times

During the week the surgery is open from 8.30am to 6.00pm

The telephone lines are open from 8.30am-6pm Monday to Friday

### Appointment times

Day	AM	PM
Monday	9:00am – 11:00am	1:50pm – 8:30pm
Tuesday	9:00am – 11:00am	2:00pm – 6:00pm
Wednesday	9:00am – 11:00am	2:30pm – 5:00pm
Thursday	9:00am – 11:00am	2:00pm – 6:00pm
Friday	9:00am – 11:00am	2:00pm – 6:00pm

## Disabled Access

There is a ramp for ease of access to the surgery; the doorways have also been widened to allow wheelchair access. If you are experiencing any difficulties, then please ring the bell at the front entrance and we will be happy to assist you

The practice door is open all day.

# The Practice Staff

## Practice Supervisor

Nicola Hurll

## Our Practice Nurses

### Mrs Keera Rowland RGN

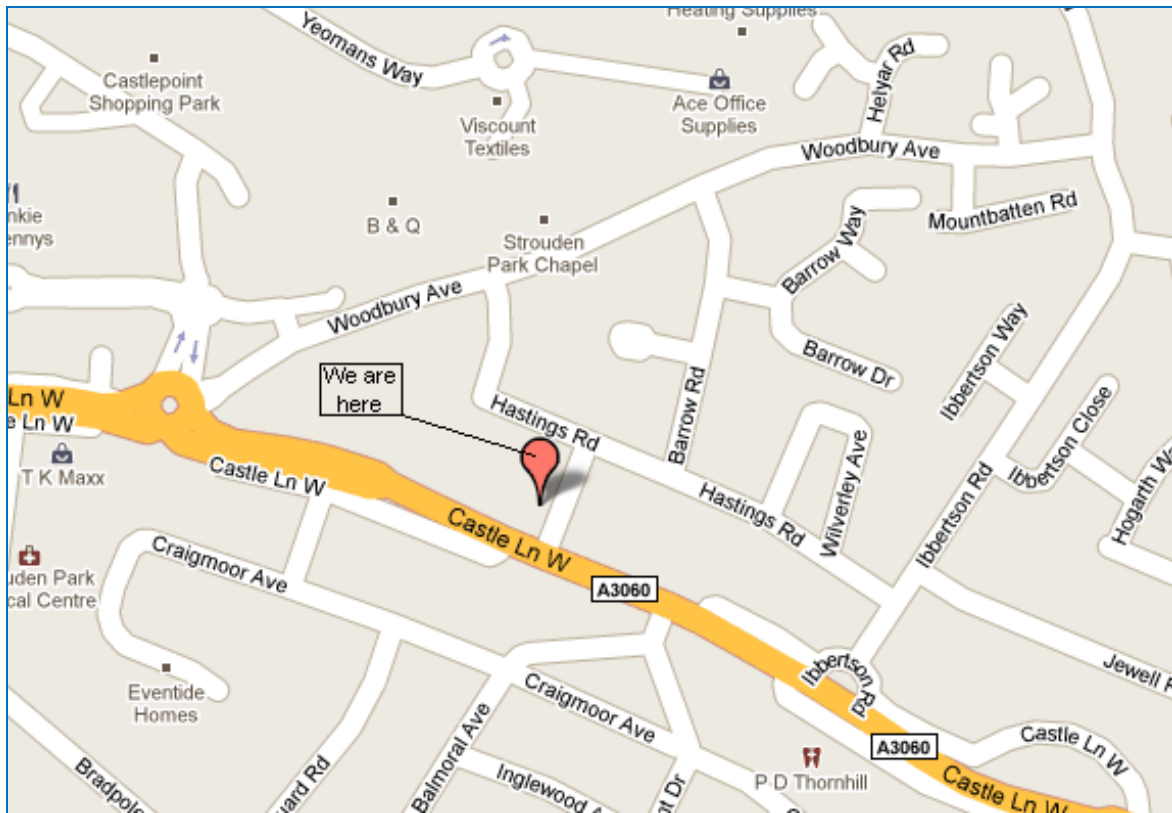
Keera recently returned to nursing. She is an ex-Intensive Care Nurse and has also worked in Orthopaedics and A&E. Her special interests include: SmokeStop and Diabetes.

