Spring and Summer Quay Points

The Patient Newsletter for East Quay Medical Centre 2026





It may be more appropriate to have your NHS consultation with a trained pharmacist instead of the GP practice. You can choose a pharmacy convenient to you and we will arrange this for you.

Your consultation will either be by phone or video call, or you can go into the pharmacy. With your consent, the pharmacist will let us know what happened at your consultation to make sure your medical record is updated.

Ask us for more information



Hay fever

Hay fever, or seasonal allergic rhinitis, causes symptoms like sneezing, itchy/watery eyes, and a runny/blocked nose. It is caused by an immune response to pollen, often worse from March to September. While no cure exists, treatments include antihistamines, nasal sprays, and avoiding allergens, with symptoms often lasting throughout the pollen season.

Symptoms of Allergic Rhinitis (Hay fever)

- **Sneezing** and coughing.
- **Runny or blocked nose**.
- **Itchy, red or watery eyes** (allergic conjunctivitis).
- **Itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears**
- **Fatigue**, headache, earache, and sinus pain.
- **Loss of smell**.



Causes and Triggers

Hay fever is an allergic reaction to pollen from trees, grass, and weeds, or sometimes mould spores. When these are inhaled, the body releases histamine, causing inflammation in the nose, eyes, and airways.

- **Tree Pollen:** March – April.
- **Grass Pollen:** May - July.
- **Weed Pollen:** June – August.
- **Mould Spores:** September – October.

Duration

Symptoms are typically seasonal, usually appearing between late March and September, particularly when it is warm, humid, and windy. However, some individuals may suffer for several months if allergic to both tree and grass pollen.

Treatments and Management

- **Medication:** Antihistamine tablets (e.g., cetirizine, loratadine, fexofenadine), nasal sprays (steroid sprays for inflammation), and eye drops.
- **Prevention:** Wear sunglasses, put petroleum jelly around nostrils to trap pollen, shower/change clothes after being outside, and keep windows closed.
- **Alternatives:** If over-the-counter options fail, a doctor may recommend immunotherapy.

Risk Factors

- **Family History:** It often runs in families.
- **Allergic Conditions:** People with asthma or eczema are more likely to develop it.
- **Age:** It commonly starts in childhood and often improves with age.

When to Seek Care

Consult a pharmacist for over-the-counter remedies first. If symptoms are severe, affecting daily life, or not responding to treatment, see a GP.

Are you travelling abroad this summer?

If you plan to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some of the serious diseases in other parts of the world.

Vaccinations are available to protect you against infections such as yellow fever, typhoid and hepatitis A.

In the UK, the NHS routine immunisation (vaccination) schedule protects you against a number of diseases but does not cover all of the infectious diseases found overseas.

Changes to service at East Quay Medical Centre.

The main change to our service is that we are unable to provide a service for any non- NHS vaccines at the current time. However, not to worry! You can still get your much needed travel vaccines from other providers. The easiest option for you to get your travel vaccinations now would be to visit a comprehensive travel service, as they will be able to do all of your vaccinations at once. Some providers include:

- Boots Pharmacy
- Superdrug Pharmacy
- Bath Travel Clinic (NOMAD)
- Masta Travel Health

You can find other providers by searching online or phoning around to pharmacies.

We know it is far from ideal, and we apologise for making this a little harder. While we can still offer travel advice and NHS vaccines, we can't provide the full service of all vaccines needed due to some not being NHS funded and because we need to focus all of our resources on medical needs due to unprecedented demand and need post-covid, also due to pressures already within the NHS. Rest assured; we can however provide you with an overview of your immunisation history it this is needed by the travel vaccination service that you go to. You will just need to let us know.

Which travel vaccines do I need?

