Autumn & Winter Quay Points

The Patient Newsletter for East Quay Medical Centre 2026/27



NHS information on

Winter vaccinations and winter health

There are some things you can do to help yourself stay well in winter. This includes getting your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.

Flu vaccine

Getting your flu vaccine every year, if you're eligible, tops up your protection and reduces your risk of getting severe symptoms.

Who should have the flu vaccine

You can get the free NHS flu vaccine if you:

- are aged 65 or over (including those who will be 65 by 31 March 2027)
- are aged 18 to 64 and have certain long-term health conditions
- are pregnant
- live in a care home
- are the main carer for an older or disabled person, or receive a carer's allowance
- live with someone who has a weakened immune system
- are experiencing homelessness or staying in a homeless hostel or night shelter

Frontline health and social care workers can also get a flu vaccine through their employer.

Children's flu vaccine

The children's flu vaccine is recommended for:

- children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2026 (born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2024)
- school-aged children (Reception to Year 11)
- children aged 6 months to 17 years with certain long-term health conditions

Children can get vaccinated from 1 September 2026.
Find out about the children's flu vaccine, including how to get it.

How to get the flu vaccine

Most eligible people can get the flu vaccine from 1 October 2026
You may be able to get a flu vaccine from:

- your GP surgery
- a pharmacy that offers NHS flu vaccination
- your maternity service (if you're pregnant)
- your care home (if you live in a care home)
- your employer (if you're a health or social care worker)

If you're aged 18 or over, you can book a flu vaccination appointment online or in the NHS App now. You do not need to wait to be invited before arranging your vaccination.

Who should have the COVID-19 vaccine

You can get a COVID-19 vaccine if you:

- are aged 75 or over (including those who will be 75 by 31 January 2027)
- are aged 6 months to 74 years and have a weakened immune system because of a health condition or treatment
- live in a care home for older adults

How to get the COVID-19 vaccine

If you're eligible for the winter COVID-19 vaccine, you can book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment online or in the NHS App now.
Vaccination appointments will take place from 1 October 2026.
From 1 October 2026, you may also be able to get vaccinated at:

- a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site
- a local service, such as a community pharmacy or your GP surgery
- your care home (if you live in a care home for older adults)

You do not need to wait for an invitation before booking an appointment.

Other vaccinations

You may also be eligible for other vaccinations, including the:

- pneumococcal vaccine (if you're aged 65 or over)
- RSV vaccine (if you're pregnant, aged 75 or over, or live in a care home for older adults)

These vaccinations help protect against serious illnesses that are more common in the winter, including pneumonia.

Who's most at risk from cold weather?

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- people aged 65 and older
- babies and children under the age of 5
- people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- people who have a long-term health condition
- people with a disability
- pregnant women
- people who have a mental health condition

Get advice if you feel unwell

If you're 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it's important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell.

You can get help and advice from:

- NHS 111 – go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you are not sure what to do
- a pharmacy – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor
- your GP – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to

The sooner you get advice, the sooner you're likely to get better.

In an emergency, go to A&E immediately or call 999.

Keep warm and get help with heating

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Heat your home to a temperature that's comfortable for you. If you can, this should be at least 18°C in the rooms that you regularly use, such as your living room and bedroom. This is particularly important if you have a health condition. It's best to keep your bedroom windows closed at night.

Check your heating and cooking appliances are safe. Contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to make sure they're working properly. You can find an engineer from the Gas Safe Register website.

Make sure your home is fire safe. For fire safety advice specific to you and your home, visit the online home fire safety check website to complete a safety check for your home.

Make sure you're getting all the help that you're entitled to. There are grants, benefits and advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills.

Find out more about ways to save energy in your home from GOV.UK, or call the government helpline on 0800 444 202.

You can also find out more from GOV.UK about benefits and financial support if you're on a low income.

Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives

Remember that other people, such as older neighbours, friends and family members, may need some extra help over the winter. There's a lot you can do to help people who need support.

Icy pavements and roads can be very slippery, and cold weather can stop people from going out. Keep in touch with your friends, neighbours and family and ask if they need any practical help, or if they're feeling unwell.

