



**December 2017**

### **Useful information to help you keep well**

The NHS gets even busier over winter and in this letter there is advice we ask you to follow so that you access services only when you really need them. Take care of minor conditions at home and please choose the right place to get help.

You might want to keep this letter somewhere where you can find it again easily.

This is what you can do:

- Be prepared – stock up with cold remedies, pain killers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, stave off upset stomachs with anti-diarrhoea capsules and rehydration mixtures, and keep plasters and bandages on hand for any cuts or scrapes. Ask your pharmacist for advice
- Get a free flu vaccination if you are aged 65 or over, have a long-term health condition, are pregnant, are a main carer or a young child – it will keep you from having a long recovery from this nasty illness, so book an appointment at this GP practice
- Ask your pharmacist. The pharmacy is a great source of help and advice and over-the-counter medicine that could make you better. Speak to the pharmacist first before making a GP appointment. Some pharmacies are open on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day and you can find the nearest one to you by calling NHS 111 or checking our website
- Beat the winter blues - talk to someone. Talk about your anxieties with someone else, a friend, relative or a group such as the Wellbeing Suffolk service on 0300 123 1503 or the Samaritans on the free 116 123 number. Talking about the things that are worrying you can make a positive difference
- If you need urgent medical help or advice simply call NHS 111 and you'll speak to a trained advisor who will help you. You can also use NHS 111 Online service. Both are available 24/7 and are free to use
- If you use repeat medication please make sure you'll have enough to last over the Christmas and New Year holidays

***KEEP THIS SOMEWHERE SAFE OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR***

- Regular hand washing with warm water and soap is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs
- *Keep your home warm* – It is important to keep warm throughout the cold winter spells. By setting your heating to the right temperature (between 18°- 21°C or 64°- 70°F), this can help you keep well especially helping to stop chest infections
- If you have very recently visited your surgery, optician or dentist, and have concerns relating to the same condition which they have treated you for, ask for their help first instead of attending A&E
- If you are unsure if you need urgent or emergency care, please call NHS 111 – trained professionals are on hand to guide you
- If you need to see a dentist outside of usual hours call NHS 111.

You really do have the power to help us and to help yourself, and by following this advice you will be helping enormously. If you have access to a computer, there are some additional helpful hints and tips on looking after yourself this winter on this website [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell) and you can access NHS 111 Online at <https://www.111onlinesuffolk.careuk.com/Portal/CareUK/>

Finally, this practice will be closed on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 December and Monday 1 January. On these days, if you need medical advice, call NHS 111 or visit the pharmacy.

Yours sincerely

On behalf of the doctors at this practice