



# Harbury Surgery Newsletter

Winter 2012



\*\*\*Seasons Greetings from the Surgery\*\*\*

## Christmas Hours

« We close on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December at 12.30 pm and re-open on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> December «

« We close on Monday 31 December at 12.30pm and will re-open on 2 January 2013 «

If you become ill when we are closed you should contact either NHS direct on 08454647 or [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) for advice, the Out of Hours Service at Warwick Hospital on 03001 303040 or if necessary call 999 for an ambulance.

## Reminder of Dispensary Hours

The Dispensary is closed between 12.30 and 1.30pm each day and the Dispensary phones are off between 12.30 and 2.30pm each day. Reception staff **do not** have access to the Dispensary when it is closed, so please only order and collect medication during the opening hours. There is a repeat prescription ordering box located just inside the main doors to the Surgery, where requests can be left at any time the Surgery is open and you can also order online via the prescriptions option on our website [www.harburysurgery.org.uk/](http://www.harburysurgery.org.uk/)



**Please order and collect any medication in good time before we close for the Christmas and New Year holidays.**

## Health Screening

Free NHS Screening is available to you in Coventry and Warwickshire for:

**Breast Screening** - offered to women aged 50 to 70 every 3 years. Women aged 70 and over can self-refer.

**Cervical Screening** – offered to women aged 25 to 49 every 3 years and to women aged 50 to 64 every 5 years.

**Bowel Cancer Screening** – offered to men and women aged 60 to 69 every 2 years. Those aged 70+ can request screening by ringing 0800 707 6060.

**Diabetic Eye Screening** - offered annually to people with diabetes from the age of 12.

Coming soon – **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening** will be offered to all men in their 65<sup>th</sup> year in the near future. The screening programme is being gradually rolled out across England and will be offered everywhere by March 2013. Men over this age are able to self-refer once the programme is up and running in our area.

If you are offered a health screening, please take the offer up. Screening can save lives. More information on these screening programmes can be found at

<http://www.warwickshire.nhs.uk/YourHealth/Screening> and about the forthcoming AAA screening programme at <http://aaa.screening.nhs.uk/leaflet>

## Winter Health Risks

**Some health problems, such as asthma, sore throat and cold sores, are triggered or worsened by cold weather. Here's how to help your body deal with cold weather ailments.**

**Colds** - You can help prevent colds by washing your hands regularly. This destroys bugs that you may have picked up from touching surfaces used by other people, such as light switches and door handles. It's also important to keep the house and any household items, such as cups, glasses and towels, clean, especially if someone in your house is ill.

**Top tip:** If you get a cold, use disposable tissues instead of cloth handkerchiefs to avoid constantly re-infecting your own hands.

**Sore throat** - Sore throats are common in winter and are almost always caused by viral infections. There's some evidence that changes in temperature, such as going from a warm, centrally heated room to the icy outdoors, can also affect the throat.

**Top tip:** One quick and easy remedy for a sore throat is to gargle with warm salty water. It won't heal the infection, but it has anti-inflammatory properties and can have a soothing effect. Dissolve one teaspoon of salt in a glass of part-cooled boiled water.

**Asthma** - Cold air is a major trigger of asthma symptoms, such as wheezing and shortness of breath. People with asthma should be especially careful in winter.

**Top tip:** Stay indoors on very cold, windy days. If you do go out, wear a scarf over your nose and mouth. Be extra vigilant about taking your regular medications, and keep rescue inhalers close by and in a warm place.

**Norovirus** - Also known as the winter vomiting bug, norovirus is an extremely infectious stomach bug. It can strike all year round, but is more common in winter and in places such as hotels and schools. The illness is unpleasant but it's usually over within a couple of days.

**Top tip:** When people are ill with vomiting and diarrhoea, it's important to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Young children and the elderly are especially at risk. By drinking oral rehydration fluids (available from pharmacies), you can reduce the risks of dehydration.

**Painful joints** - Many people with arthritis say their joints become more painful in winter, though it's not clear why this is so. Only joint symptoms, such as pain and stiffness, are affected by the weather. There's no evidence that changes in the weather cause joint damage.

**Top tip:** Many people get a little depressed during the winter months and this can make them perceive pain more acutely. Everything feels worse, including medical conditions. Daily exercise can boost a person's mental and physical state. Swimming is ideal as it's easy on the joints.

**Cold sores** - Most of us recognise that cold sores are a sign that we're run down or under stress. While there's no cure for cold sores, you can reduce the chances of getting one by looking after yourself through winter.

**Top tip:** Every day, do things that make you feel less stressed, such as having a hot bath, going for a walk in the park or watching one of your favourite films.

**Cold hands** - Raynaud's phenomenon is a common condition that makes your fingers and toes change colour and become very painful in cold weather. Fingers can go white, then blue, then red and throb and tingle. It's a sign of poor circulation in the small blood vessels of the hands and feet. In severe cases, medication can help, but most people live with their symptoms.

**Top tip:** Don't smoke or drink caffeine (they can both worsen symptoms) and always wear warm gloves, socks and shoes when going out in cold weather.

**Dry skin** - Dry skin is a common condition and is often worse during the winter when environmental humidity is low. Moisturising is essential during winter. Contrary to popular belief, moisturising lotions and creams aren't absorbed by the skin. Instead, they act as a sealant to stop the skin's natural moisture from evaporating away. The best time to apply moisturiser is after a bath or shower while your skin is still moist, and again at bedtime.

**Top tip:** Have warm rather than hot showers. Water that is too hot makes skin feel more dry and itchy. Hot water will also make your hair look dull and dry.