Make sure they're stocked up with enough food supplies for a few days, in case they cannot go out.

If they do need to go out in the cold, encourage them to wear shoes with a good grip and a scarf around the mouth to protect them from cold air, and to reduce their risk of chest infections.

Make sure they get any prescription medicines before the holiday period starts and if bad weather is forecast.

If they need help over the holiday period when the GP surgery or pharmacy is closed or they're not sure what to do, go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111.

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council or call the Age UK helpline on 0800 678 1602 (8am to 7pm every day). You can find your local council on GOV.UK.

If you're concerned the person may have hypothermia, go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111.


HM Government
NHS
SMASH
FLU & COVID-19
GET VACCINATED
GET WINTER STRONG
If you have a long term health condition, like John, who has diabetes, check your eligibility and book now at
nhs.uk/wintervaccinations

Public Health England

NHS

Shingles vaccination

Who's eligible?

Aged 70 years?

Plus anyone in their 70s who was born after 1 September 1942 and has not yet had the vaccine.

Aged 78 years?

Plus anyone aged 79 years old who has missed out on the vaccine.



Protect yourself from the pain of shingles – speak to your GP surgery about having your vaccine today!

immunisation

The safest way to protect children and adults

RSV vaccine



The RSV vaccine helps protect against infection with RSV, a common virus that can make babies and older adults seriously ill. It's offered on the NHS if you're pregnant or at higher risk of getting seriously ill from RSV.

What the RSV vaccine is for

The RSV vaccine helps protect against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infections.
RSV is a common cause of coughs and colds. Most people get it several times during their life.
It usually gets better by itself, but in some people (especially babies and older adults) it can cause illnesses, such as:

- pneumonia (a lung infection)
- bronchiolitis (a chest infection that affects babies)

These illnesses can cause serious breathing problems. They may need to be treated in hospital and can be life-threatening.
Getting an RSV infection can also make your symptoms worse if you have a lung condition, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
The RSV vaccine helps reduce the risk of serious breathing problems like pneumonia and bronchiolitis.

Who should have the RSV vaccine

You can get a free RSV vaccination on the NHS if:

- you're 28 weeks pregnant or more – the vaccine is recommended during every pregnancy to help protect your baby after they're born
- you're aged 75 or over
- you're aged 65 to 74 and have a weakened immune system or have a long-term lung condition (this does not include asthma that is under control)
- you live in a care home for older adults

How to get the RSV vaccine

There are different ways to get the RSV vaccine.

If you're pregnant
You should be offered the RSV vaccine around the time of your 28-week antenatal appointment. Getting vaccinated as soon as possible from 28 weeks will provide the best protection for your baby. But the vaccine can be given later if needed, including up until you go into labour.
Speak to your maternity service or GP surgery if you're 28 weeks pregnant or more and have not been offered the vaccine.
If you're aged 75 or over
Your GP surgery will contact you about getting the RSV vaccine. This may be by letter, text, phone call or email.
If you're aged 65 to 74 and have a weakened immune system or long-term lung condition
Your GP surgery will contact you about getting the RSV vaccine. This may be by letter, text, phone call or email.
If you live in a care home for older adults
Speak to a member of staff at your care home about how to get the RSV vaccine.

How the RSV vaccine is given

The RSV vaccine is given as an injection into your upper arm.
Unlike some vaccines (such as flu or COVID-19 vaccines), the RSV vaccine is given all year round.
If you're pregnant, you should have the vaccine during every pregnancy. This will help make sure each baby is protected for the first 6 months after they're born, when they're most likely to get seriously ill if they get RSV.
Older adults only need 1 dose, which should protect them for several years.

Having the RSV vaccine at the same time as other vaccines

If you're pregnant, you can have the RSV vaccine at the same time as other pregnancy vaccines, such as the whooping cough and flu vaccines.
But it's best to have them as soon as they're offered rather than waiting to have them at the same time.
The RSV vaccine is not usually given at the same appointment as flu vaccines in older adults, but you can have them at the same time if a doctor or nurse thinks it's needed.
You can have it at the same time as other vaccines, such as the COVID-19, shingles and pneumococcal vaccines.