## The reception staff

The reception staff are here to help you, at times they are extremely busy dealing with patients face to face and on the telephone, your patience during busy times is much appreciated. Please don't ask the reception staff to make any clinical decisions as they are not medically trained, they only carry out instructions from the GPs regarding appointments and information.

## The Practice Area

The map below is a guide to our practice area. Please ask at reception if you are unsure whether you are within our area. Generally postcodes with BH8 and BH9 are within our boundaries



## How to Join our List

If you have just moved into the area, then please ask the reception staff for a registration pack. You will be asked to fill in a form. We will look after your medical needs straight away but please bear in mind that we may not receive your medical records for up to 10 working days.

Your registered GP will be Dr Rowland but you may see ANY GP here at the practice, when you ask for an appointment let us know if you have a preference about who you see. Please note that in the event of an emergency you may be unable to specify who you wish to see

Please Note: As of April 2014 practices are required to provide all their patients aged 75 and over with a named GP who will have overall responsibility for the care and support that our surgery provides to them. The reception staff will be pleased to inform you of who your named GP is but this does not prevent you seeing any GP in the practice as you currently do.

## Out of Hours Service

Under the new GP contract your local Clinical Commissioning Group is responsible for your medical care 'out of hours' i.e. 6.00pm-8.30am during the week and all weekend.

If you require **URGENT** medical OR dental attention or advice that cannot wait until the surgery is open, please call:

### **NHS 111**

Just dial 111 from your landline or mobile number – this is free but please note: pay as you go customers need 1p credit.

If you are seriously ill or have had a serious accident, then please call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Alternatively, please call the surgery number and the above numbers will be given to you via the answer phone. Remember to have a pen and paper handy.

Please **DO NOT** go to A&E unless you are seriously ill or injured, use this service appropriately!

At weekends you can go to the Boscombe & Springbourne drop in centre from 8am-8pm at:-

66-68 Palmerston Rd  
Boscombe  
BH1 4JT  
Tel 01202 720174

The Out of Hours service is not designed for the request of repeat prescriptions, test results or for making appointments.

Please Note: That the Out of Hours service will not provide repeat prescriptions for routine or non-urgent medication from patients who have forgotten to order their regular medicines from the practice during normal surgery hours.

Please remember to put in your repeat script request in good time – BEFORE – you run out of your medication and collect during normal opening hours if it is not sent directly to the pharmacy.

It would surprise you how many scripts end up having to be processed as an 'emergency' by the same individuals because of lack of planning. It is the Department of Health (DOH) advice that patients should be referred to pharmacies for an emergency supply of repeat and/or non-urgent medication when necessary.

# Nursing Services

## General services:

Appointments can be made for general nursing duties such as ear syringing, dressings, blood pressure checks.

## Travel services:

Please ask at reception for a travel clinic form which will need to be filled in with details of your destination and travel date. Please try and give 8 weeks' notice as some vaccines have to be pre ordered. There may be a charge for some vaccines and you will be advised of this prior to ordering.

## Immunisation Including immunisations for:

- ✚ Tetanus, Diphtheria, Whooping cough
- ✚ Polio
- ✚ Meningitis C
- ✚ MMR, and preschool boosters

Please advise the receptionist when you are booking an appointment which immunisations are required.

## Coronary heart disease services:

This is a service to monitor all patients who have had a coronary event or have been diagnosed as having angina.

## Diabetic services:

All our diabetic patients are offered a checkup every six months either in the practice or the hospital. Your diet and weight are checked and diabetic control is discussed. Arrangements are made for you to see a doctor if necessary. Prior to the appointment you may need to have a blood test.

## Cervical smear service:

You will be sent a reminder when your next smear is due.

## Freeze clinics:

These are held bi-monthly to treat minor skin complaints. The doctor will refer you if deemed appropriate.

## Spirometry:

This is used as a diagnostic tool for asthma and COPD and is used in the monitoring of COPD.

## COPD/Asthma services:

All patients with these problems are seen at least annually. An invitation will be sent when a check-up is due.

## Specialist Services

### **Family planning/contraception:**

See your doctor in normal surgery hours for advice and help with family planning and contraception.

### **Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC)**

The Department of Health has asked us to make you aware of long acting reversible contraception (LARC) which includes coils and contraceptive implants and injections. This is because statically these methods are more effective at reducing unwanted pregnancies than the contraceptive pill.

