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Keep up to date with our latest health news on Facebook using the following link or scanning the QR code on a smartphone: <https://www.facebook.com/StevNorthPCN>



## Sun safety tips



With the summer holidays upon us, here are some sun safety tips for you to consider while enjoying the sun:

- Wear protective clothing and apply a high factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 15) even on cloudy days. Always use a high factor to protect children. Remember to reapply sunscreen every two hours.
- Reapply sunscreen after swimming or sweating.
- Try to stay in the shade between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is at its most intense.
- Stay hydrated with plenty of fluids, especially water to help prevent heat exhaustion or worse, sun stroke.
- If you have moles or freckles, you need to take extra care. Keep an eye out for changes to your skin and report these to your doctor without delay.

So do please enjoy the summer sun, but stay protected and healthy.

## Whooping cough and vaccinations



Whooping cough is a bacterial infection that affects the lungs. It is spread very easily and can quickly become very serious, especially in babies under 6 months old. Whooping cough is less severe in older children and adults. Babies under 6 months can become dehydrated, have seizures (fits) and have difficulty breathing. Adults and older children can have symptoms such as a middle ear infection and leaking urine when coughing.

The vaccination can protect babies and children from getting whooping cough. The vaccine is routinely given as part of the 6 in 1 vaccine at 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age and as part of their pre-school booster. Pregnant women can protect their babies by having the vaccine between 16 and 32 weeks of pregnancy, although it is still possible to receive it up until you go into labour.

Full information about whooping cough and the vaccination can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/whooping-cough/> and <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/whooping-cough-vaccination/>.

If you are concerned about someone who may have whooping cough, speak to your GP, contact NHS 111 or if you think it is serious, call 999.



# Lupus disease



May was Lupus awareness month being signified by wearing a purple ribbon—"Wear purple and be visible for an invisible disease".

Lupus is an autoimmune disease where a person's immune system tries to attack the body's own tissue as if it was an invading organism. The effect of having Lupus is inflammation and tissue damage, possibly affecting organs and / or joints in some patients. Lupus more often affects females and people from Black African, Caribbean, and Asian backgrounds.

Lupus is a disease which can present many different symptoms, rarely do two people have exactly the same symptoms, and these can vary from just one to many. The following website is

devoted to the disease and provides information to help identify and be aware of the disease:

<https://lupusuk.org.uk>.



# Don't suffer in silence: seeking help for problem periods

Heavy periods, endometriosis and menopause symptoms can all affect our daily lives, but treatment is available. If problem periods are having a major impact on you and how you learn, work and live, don't suffer in silence. Treatment can help – contact your GP practice today or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/womens-health/periods/> further information.



# Patient feedback

**THE NHS FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST**

We welcome patient feedback to tell us what we are doing right and what we can improve. Thinking about our practice...

Overall, how was your experience of our service?

Very good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	←————→				?

Please can you tell us why you gave your answer?

**A little bit about you:**

Please note - completing this additional information is optional but helpful to the NHS in understanding the needs and experiences of individual patients.

<b>Are you?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to self describe	<b>What age are you?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 0-15 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 75-84 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 85+ <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<b>Do you consider yourself to have a physical or mental health condition or disability?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Details: _____
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**Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?**

<b>White</b> <input type="checkbox"/> British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Other white background	<b>Asian or Asian British</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian background	<b>Mixed</b> <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Other Mixed Background
<b>Black or Black British</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black background	<b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Anything else <input type="checkbox"/> I would rather not say	

**Are you?**  
 the patient     the parent or carer     the patient and parent/carer

Thank you for completing the card and providing us with feedback to improve our services.  
 If you DO NOT wish your anonymous comments to be shared then please tick here:

Have you completed one of these feedback forms as part of the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT)?

These can be found at surgery receptions and they are titled "The NHS Friends and Family Test". (If you cannot find them, just ask). A digital link to the survey is also sent out after appointments, if the surgery has your contact details.

They are quick to fill in, anonymous and will help the surgery identify opportunities to make improvements to its health services. On-line details about the FFT can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/friends-and-family-test-fft/>



# Dementia



Dementia describes a collection of symptoms, when certain diseases affect the brain. Symptoms can include memory problems mood changes and problems with thinking, speech and communication. Some people experience sensory changes, or it could be emotional changes, also difficulty sleeping and loss of appetite.