Who can and cannot have the RSV vaccine

Most people who are eligible for the RSV vaccine can have it.
You only cannot have the vaccine if you've had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine or an ingredient in the vaccine.

Getting vaccinated if you're unwell

If you have a high temperature, wait until you're feeling better before having the vaccine.

Contact your GP surgery, pharmacy or maternity service to rearrange your appointment.

ACTIVE TRAVEL, BETTER FOR YOU.

EAST QUAY
MEDICAL CENTRE

Better for your wellbeing.
Better for our community.

Healthier journeys
lead to healthier lives.

Thank you for choosing
a more active way to visit us.



Active travel to your appointment can make a big difference to your physical health, mental wellbeing and everyday experience.

BOOST YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH

Walking or cycling helps improve heart health, strengthen muscles, support weight management and boost energy.

SUPPORT YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING

Being active can reduce stress, lift your mood, improve sleep and leave you feeling more positive.

LESS STRESS, MORE TIME

Avoid car park stress and save time looking for a space.

Arrive relaxed and ready for your appointment.

BETTER FOR YOUR WALLET & THE PLANET

Save money on fuel and parking.

Every active journey helps create a cleaner, healthier community.

Small steps. Big difference.

Thank you for choosing an active way to visit us.

Your health. Our community. A better future together.

Make it part of your day!

- Park and walk the rest
- Cycle and feel the benefits
- Combine with public transport if you can
- Enjoy fresh air, clear your mind and feel good

We're glad you're here.

EAST QUAY MEDICAL CENTRE IS A PARK RUN PRACTICE

What is St Matthew's Field parkrun?

A free, fun, and friendly weekly 5k community event. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate – it's up to you!

When is it?

Every Saturday at 9:00am.

Where is it?

The event takes place at St. Matthew's Field & The Meads Eco Park, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 7HD. See our course page online for more details.

What does it cost to join in?

Nothing - it's free! but please register online before you first come along. Only ever register with parkrun once and don't forget to bring a scannable copy of your barcode. If you forget it, you won't get a time.

How fast do I have to be?

We all take part for our own enjoyment. Please come along and join in whatever your pace! You can walk, run or jog or a bit of all of these.

St Matthew's Field parkrun needs you!