If you want further information about these methods please talk to the practice nurse when you have your annual pill check.

### **Maternity:**

Again, see your doctor in normal surgery hours; he/she will care for you during your pregnancy with our midwives.

## Carers

### **Are you a carer?**

Do you look after someone who is ill, frail or who has a disability?

If the answer to the above question is YES and you would like to be included on the carer's register held at this surgery and/or receive FREE information and support that may help you, please complete a carer's information form available at reception



# Your Medical Records

## About your medical records

We ask you for information about yourself so that you can receive proper care and treatment

You have a right of access to your medical records; please contact the practice manager or the secretary for further information

Please be assured that your medical records are treated in the strictest of confidence, we abide by:-

- ✚ The Caldicott Principles of confidentiality
- ✚ The Data Protection Act of 1998
- ✚ The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- ✚ Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
- ✚ The Human rights Act of 1998

## Patient Access

To view your computerised medical records Woodlea House Surgery is expanding on the online services currently offered to patients. From the 31st March 2016 you will be able to access the following information:

- ✚ Booking and cancelling of appointments
- ✚ Ordering of repeat prescriptions
- ✚ Viewing of summary information in their records about medication and allergies
- ✚ Coded information on illnesses
- ✚ Immunisations and test results

If you haven't already signed up for patient access, please visit:

<http://patient.emisaccess.co.uk> or ask a member of the reception staff.

For further information regarding access to GP online services visit the NHS choices website:

[GP Online Services](#)

Please note: Access to Viewing of summary information about medication and allergies, Coded information on illnesses and Immunisation and test results will be granted on an individual basis - please ask at reception.

In addition, if you are not known to the surgery we will ask for identification before you are granted Patient Access

# The Complaints Procedure

## When should I complain?

You should complain as soon as possible. Complaints should normally be made within 12 months of the date of the event that you're complaining about, or as soon as the matter first came to your attention.

The time limit can sometimes be extended (so long as it's still possible to investigate the complaint). An extension might be possible, for instance in situations where it would have been difficult for you to complain earlier, for example, when you were grieving or undergoing trauma.

If your complaint is made directly to the surgery the Practice Supervisor or a nominated deputy in her absence will in the first instance contact you by telephone to discuss how you would like the complaint to be handled including time scales and how all future contact should be made. We will endeavour to be flexible at all times. We will also let you if the surgery has changed any processes as a result of your complaint after being discussed in our practice staff meeting.

Please note: If we are unable to contact you by telephone we will write to you.

If you made your complaint to NHS England you will receive the findings of the investigation together with an appropriate apology and the changes or learning that have taken place as a result of the investigation.

If you need further information please ask for our 'How to make comments, suggestions and Complaints' leaflet from reception.

## If you are still not satisfied

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman on telephone number: 0345 015 4033. People's rights are explained at [www.nhs.uk/NHSConstitution](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSConstitution)

If a person pays for their treatment privately and they are not happy with the way their GP practice has dealt with their complaint, they can contact the Independent Healthcare Advisory Service (IHAS) at [www.independenthealthcare.org.uk](http://www.independenthealthcare.org.uk).

They can also contact the General Medical Council (GMC) on telephone number: 0161 923 6602, or visit the website at [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org).

## Patients who are aggressive or violent

We operate a zero tolerance approach to aggressive behaviour or violence towards our staff or other persons on the premises. If a patient becomes violent or aggressive he/she will be asked to leave immediately. If he/she refuses, the police will be called. Panic buttons are installed around the premises for urgent police attendance. The practice has the right to remove a violent or aggressive patient from the practice list with immediate effect

## Other Useful Information

### **Making an appointment**

Please call our surgery number on 01202 300903 to book an appointment. If you feel you need to be consulted urgently please telephone between 8:30am – 9:30am as the surgery operates a telephone triage system every day where you can be booked in to speak to a GP between 10:00am and 10:30am. The GP will decide if your problem can be dealt with over the telephone or call you in to be seen later on that morning.

For routine appointments you also have the option to book up to 4-6 weeks in advance if this is more convenient for you.

We do ask our patients to wait on the telephone if they hear the automated message, we are extremely busy at times but please be assured your call will be answered.

