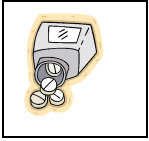




Bedlingtonshire Medical Group

www.bedlington-doctors.com

Newsletter Winter 2011



Be Ready for Winter

Restock your medicine cabinet

Don't forget to restock your medicine cabinet with some over the counter remedies. Remember a pharmacist can recommend the most appropriate treatment for you. Always follow instructions/advice on the pack. If symptoms persist (or are severe) seek further advice. Only restock with what you need to cover the winter period. What to keep in your medicine cabinet:

Pain relief – Paracetamol and ibuprofen are the most common remedies and can be used safely with antibiotics. Please check the label and/or speak to the pharmacist to check that the medicine is suitable.

Anti-histamines – These help allergies and runny noses.

Indigestion remedy – A simple, readily available antacid will neutralise any excess acid and relieve the majority of symptoms.

Mild laxative – Try Senna for constipation.

First Aid Kit – Your local pharmacist can advise you on what your household first aid kit should contain.

NOTE: There are a number of medicines made specifically for children and your pharmacist can advise which would be the most suitable ones to keep in the house.



Remember

Antibiotics don't kill viruses so they won't help with colds or flu and can even have unpleasant side effects.



Repeat Prescriptions & the Festive Bank Holiday Period

If you take regular medication, make sure you order what you need, to cover holiday periods and weekends. Remember to collect any repeat prescription you have ordered before the holidays, and make sure you don't run out. GP surgeries are closed for four days at Christmas and three days at New Year. So if you need a prescription(s) remember to order and collect them in time.

The last day for ordering any repeat prescription you need before the festive break is:

Tuesday 20th December 2011





Get better without using antibiotics

How should I treat my cold?

The best way to treat most colds, coughs or sore throats is to drink plenty of fluids and to rest. Colds can last about two weeks and may end with a cough and bringing up phlegm. There are many over the counter remedies to ease the symptoms – paracetamol, for example. Ask your pharmacist for advice. If the cold lasts more than three weeks, or you become breathless or have chest pains, or already have a chest complaint, see your doctor.

Why should antibiotics not be used to treat coughs and colds?

All colds and most coughs and sore throats are caused by viruses. Antibiotics do not work against infections, such as colds, caused by viruses. Viral infections are much more common than bacterial infections.

So when will I be prescribed antibiotics?

Your doctor will only prescribe antibiotics when you need them, for example for a kidney infection or pneumonia. Antibiotics may be life-saving for infections such as meningitis. By not using them unnecessarily, they are more likely to work when we need them.



Only use A&E in Emergencies

People who feel unwell this winter are reminded to remember all of the options open to them for getting help with everyday illnesses. **The NHS is also reminding people that they should only attend accident and emergency (A&E) centres or call 999 for an ambulance for serious or critical conditions.**

Winter is always a busier time for hospitals as the inevitable cold conditions mean that more people will experience breathing problems. There is often an increase in chest infections and people who already have respiratory problems are likely to see their condition aggravated even further.

There may also be a greater prevalence of other seasonal conditions, such as diarrhoea and vomiting, and more people may slip and fall due to icy conditions.

One of the best ways of protecting ourselves and others is by stopping germs spreading in the first place. Basic respiratory and hand hygiene is essential in stopping the spread of germs. This includes, catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue; disposing of the tissue quickly and safely and also regularly washing your hands with soap and warm water.