Some countries require proof of vaccination (for example, for polio or yellow fever vaccination), which must be documented on an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) before you enter or when you leave a country.
Not all travel vaccinations are available free on the NHS, even if they're recommended for travel to a certain area.
Other non-NHS travel vaccines will be charged.
You'll have to pay for travel vaccinations against:

- hepatitis B
- Japanese encephalitis
- meningitis vaccines
- rabies
- tick-borne encephalitis
- tuberculosis (TB)
- yellow fever

Yellow fever vaccines are only available from designated centres.

The cost of travel vaccines that are not available on the NHS will vary, depending on the vaccine and number of doses you need. It's worth considering this when budgeting for your trip.

Which travel vaccines are free?

The following travel vaccines are available free on the NHS if your GP practice is signed up to provide vaccination (immunisation) services.

•polio (given as a combined diphtheria/tetanus/polio jab)
•typhoid
•hepatitis A

These vaccines are free because they protect against diseases thought to represent the greatest risk to public health if they were brought into the country.

How do I stay healthy on my trip?

Water

Diseases can be caught from drinking contaminated water, or swimming in it.
Unless you know the water, supply is safe where you are staying,
ONLY USE (in order of preference)

1. Boiled water
2. Bottled water or canned drinks
3. Water treated by a sterilising agent.

This includes water used to make ice cubes in drinks and water for cleaning your teeth

Swimming

It is safer to swim in water that is well chlorinated. If you are travelling to Africa, South America or some parts of the Caribbean, avoid swimming in freshwater lakes and streams. You can catch a parasitic disease called schistosomiasis from such places. This disease is also known as Bilharzia. It is also wise never to go barefoot, but to wear protective footwear when out, even on the beach. Other diseases can be caught from sand and soil, particularly wet soil.

Personal Hygiene

Many diseases are transmitted by what is known as the 'faecal-oral' route. To help prevent this, always wash your hands with soap and clean water after going to the toilet, before eating and before handling food. Using hand gel is another sensible option.

Insect Bites

Mosquitoes, certain types of flies, ticks and bugs can cause many different diseases. e.g. malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever. Some bite at night, but some during daytime so protection is always needed.

Avoid being bitten by:

- Cover up skin as much as possible if going out at night (mosquitoes that transmit malaria bite from dusk until dawn). Wear loose fitting clothes, long sleeves, trousers or long skirts.
- Use insect repellents on exposed skin. (DEET containing products are the most effective. A content of up to 50% DEET is recommended for tropical destinations). Clothes can be sprayed with repellents too or clothing specific sprays. Check suitability for children on the individual products. If using sunscreen always apply first, followed by an insect repellent spray on top.
- If room is not air conditioned, but is screened, close shutters early evening and spray room with knockdown insecticide spray. In malarious regions, if camping, or sleeping in unprotected accommodation, always sleep under a mosquito net (impregnated with permethrin). Avoid camping near areas of stagnant water, these are common breeding areas for mosquitoes etc.
- Electric insecticide vaporisers are very effective as long as there are no power failures!
- There is no scientific evidence that electric buzzers, savoury yeast extract, tea tree oil, bath oils, garlic and vitamin B are effective.
- Homeopathic and herbal medications should NEVER be used as an alternative to conventional measures for malaria prevention.

How to stay safe on my travels

Personal safety and security

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provide excellent information about this. They have information for many different types of travel and also advise on travel to specific destinations in times of political unrest and natural disasters. Please go to their website for more information at

https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office

Insurance cover

•Take out adequate insurance cover for your trip. This should possibly include medical repatriation as without it, this service is extremely expensive if needed.
•If you have any pre existing medical conditions, make sure you inform the insurance company of these details and check the small print of the policy thoroughly.
•If you travel to a European Union country, make sure you have obtained an EHIC card before you travel which takes some time to obtain. Further information about the EHIC is found at **http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/Applyingandrenewing.aspx**
•Please note, additional travel insurance is still advised even if you have an EHIC card

Air Travel

It is sensible on any long haul flight to be comfortable in your seat. Exercise your legs, feet and toes while sitting every half an hour or so and take short walks whenever feasible. Upper body and breathing exercises can further improve circulation. Drink plenty of water and be sensible about alcohol intake which in excess leads to dehydration. Further information can be obtained from the websites detailed at the end of this leaflet with more specific advice and information on travel-related deep vein thrombosis.