Please note: Nurses based in our practice treat patients for a wide range of common conditions

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENT PLEASE LET US KNOW IN GOOD TIME SO IT MAY BE OFFERED TO ANOTHER PERSON**

### **Repeat prescriptions**

Your regular medications will be listed with your prescriptions. When you need a further supply, please tick the items you require. A repeat prescriptions box is prominently displayed in the entrance hall for you to post these in. Alternatively, you can e-mail your request: [woodlea.reception@dorset.nhs.uk](mailto:woodlea.reception@dorset.nhs.uk) which is checked each day, please ask for details at reception, you can also mail them to us. If you require the prescription to be returned in the mail, please include a stamped addressed envelope.

### **Online Ordering of your Repeat Prescriptions**

You can also order your repeat prescriptions online. Please see our receptionists for details on registering for this access. If you have already registered for this facility, then you can go to our website and link on the Patient access link on our Pharmacy Page.

### **Please allow 48 hours before collection**

### **EPS (Electronic Prescription Service)**

A new way to get your medicines and appliances. The EPS is an NHS service. It gives you the chance to change how your GP sends your prescription to the place you choose to get your medicines and appliances from. Please go to our website to download the EPS Patient Leaflet.

### **REPEAT PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS CANNOT BE TAKEN OVER THE TELEPHONE**

Several local chemists offer a collect and delivery service, please ask at reception for details.

### **Telephone advice**

If you wish to speak to a doctor or nurse on the telephone, ask the receptionist who will advise you of the most convenient time to ring. This is usually at the end of surgery between 11am and noon.

### **Change of personal details**

Should you change your name, address or telephone number, please notify the surgery, as apart from keeping your records accurate, we may also need to contact you. This is VERY important.

### **Equipment fund**

The very best equipment for your use is expensive. If you would like to make a donation to our equipment fund we would be most grateful. Cheques should be made payable to 'Woodlea House Surgery equipment fund' for the attention of the practice manager

## **To whom it may concern letters**

There will always be a charge for non NHS letter which must be paid for on collection.

## **Requesting a home visit**

Doctors will visit the seriously ill and housebound at home. Please request the visit by 10.30am if possible. The receptionist may ask for a brief outline of the problem in order to assist the doctor in prioritising his/her house calls. It is not the responsibility of the practice to visit if transport cannot be arranged or funded by the patient. Please make every effort to attend the surgery, as more facilities are available for your treatment.

## **How to contact Dorset CCG**

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group  
Canford House  
Discovery Court Business Centre  
551-553 Wallisdown Road  
Poole  
Dorset  
BH12 5AG  
Tel: 01202 541400  
Fax: 01202 541402

Or

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group  
Vespasian House  
Bridport Road  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT1 1TS  
Tel: 01305 368900  
Fax: 01305 368947  
Email: [feedback@dorsetccg.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@dorsetccg.nhs.uk)

# Woodlea House Surgery

## Patient Charter



**“WE AIM TO CARE FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL’S HEALTH AND WELL BEING TO THE VERY BEST OF OUR ABILITY”**

At Woodlea House Surgery we have set ourselves the following standards, to try to ensure the best possible health care for you and your family. We aim to give you the most appropriate treatment and advice for your individual situation. Any proposed treatment or care will be administered by suitably qualified members of staff. We also aim to ensure that you fully understand and consent to all aspects of your health care.

Please feel free to ask questions if you are unsure about anything. It is our belief that we have a responsibility to you, the patient, and that you have a responsibility to the practice, and to others needing our services. We ask that you make use of our facilities as wisely and responsibly as possible. In addition, if you decide you no longer need an appointment for further treatment, or a second opinion, which has been made for you, please inform both the hospital and us.

### YOUR HEALTH

We aim to offer patients useful and practical advice on promoting good health and avoidance of illness. You are responsible for your own health and the health of your family. We are here to give you our professional help. Please help us to help you by acting on the advice offered.

### YOUR RECORDS

Your medical records will be confidential at all times; however, you have a right to see your records, subject to any limitations of the law. If you wish to see your records, please ask your Doctor.

### COMPLAINTS/SUGGESTIONS

We will be happy to talk over any complaints or suggestions that you may have concerning the service offered to you. Constructive comments and feedback on our service, skills and behaviour will be very useful. It is our belief that the Doctor/patient relationship is vitally important in good health care, with co-operation and trust being essential. If you feel that this relationship is not working, for whatever reason, do please let us know, so that improvements can be made.