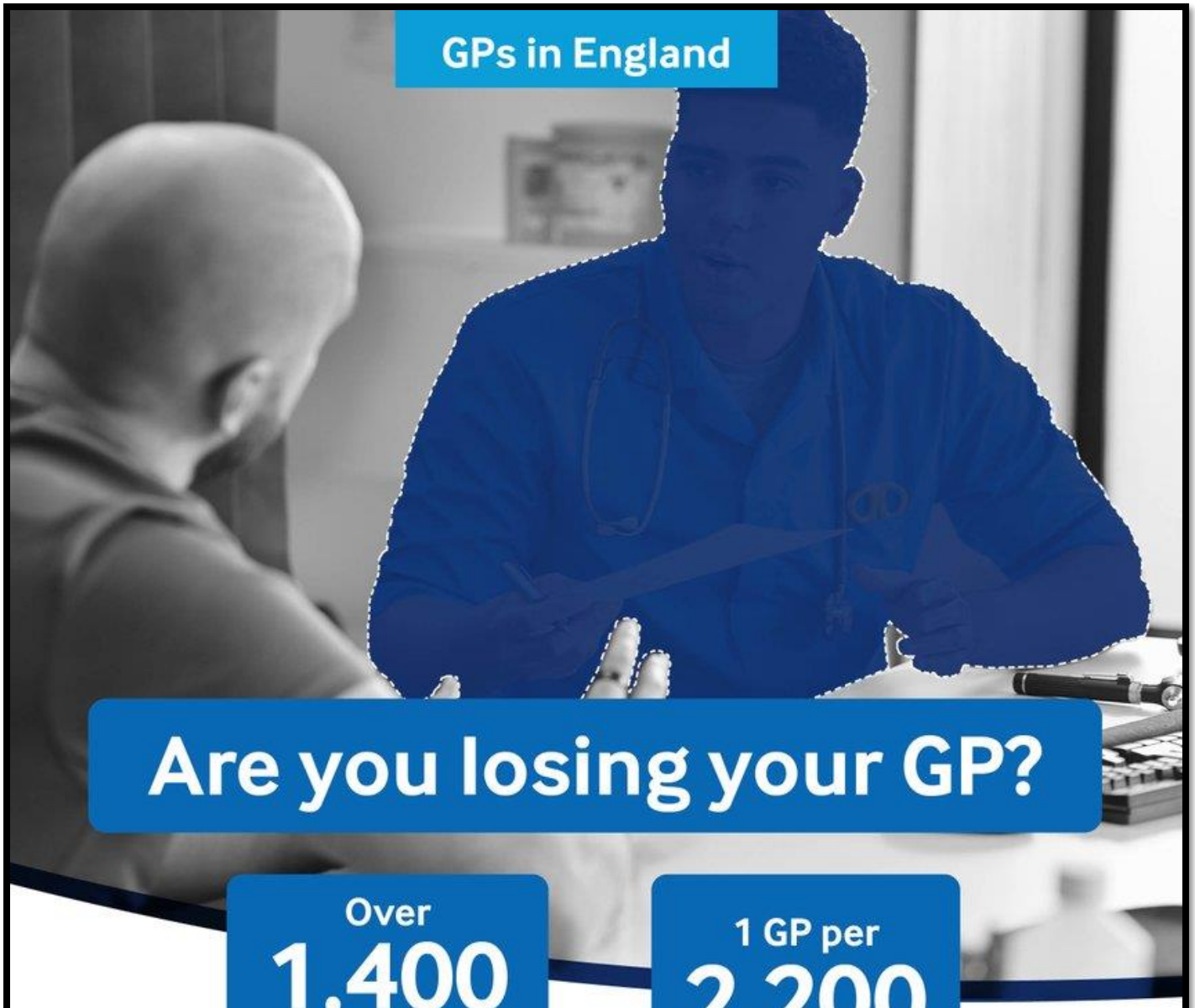
It is entirely organised by volunteers - email stmatthewsfield@parkrun.com to help.

If you don't want to run, come along and volunteer.

See our volunteer page for information on how you can get involved.

We're friendly!

Every week we grab a post parkrun coffee at Bridgwater Cricket Club - please come and join us!



Are you losing your GP?

Over
1,400
practices gone since 2015

1 GP per
2,200
patients

One doctor cannot do the work of two.

We are fighting to protect your practice.

Sign the petition, support your GP in taking action to protect your practice.

BMA

Planning ahead is for everyone...

any age, at any stage.



Record your future healthcare wishes.

NHS Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

Start here: scan the QR code or pick up a 'Somerset Planning Ahead' booklet from your GP surgery

somerset.eolcare.uk

SIT & WAIT BLOOD SERVICE

AT VICTORIA PARK

VICTORIA PARK HEALTH & WELLBEING HUB
VICTORIA PARK DRIVE
BRIDGWATER
TA6 7AS

01278 720270

Bridgwater Bay PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

FOR PATIENTS **OVER 16** REGISTERED AT THE FOLLOWING GP Practices:
CANNINGTON, CRANLEIGH GARDENS, EAST QUAY, NORTH PETHERTON, POLDEN, REDGATE, SOMERSET BRIDGE, TAUNTON ROAD & QUANTOCK

THIS SERVICE IS AVAILABLE MONDAY-FRIDAY BETWEEN THE TIMES OF

8:45- 12:45

Please note that if we reach capacity before 12.45 you may be asked to return for our next available clinic

YOU MAY BE SIGNPOSTED TO THIS SERVICE RATHER THAN BEING BOOKED A BLOOD TEST AT YOUR PRACTICE

WAIT TIMES MAY VARY

Royal College of General Practitioners

NHS

Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice



We are an Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

This means that, as part of the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, we have a dedicated clinician who has a specialist knowledge of military related health conditions and veteran specific health services. This is important in helping ex-forces to get the best care and treatment.