Sun and Heat

Sunburn and heat-stroke cause serious problems in travellers but in the long term can be a serious cause of skin cancer. There is no such thing as a safe suntan, but the following advice should be taken:

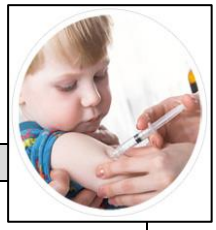
Precautionary guidelines

•Increase sun exposure gradually, with a 20-minute limit initially.
•Use sun blocks which contain both UVA and UVB protection and sufficient sun protection factor (SPF) and a minimum of SPF 15. Children under 3 years should have a minimum of SPF 25 and babies under 6 months should be kept out of the sun at all times. Reapply often and always after swimming and washing. Read manufacturer instructions
•Always apply sunscreen first followed by an insect repellent spray on top
•Wear protective clothing – sunhats, T shirts and sunglasses etc.
•Avoid going out between 11am - 3pm, when the sun's rays are strongest
•Take special care of children and those with pale skin/red hair
•Drink extra fluids in a hot climate – be aware alcohol can make you dehydrated

Enjoy your vacation!



NHS VACCINATION SCHEDULE



Vaccines for babies under 1 year old

Age	Vaccines
8 weeks	6-in-1 vaccine (1st dose) Rotavirus vaccine (1st dose) MenB vaccine (1st dose)
12 weeks	6-in-1 vaccine (2nd dose) MenB vaccine (2nd dose) Rotavirus vaccine (2nd dose)
16 weeks	6-in-1 vaccine (3rd dose) Pneumococcal vaccine (1st dose)

Vaccines for children aged 1 to 15 years

Age	Vaccines
1 year	MMRV vaccine (1st dose for children born on or after 1 January 2025) Pneumococcal vaccine (2nd dose) MenB vaccine (3rd dose)
1 year and 6 months (18 months)	6-in-1 vaccine (4th dose for children born on or after 1 July 2024) MMRV vaccine (1st or 2nd dose for children born on or after 1 July 2024)
2 to 15 years	Children's flu vaccine (every year until children finish Year 11 of secondary school)
3 years and 4 months	4-in-1 pre-school booster vaccine MMRV vaccine (1st or 2nd dose for children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 December 2024)
12 to 13 years	HPV vaccine
14 years	Td/IPV vaccine (3-in-1 teenage booster) MenACWY vaccine

Vaccines for adults

Age	Vaccines
65 years	Flu vaccine (given every year after turning 65) Pneumococcal vaccine Shingles vaccine (if you turned 65 on or after 1 September 2023)
70 to 79 years	Shingles vaccine
75 to 79 years	RSV vaccine
75 years and over	COVID-19 vaccine (usually given in spring and winter)

Vaccines for pregnant women

When it is offered	Vaccines
During flu season	Flu vaccine in pregnancy
From 16 weeks pregnant	Whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine
From 28 weeks pregnant	RSV vaccine

Extra vaccines for at-risk people

Some vaccines are only available on the NHS for groups of people who need extra protection.

Vaccines for at-risk babies and children

At-risk group	Vaccines
Babies born to mothers who have hepatitis B	Hepatitis B vaccine at birth and 4 weeks, also at 12 months for babies born on or before 30 June 2024
Children born in areas of the country where there are high numbers of TB cases	BCG tuberculosis (TB) vaccine at around 4 weeks

Children whose parents or grandparents were born in a country with many cases of TB	BCG tuberculosis (TB) vaccine at around 4 weeks
Children 6 months to 17 years old with long-term health conditions	Children's flu vaccine every year
Children 6 months to 17 years old who have a weakened immune system	COVID-19 vaccine, usually given in spring and winter