Similarly, if we feel that you have in some way misused the facilities provided, to the disadvantage of other patients, we feel we have the right to bring it to your attention

### **OUT OF HOURS CALLS**

We provide 24-hour cover, 365 days a year for emergencies. This cover is provided by ourselves and a deputizing service. Please remember that our Doctors work very hard and that any out of hours call is over and above their normal working week. Please do not call out of hours unless it is an emergency which cannot wait until the next surgery.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

We will offer you an appointment for an urgent case the same day. Please ring first thing in the morning to enable us to do this. For less urgent cases we will try to offer you an appointment within 48 hours.

Our reception staff will try and answer the telephone promptly. Should you wish to speak to a Doctor by telephone; a convenient time can be arranged through the reception staff.

### **HOME VISITS**

If a patient is too ill to attend the surgery, then a home visit will be arranged as appropriate. Please do not ask for a home visit unless it is absolutely genuine. Requests for home visits must reach the surgery before 10:00am, unless a genuine emergency arises later.

### **TEST RESULTS**

Test results can be obtained by calling reception AFTER 2:00pm thus avoiding clogging up the phone lines in the morning. Please remember that results take a little time to reach us, so please do not call before you have been asked to do so. If you don't call for your results, please ask the Doctor for them at your next appointment.

Enquiries concerning tests ordered by the hospital should be addressed to the hospital, unless you are specifically asked by the hospital to contact us.

### **PATIENTS**

All our patients are treated as individuals and partners in their health care, irrespective of ethnic origin or cultural and religious beliefs. We ask that you treat the staff at Woodlea House Surgery with the same courtesy and respect.

### **SERVICES**

Please ask at reception for a copy of our practice leaflet. This gives details of all our services.

### **FURTHER TREATMENT/SECOND OPINIONS**

If we feel that you require a second opinion or treatment unavailable at our practice, we will assist you in achieving this. We ask you not to arrange a specialist appointment without first discussing the matter fully with a Doctor.

### **PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

If you would like to join our Patient Participation Group (PPG), please ask at reception or visit our website where you will find lots of information and our latest reports

# Illnesses and Self Treatment

## Back pain

Most back pain is caused by misuse such as lifting heavy objects; be sensible and take things easy. Make sure you sit upright as possible or lie on a hard, flat surface, and use a support in the small of the back. Aspirin, Paracetamol or Ibuprofen will not only help relieve the pain but may also help to relieve inflammation. It is advisable to consult the doctor if pain persists for more than one week.

## Burns

Apply as much clean, cold water as possible to the whole area as fast as possible-seconds count. Keep cool water flowing over all the area until the pain subsides. This may take as long as 15 minutes. If the skin is unbroken or blistered, apply a loose, dry dressing. If the burn is larger than 3 or 5 inches (10-12cms) in diameter or if the skin is broken, consult your local A&E or practice nurse as soon as possible. Paracetamol may help with the pain.

## Chicken Pox

On day one a rash appears as small red patches about 3-4mm across. Within a few hours of these developing, small blisters appear in the centre of the patches. During the next 3 or 4 days further spots may appear and the earlier ones will turn crusty and fall off. Oily calamine lotion may be applied to soothe the often severe itching. Cool baths also help. The most infectious period is from 14 days before the rash appears (the child often has a slight cold then) and up to five days after it.

Children may return to school when all the spots have dried and crusted over, as long as they are well in themselves.

## Child with a temperature

Infections and teething are the main causes of children's temperatures. Most infections are mild and are growing up and gaining resistance to germs. They are usually caused by viruses so they do NOT need antibiotics (these only help bacterial infections).

The following advice should help:

1. Keep a supply of Paracetamol medicine, such as Calpol or Disprol, at home. (Don't wait to be caught out-almost every child needs medicine at some point). Do not give aspirin to children.
2. if your child feels hot and appears unwell, take his/her temperature if you have a thermometer. The normal temperature is 37.0 degrees Centigrade (98.4 degrees F). If the temperature is raised or you do not have a thermometer but you think your child has a temperature, cool him/her down as follows:-
  - a. Give the child Paracetamol in the dose advised on the bottle
  - b. Dress the child in loose clothes or a vest, cool the room down and let the air get to the body
  - c. Give plenty of cool drinks, clear fluid is best. Give a small amount every 5 minutes rather than expecting them to drink it all at once
  - d. Use an electric fan, if the child will tolerate it, try a normal temperature bath or shower and pour water over the shoulders
3. If this does not work and the child is particularly ill, contact the surgery. We will always fit in poorly children as soon as possible if brought to the surgery: it will ensure that they are seen sooner.
4. A child with a fever is likely to be restless at night, offer cool drinks and sponge their forehead if they wake.