If you are ex-forces, please let your GP know to help ensure you are getting the best possible care.

To find out more, ask your nurse or GP.

Medicine Sick Day Rules

NHS Somerset

When you are unwell with any of the following:

- **Vomiting or diarrhoea (unless only minor)**
- **Dehydration e.g., from fever and sweats**

Restart when you are well (after 24-48 hours of eating and drinking normally)

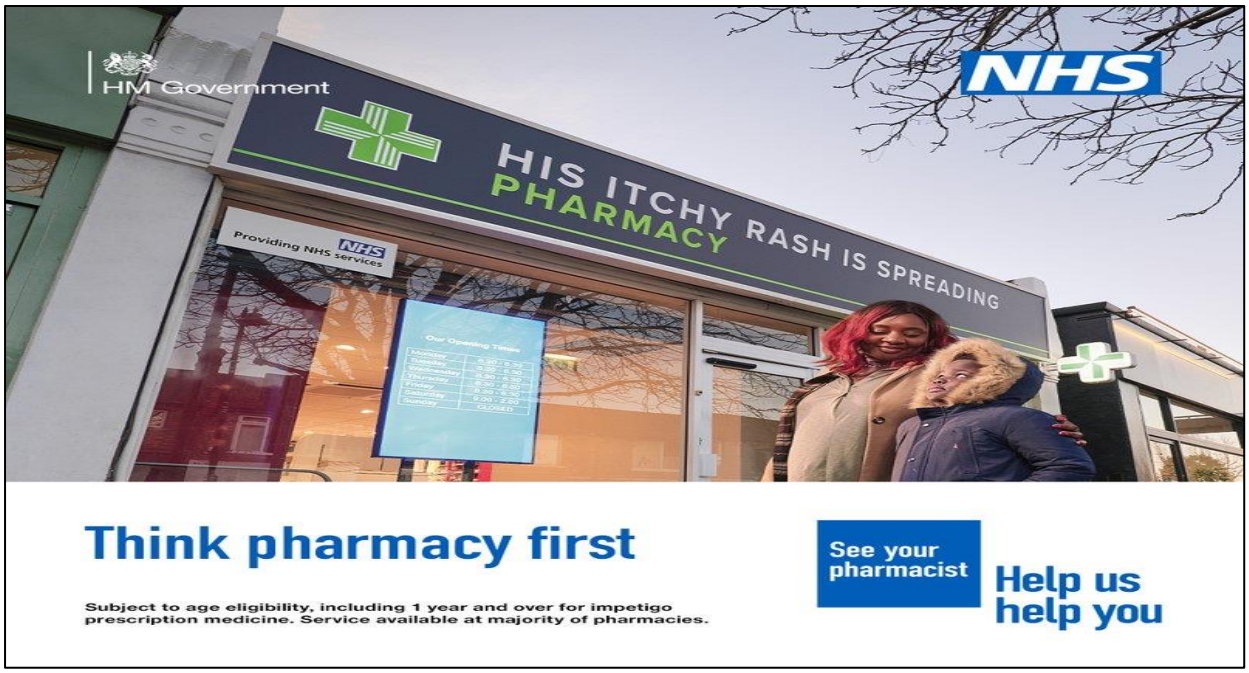
Then STOP taking the medicines listed below on SICK DAYS

ACE or ARBs:	*e.g. lisinopril, perindopril, ramipril or losartan, candesartan, valsartan*
NSAIDs:	*e.g. ibuprofen, diclofenac, naproxen*
Diuretics:	*e.g. furosemide, spironolactone, indapamide, bendroflumethiazide*
Certain medicines for diabetes:	*e.g. metformin or 'flozins:*
Other medicines:	

If you are in any doubt, contact your pharmacist, GP or nurse.

somicb.medicinesmanagementteam@nhs.net

OUR SOMERSET Together we can



Think Pharmacy First" is a UK-wide NHS initiative encouraging people to visit their local pharmacy for minor health concerns and some prescription-only conditions, rather than their GP. Launched in January 2024, the Pharmacy First service allows pharmacists to provide advice, treatment, and even prescription-only medication for conditions like UTIs, shingles, impetigo, infected insect bites, sinusitis, sore throats, and ear infections, without the need for a GP appointment or referral.