The symptoms usually start with people over 65 years, but can affect people much younger and there is no cure, although there are many things that can be done to make living with the disease easier.

If you recognise any symptoms, you should see your doctor, they should review any medication you have and discuss your symptoms. Your doctor may refer you to a specialist to get a more detailed assessment, which may include a brain scan. If dementia is confirmed the specialist should discuss possibilities and also discuss medication.

You can also call the Alzheimer's Society Helpline or the Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline for support on **0333 150 3456** or **020 8036 5400**. For online information visit: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>

There are also a number of very good booklets at Age Concern in Stevenage Market that can help you.



Remember, there are hundreds of people like you. You are NOT ALONE.

## Dementia Café

Coming soon at the Healthy Hub Stevenage. A weekly meeting for those living with dementia and their family and friends to meet others going through a similar situation, there will be activities booked throughout the year including Love to Move, singing and advice from dementia support groups. They are also looking for volunteers to lead the sessions.

Visit their website for more information: <https://www.everyoneactive.com/centre/stevenage-arts-leisure-centre/healthy-hub/> or contact them at **01438 579390**.



## MIND



Mind in Mid Herts is an independent charity that supports people aged 16 and over with their mental health.

They offer social support services and counselling plus talking therapies. They run social groups which include - peer support, wellbeing recovery, arts and crafts and men and women's groups.

To access their services, you need to complete a referral form which can be found on their website (<https://www.mindinmidherts.org.uk/>) or telephone **03303 208100**.

You can also visit The Stevenage Wellbeing centre at 13 Town Square, Stevenage SG1 1BP.



## Just for fun!

No prizes, but can you find the answers to these questions? (answers at the end of the newsletter):

1. Can you have a Whooping cough vaccine after week 32 of pregnancy?
2. Where can you find NHS feedback forms?
3. What does PPC mean?
4. What is the maximum time before re-applying sunscreen?

# Would you like to Volunteer as a helper at East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust?



Volunteers make an invaluable contribution to patient care, delivering a variety of services alongside paid staff. Here at East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust they currently have a dedicated team of over 300 volunteers committed to enhancing patient, carer and visitor experiences across the Trust. The volunteers' skills, experience and motivations vary, but they are all an important asset to the NHS. Volunteers engage in and support the life of the hospital. There are lots of different roles to get involved in and they will try to match your skills to the available opportunities.

## Benefits of Volunteering:

Volunteering your time and skills helps make a big difference to our patients' experience. It can also have great benefits for the volunteer too, by letting you:

- Give something back to your local community
- Feel valued and a part of a team
- Learn and develop new skills, knowledge and experience
- Enhance your CV and employment prospects
- Do something different and have fun
- Make a difference
- Remain active and alert

## What do the volunteers do?

Volunteers have a wide range of roles and are divided into two groups:

- Hospital volunteers: these volunteers are registered with the hospital and complete our recruitment checks.
- Community volunteers: these volunteers are usually groups of people who provide a specific service off-site or come in to the Trust with one of our hosts, to provide entertainment and services patients.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to join us at East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, please visit [www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk) or call us on **01438 284760**.



## Prescription Prepayment Certificate

If you have a long-term health condition and need several medications, you could save money on your prescriptions using a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC). A PPC will save you money if you pay for more than three items in three months, or 11 items in 12 months. You can check your eligibility at <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/nhs-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc>.



## Just for fun answers

(1) Yes, even up to labour, (2) At reception, (3) Prescription Prepayment Certificate for saving money on your prescriptions, (4) 2 hours maximum



The Stanmore Medical Group provides comprehensive NHS primary care services from its surgeries: The Stanmore surgery, The Poplars Surgery (currently closed), St. Nicholas Health Centre, Canterbury Way Surgery and Chells Surgery.

This newsletter was produced in collaboration with the Patient Participation Group (PPG). An audio version of this newsletter is also available. Details about the group can be found on line at: <https://www.stanmoremedicalgroup.co.uk> or by scanning this QR code..

Several of this publication's images have been created by Artificial Intelligence.