Very rarely a child under 5 years will have a convulsion with a high temperature. The child suddenly shakes all over and becomes very still. It should subside within 5 minutes. Lay the child on his/her side and stay with them while it lasts. If there is another adult in the house, ask them to call the surgery, if not, call the surgery when the convulsion has stopped.

## Colds

The common cold has no magic cure. Drink plenty of fluids. If you have a headache or are feverish, take aspirin (if aged over 12) or Paracetamol. Antibiotics have no beneficial effect on viruses and often produce side effects

## Dental emergencies

Consult your dentist for regular checkups. Dental problems are the province of dentists not doctors, and they can prescribe both antibiotics and painkillers, just as doctors do. Once you have registered at a dental practice, there should be an out of hours dental emergency service available with him/her.

Holiday makers and people not registered with a dentist can consult any NHS dentist for advice or else telephone the emergency dental helpline 01202 854443. The out of hours number is 0845 7010401

If you or your child has a tooth knocked out, carefully pick up the tooth but do not attempt to wash and clean it, immediately put it into a little cold milk and take it and the patient to your own dentist.

## Sore throats

However painful, sore throats are usually caused by viruses and often associated with other cold symptoms. Treatment with Paracetamol (or possibly aspirin if an adult) is all that is necessary, and most will resolve naturally in three to four days. Therefore, a doctor's appointment is not necessary.

Occasionally, the cause is tonsillitis when the patient is feverish and generally unwell. Antibiotics may be necessary as well Paracetamol. Consult your doctor.

## Sprains

Remember **RICE**- Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation. Rest and elevate the affected part and apply Ice or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel for about 15-30 minutes. Then Compress with a crepe bandage and Elevate and rest until the discomfort has subsided. It may be painful for several days. Gradually mobilise.

## Sunburn

Remember prevention is better than cure! Apply a high factor sun cream (15-20 for adults and total sun block for babies and children)

Treat sun burn like any other burn. Applying after sun gel and calamine lotion may help a little, as well as taking Paracetamol.

## Worms

Threadworm is a common problem for preschool children, and occasionally older children and adults. It is spread by hand to mouth contact in the same way as a tummy bug. The worms are often noticed as little cotton thread like tiny worms in the person's motions. Sometimes the person make wake in the night with an itchy bottom. There is no cause for alarm; it is not a dangerous condition. Ask the surgery to prescribe some medicine to clear the infection. (Adults can buy medication over the counter)

## Diarrhoea and vomiting

This is a common condition, over 90% of cases being caused by a virus. The infection is cleared naturally by the body. It is important to drink plenty of clear fluids and to avoid all solid food and milk until the vomiting and diarrhoea have settled. For small children, Dioralyte sachets can be obtained from the chemist. Breast fed babies may continue breast milk and have Dioralyte sachets as well. These sachets replenish salts lost from the body due to the vomiting. Please do not try to make a salt solution yourself as the concentration is critical, and if wrong could make your child more unwell. Consult your doctor if the diarrhoea or vomiting does not respond to these measures, or if your child is not taking adequate fluids, or looks ill or drowsy.



## Head lice

Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene. Contrary to popular belief, they are fussy creatures who prefer clean hair! These small crawling insects are usually found in the hair near the ears and the back of the head. Medicated lotion can be obtained from the pharmacy. You should check all family members.

## Insect bites and stings

Antihistamine tablets and hydrocortisone cream can be obtained from a pharmacy without prescription and will usually relieve most symptoms. Bee stings should be scraped away rather than plucked to avoid squeezing the contents of the venom sac into the wound. Cotton wool soaked with vinegar for wasp stings and bicarbonate of soda for bee stings may help.

## Minor cuts and grazes

Wash and clean the wound thoroughly with soapy water. To stop bleeding, apply a clean handkerchief or dressing and press firmly on the wound for five minutes. Do not apply any kind of tourniquet to the affected limb or finger. Cover with a clean dry dressing.