How it Works

- **Self-referral:**
  You can walk into a pharmacy and speak to a pharmacist about your symptoms.
- **Free consultations:**
  The consultations are free of charge.
- **Treatment:**
  The pharmacist can offer advice and treatment, and if clinically appropriate, prescribe and supply medication, including antibiotics and antivirals, for certain conditions.
- **Cost of medication:**
  If you are prescribed medication, standard prescription charges will apply.

Conditions Covered by Pharmacy First

- Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) in women aged 16-64
- Shingles (for those aged 18 and over)
- Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection, for those aged 1 year and over)
- Infected Insect Bites (for those aged 1 year and over)
- Sinusitis (for those aged 12 and over)
- Sore Throat (for those aged 5 and over)
- Earache / Otitis Media (Middle ear infections, for those aged 1 to 17 years)

Why Use Pharmacy First?

- **Accessibility:**
  It provides easy and prompt access to advice and treatment from a healthcare professional without the need to see a GP or make an appointment.
- **Convenience:**
  Local pharmacies are often more accessible, allowing you to get the care you need quickly.
- **Reduced GP workload:**

  By managing minor ailments, pharmacies help free up GP appointments for more serious conditions.

Move More with your Long-Term Health Condition

Inspiring and supporting people with health conditions to be active

Over 1 in 4 people live with at least one long-term health condition and these numbers are rising.

However, being active can help to manage over 20 long-term conditions, such as depression and type 2 diabetes; it reduces the risk of developing some conditions by up to 40%.

We have put together some ideas for you to use to get started. Remember, it's important to find movement that you enjoy and that works for you - that way you will stick to it!

Hints and Tips

Starting out can feel overwhelming; our relationship with physical activity is shaped from a very early age but it doesn't have to affect how we move in adulthood. Here are some hints and tips from SASP so you can get started right away.

- Try starting with short, gentle activities and build up at your own pace.
- If you enjoy being around others, consider a group activity or a gentle class.
- Focus on consistency rather than intensity, a little movement often is better than none.
- Choose activities that feel achievable and fit into your daily routine.



HYPERTENSION

Think you may have a high blood pressure?

Leaving hypertension undiagnosed can lead to serious health conditions. It is vital to get your blood pressure checked.



Hypertension can cause:

- Kidney Disease
- Strokes
- Aortic Aneurysms
- Vascular Dementia
- Heart Disease
- Heart Failure
- Heart Attacks

Even the smallest change will reduce your risk

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

You are eligible for a free NHS blood pressure check if :

- You are over the age of 40
- Live in England
- Are not already diagnosed with a high blood pressure
- Have not had a blood pressure check within the last 6 months

Local Pharmacies to check your Blood Pressure At:

- Rowlands
- Stockmoor
- Cranleigh Gardens
- Asda
- Superdrug

Grab a leaflet to find out more

HYPERTENSION

Learn more about high blood pressure

About Hypertension

Hypertension is the medical term to describe those that suffer from having a high blood pressure. This would be anything over a reading of 135/85 for under 80 year olds or 145/85 for anyone aged 80 and over.

It is said that in every 1 in 9 people have hypertension but aren't aware they have it. By having undiagnosed hypertension, you are at a higher risk of life-changing medical conditions. These consist of:

- **Kidney Disease**
- **Strokes**
- **Aortic Aneurysms**
- **Vascular Dementia**
- **Heart Disease**
- **Heart Failure**
- **Heart Attacks**

A diagnosis of hypertension will help you to monitor and manage your blood pressure. Even the slightest change can significantly reduce your risk of the above conditions.