Vaccines for people with underlying health conditions

At-risk group	Vaccines
Problems with the spleen, for example caused by sickle cell disease or coeliac disease	MenACWY vaccine MenB vaccine Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine
Cochlear implants	Pneumococcal vaccine
Chronic respiratory and heart conditions, such as severe asthma or heart failure	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine
Chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease or a learning disability	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine
Diabetes	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine
Chronic kidney disease	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine Hepatitis B vaccine
Chronic liver conditions	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine Hepatitis A vaccine Hepatitis B vaccine
Haemophilia	Hepatitis A vaccine Hepatitis B vaccine
Weakened immune system caused by treatments or disease	Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine Shingles vaccine (if aged 18 or over)
Complement disorders or people receiving complement inhibitor therapies	MenACWY vaccine MenB vaccine Pneumococcal vaccine Flu vaccine
People with a weakened immune system, and people who live in a care home for older adults	COVID-19 vaccine, usually given in spring and winter

Important

If you're starting college or university, you should make sure you've already had:

- the MenACWY vaccine – which protects against serious infections like meningitis. You can still ask your GP for this vaccine until your 25th birthday.
- 2 doses of the MMR vaccine – as there are outbreaks of mumps and measles at universities. If you have not previously had 2 doses of MMR, you can still ask your GP for the vaccine.
- the HPV vaccine – which helps protect against genital warts and cancers caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV), such as cervical cancer.

Non-urgent advice: Speak to your GP surgery if:

- you think you or your child have missed any vaccinations
- you or your child has a vaccination appointment – but you've missed it or cannot attend

Your GP surgery can book or rearrange an appointment.

It's best to have vaccines on time, but you can still catch up on most vaccines if you miss them.

From GOV.UK

Page last reviewed: Dec 2026



You can now have your bloods done at Victoria Park Health and Wellbeing Hub

As long as you have the forms/labels or we have added them at the practice, the team at Victoria Park Health and Wellbeing Hub can take your blood.
The service is now Monday to Friday 8.45-12.45.
This is a walk in service (so there may be a slight delay)
Call 01278 720270

Bridgwater Bay PCN have produced a fantastic set of podcasts on womens health issues.

They are on Spotify but you can access them through any internet browser

They are 15 minutes long and provide a really helpful overview of various topics, from cancer screening to menopause to heavy menstrual bleeding

If you are a woman or have a woman in your life – please have a listen

https://open.spotify.co./episode/4Z1slAbbWAcwscCUozI8SF

Our projects

One of our main aims is to encourage and engage patients with improving their health and wellbeing through local and national initiatives. These projects offer advice and practical solutions to help patients achieve their health and wellbeing goals.

We work with national programmes like **National Diabetes Prevention Programme**, **NHS Better Health** and **Targeted Lung Health Care**. Locally, our work includes the **Complete Community Care** project which encourages new and young mums to increase their activity to improve their health and wellbeing.



East Quay Medical Centre is a Parkrun Surgery

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.

What does it cost to join in?

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

How fast do I have to be?

We all take part for our own enjoyment. Please come along and join in whatever your pace!

St Matthew's Field parkrun needs you!

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

We're friendly!
Every week we grab a post parkrun coffee at Bridgwater Cricket Club – please come and join us.





We have First Contact Physiotherapists at the surgery.

A First Contact Physiotherapist (FCP) is a highly experienced physiotherapist based within your GP practice. FCP's are highly skilled in the assessment, diagnosis and management of musculoskeletal problems such as joint, muscle, ligament or tendon injuries. These injuries can be a result of minor trauma, posture, overuse, or sports injuries. An FCP provides patients with easily accessible information, advice and guidance on treatment options for their injury.

FCP appointments are booked through our reception team



Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) is dedicated to increasing the health and happiness of residents in Somerset through physical activity and sport.

SASP is a charitable trust and a member of the nation-wide network of 43 Active Partnership's, sharing a mission of transforming lives through sport and physical activity. Each Active Partnership is independent, governed by a Board of Trustees and funded through Sport England, and grant giving bodies, companies and individuals whom share their mission.