## Nose bleeds

Sit in a chair (leaning forward with the mouth open), blow your nose to remove any clots first, then pinch together firmly the soft part of the nose below the bone for 10 minutes without letting go. Then let go, wait for 5 minutes and if still bleeding do the same again. Avoid blowing your nose for 24 hours afterwards. If symptoms persist consult your local A&E.

## Signs and symptoms of meningitis

Meningitis is extremely rare, however if you are worried seek advice from your doctor.

## Bacterial meningitis

Bacterial meningitis is very serious. In babies and young children, death can occur in a matter of hours if left untreated. In some cases, the acute illness subsides into a chronic state, which may lead to serious brain damage. **If you suspect meningitis you must seek urgent medical assistance.**

Symptoms may not be easy to identify because initially they can be similar to symptoms of flu. Any of the symptoms below may appear in any order over 1-2 days, or in a matter of hours. It is also possible that there may be additional symptoms.

## Symptoms in adults and older children may include:

- ✚ a constant generalised headache,
- ✚ confusion,
- ✚ a high temperature, although hands and feet may be cold,
- ✚ drowsiness,
- ✚ vomiting,
- ✚ stomach pain, sometimes with diarrhoea,
- ✚ rapid breathing,
- ✚ neck stiffness - moving the chin to the chest will be painful at the back of the neck,
- ✚ a rash of red or purple spots or bruises (or darker than normal, in dark skins) that does not fade when you press a glass tumbler or finger against it - this may not be present in the early stages,
- ✚ joint or muscle pain
- ✚ sensitivity to bright lights, daylight or even the television.

## Symptoms in babies and infants may include:

- ✚ high temperature, fever (possibly with cold hands and feet),
- ✚ vomiting and refusing feeds,
- ✚ high pitched moaning or whimpering cry,
- ✚ blank staring expression,
- ✚ pale itchy complexion,
- ✚ floppiness,
- ✚ dislike of being handled,
- ✚ fretful,
- ✚ neck retraction with arching of back,
- ✚ convulsions,
- ✚ lethargic and difficult to wake, and
- ✚ tense or bulging fontanelle (soft spot on head)

A recent study by The Meningitis Research Foundation has found that the key early warning signs of meningitis in children (under 17 years old) often include:

- ✚ cold hands and feet,
- ✚ leg pains, and
- ✚ abnormal skin colour.

These are symptoms of blood poisoning (septicaemia) that is often associated with meningitis. This is a medical emergency and needs urgent treatment with antibiotics. These symptoms can appear hours before such symptoms as sensitivity to bright light and a rash. **If you suspect your child had meningitis do not wait for a rash to appear but seek medical advice immediately.**

If there is a rash, the glass (tumbler) test can be used to determine if it might indicate septicaemia (blood poisoning). Press the side of a clear drinking glass onto the rash or bruises and check that they fade. If they do not fade, you should suspect septicaemia. In a small number of cases the rash may fade at first but may later change into one that does not fade.

## Viral meningitis

Viral meningitis is a less severe illness but, very rarely, can progress from headache, fever and drowsiness, to deep coma. In severe cases there may be weakness of the muscles, paralysis, speech disturbances, double vision or partial loss of the field of vision, and epileptic fits. Most people make a full recovery within one to two weeks. Occasionally there may be long term problems such as hearing or memory impairment

## Advice if someone dies

A number of matters need to be dealt with at this time of sadness and grief. The following information will, we hope, be useful and guide you through the first few difficult days when certain formalities must be attended to.

If someone dies you need to call a doctor. It is not necessary to move the patient. It is a legal requirement for a doctor to confirm that someone has died. If the doctor has recently seen the patient, a death certificate can normally be issued. You will need to register the death at the Registry office covering your area.

If the death is unexpected, the doctor will need to notify the Coroner who will then advise as to further arrangements.

The doctors and health visitors are pleased to offer any support you need. We also have contact numbers of organisations who can offer help, advice or support.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

Royal Bournemouth Hospital	303626
Poole Hospital NHS Trust	665511
St Ann's Hospital	708881
Christchurch Hospital	486261
Care Direct	0800 444 000
Bournemouth Cancer Care & Help Centre	709552
Dorset Drugs Advisory Service	01929 422 777
Dorset Healthline	0800 665 544
Alcohol Anonymous (emergency)	296000
Samaritans	551999
Cruse	302000
BPAS	558762

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