Local Pharmacies

- Many pharmacies now offer NHS blood pressure checks to help diagnose those suffering from a high blood pressure. This service is free to those that are eligible. You are eligible if :
- **You are aged 40 and over**
- **Live in England**
- **Have not had a blood pressure check in the last 6 months**

If you are already diagnosed with a high blood pressure then you are not eligible for a free pharmacy test however it can be monitored at your GP surgery. You can also purchase your own blood pressure monitor or loan one from the library. Local pharmacies that offer this service are:

- **Rowlands**
- **Stockmoor**
- **Cranleigh Gardens**
- **Asda**
- **Superdrug**

To find out more about having your blood pressure checked at a pharmacy, find information on the NHS website, **https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-that-offers-free-blood-pressure-checks/**

Rowlands Pharmacy
TA6 4GP
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 9am-6pm

Stockmoor Pharmacy
TA6 6WU
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8:45am-6:15pm
SATURDAY: 9am-1pm

Cranleigh Gardens Pharmacy
TA6 5JS
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8am-7pm
SATURDAY: 9am-1pm
SUNDAY: 3pm-8pm

Asda Pharmacy
TA6 5AZ
MONDAY-SATURDAY: 9am-9pm
SUNDAY: 10am-4pm

Superdrug Pharmacy
TA6 4AB
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 9am-7pm
SATURDAY: 9am-6pm
SUNDAY: 10am4pm

Boots Pharmacy
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 9am-5:30pm
SATURDAY: 8:30am-5:30pm
Sunday: 10am-4pm

Receiving Help at the Practice

If you are concerned that you have a high blood pressure you should contact your GP practice.

After contacting the surgery, you will be put in the care of the clinical team who will carry out any further investigations – this is often 7 days of blood pressure readings, and then, if needed blood tests and ECGs if needed.

Your GP surgery will discuss lifestyle changes and offer medication if you need this.

Preventing Hypertension

Although it is not always possible, hypertension can some times be prevented. This can be done by living a healthy lifestyle; this involves:

- **Having a healthy diet**
- **Limiting or not drinking caffeine**
- **Limiting or not drinking alcohol**
- **Stopping smoking**
- **Getting active**

Although these can be hard sacrifices and changes to make, it is will benefit your health and well being.

If you are struggling with the above lifestyle changes. There is lots of information online on the NHS website: **https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/**

For support to improve your Health and Wellbeing, book with our NHS Health and Wellbeing coaches – refer yourself here: **https://www.sasp.co.uk/forms/view/hwc**

Bridgwater Foodbank

Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau
Health Visitors
The Alfred Jewel Benifice
Home Start
Knightstone Housing Association
The Salvation Army
POD1 Social Services
Homes in Sedgemoor
Avon & Somerset Probation Service

Do you have a temporary crisis?

The Bridgwater foodbank can help

If you are deciding whether you **eat or heat,** we could be the answer to your dilemma

If you go to one of the approved care professional bodies they may be able to get you the help you badly need.



East Quay Medical Centre surgery car parking



Wickes Car Park

Wickes have been in contact, and the store manager has kindly confirmed that he is happy for East Quay Patients to park in the customer car park whilst having an appointment at Esat Quay

It is important to avoid parking near the Wickes loading bay and also opposite the exits, as large lorries need to park up and unload. So for safety of the road users and vehicles, avid parking near the loading bay of exits.

Of course we encourage those who use the car park to visit the store and support them too.

We at East Quay really appreciate Wickes being such kind neighbours and thank the Store Manager for reaching out.

Disabled Parking Bays are located at the front of the Surgery

Please remember when parking in the surgery car park that the yellow disabled parking bays are only to be used by Blue Badge holders.

The bays are NOT for dropping off, or to be parked in without displaying a blue badge

Not all disabilities are visible, but please respect the people who do park in these parking bays who are blue badge holders

Thank you



TEXT MESSAGES

We have been using text messaging more – for general messages, as well as reminders.

- We also now use them for messages from the GP like links and test results, there are of course systems for those who don't have or use their mobiles phones.
- You can use your NHS app to check the number we have for you. Or when you next call or have an appointment, you can check the number we have for you.
- We also now send out links to allow appointments like vaccinations to booked via your surgery.
- If you do not want us to text you at all, please let us know by calling or emailing the surgery.