Our vision is to...

"Achieve healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity and sport"

We inspire and enable positive life choices through sport and physical activity and we do this by:

- Providing accessible opportunities locally for all ages and abilities, prioritising those who are least active.
- Addressing inequalities and removing barriers to physical activity and sport.
- Supporting clubs, communities, schools and the workforce to embrace physical activity.
- Bringing together organisations and partners to create positive change to enable active lives for all.

SASP health coaches are available at your GP surgery, so please enquire within, or call 01823 653990

What is a health walk?

It's a walk done on a regular basis for your wellbeing, ranging right from beginner through to gentle, moderate and advanced. It can help you to feel good, to have more energy, to sleep better and to manage your weight. There are so many benefits from health walking - we're sure you will see a difference in yourself even after your first walk!

Somerset Health Walks are for everyone. Our Walk Leaders cannot be responsible for individuals. If you need support on a walk, please bring along a trusted friend, family member, support worker or carer.

See which walk is right for you and find your local health walk

- **Beginner Walks:** Under 1 mile, flat and even ground, no stiles, gentle pace and frequent stops. Ideal for those new to walking or living with health conditions that impact fitness or mobility.
- **Level 1:** 1 to 1.5 miles, flat or gentle slopes, no stiles and ideal for those able to complete 30-40 mins with minimal stops.
- **Level 2:** 2 - 2.5 miles, tracks and some hills or moderate pace. Ideal for those looking to develop their walking fitness and able to complete 45-60 mins with minimal stops.
- **Level 3:** 3-4 miles, fields and hills, quicker pace and possible stiles. Intermediate walks, ideal for those with good walking fitness and able to complete 60-90mins with minimal stops.
- **Level 4:** 3-5 miles, fields and steep hills, quicker pace and stiles. Advanced walks, ideal for those with very good mobility and fitness and able to complete 90mins + with minimal stops.
-

To Register for FREE Health Walks across Somerset please complete our registration form here.
https://www.sasp.co.uk/health-walks

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



youtube.com

Don't fear the smear: What happens when you attend a cervical screening?

What if I'm too embarrassed to attend my cervical screening? Will it be painful? Do I need to shave, down there?

Perhaps you have some questions about smear tests that you might not be comfortable asking yourself?

Meet Liz, a Practice Nurse based in Somerset. Liz sees hundreds of women each year and understands why some people feel nervous about attending their cervical screening.

In this video, she answers some of the questions you might be worried about asking. If you have more questions that aren't answered here, don't rely on google - please contact your practice nurse who will be happy to help.

#CervicalScreeningAwarenessWeek
#dontfearthesmear



01823 331222 info@somersetrcc.org.uk https://somersetagents.org

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

SURGERY

CAR PARKING

Wickes

Wickes have been in touch. The Store Manager has confirmed that he is happy for East Quay patients to park in the customer car park whilst having an appointment at East Quay etc.

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

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

The Store Manager said:

"I fully appreciate what a vital service East Quay provides for the community…I just wanted to make you aware that the patrons of East Quay are welcome to park in our carpark and have a full 90 minutes if they wish, I know a few do already but I am hoping if you make them aware this might take the pressure off the Symonds Way and prevent any incidents / accidents in the future. There have been new signs put up by G24 but nothing has changed. This was due to a complaint that the signs were not clear when someone had stayed overnight"

We at East Quay really appreciate Wickes being such a good neighbour 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.

Our Surgery details:

East Quay Medical Centre
East Quay
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 4GP

Reception: 01278 444666
Prescriptions: 01278 446006
www.eastquaymedicalcentre.com

Onsite Opticians: 01278 440440
Onsite Pharmacy: 01278 423015
Onsite Dentist: 01278 411141

You can find us on Facebook

Under "East Quay Medical Center"

facebook

This page is updated regularly with all relevant information and support