

# Brannam Medical Centre January 2010 Newsletter



## Welcome to our latest newsletter

### Staff Changes

We would like to welcome Caroline to our reception team. Caroline is covering for Michelle whilst she is on her maternity leave and covering for other members of reception.

We say goodbye to Michelle (Dr Chesworth's receptionist) at the end of January. She will be relaxing before the birth of her baby, due in March.

### Seasonal Flu

Yes, it's that time of year again! Some patients have an increased risk of developing serious complications from flu, such as pneumonia. One of the best ways to protect yourself is to have a flu vaccination. Please note: the flu virus is essentially changing so it is important to have the vaccination every year to stay protected.



If you are in one of the groups listed below please book an appointment in reception or online:

- Anyone over the age of 65
- Chronic Respiratory Disease / Asthma
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Kidney & Liver Disease
- Main carer for an elderly/disabled person
- Those with Low Immunity

### Computer System Upgrade

From January we will begin training to upgrade to a new computer system. This means that there may be some disruption to the way we usually work, in that it will be brand new to all staff. We are hoping to have moved to the new system completely by the end of February/beginning March. Please bear with us whilst this change occurs.

### Dr McCaie/Dr Bond working hours

As you will all know by now Dr Bond has taken over from Dr Jack and is job sharing with Dr McCaie. Their working hours are:

Dr McCaie: Mon, Tue – All Day.  
Wed – am.

Dr Bond: Thurs, Fri – All Day.

### Swine Flu

As you have all probably heard by now Swine Flu is spreading around the country.

The best way to protect yourself and others is to ensure strict hygiene.

#### CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



#### BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



#### KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



It is also advisable to clean work surfaces and door handles more frequently.

If you have symptoms of swine flu please phone the National Flu Pandemic Line on 0800 1 513 100 or phone your GP. If you are advised to come in by your GP please use the rear entrance of the building and follow the instructions displayed. Please remember to bring your 'Flu Friend' with you.

#### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of swine flu are similar to those of seasonal flu infection and include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, coughing, sore throat, joint pain, headache and a runny nose. Some people with swine flu have also reported vomiting and diarrhoea.

#### Flu Friend

If your GP says you have swine flu, you should not collect the antiviral medicine yourself. Your 'Flu Friend' should do this for you. This is to reduce the risk of you spreading the virus to others.



A 'Flu Friend' can be a family member, friend or neighbour who can collect the prescription from one of a number of antiviral collection points set up across Devon.

Your 'Flu Friend' may also be able to do some shopping for you so that you do not need to leave home until you feel well again.

#### **Want to book an appointment without calling?**

Go to our website [www.brannammedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.brannammedicalcentre.co.uk) to sign up for appointments online.

## Prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions can be requested once you are on regular medication. **Please allow 72 hrs if collecting from the chemist, or 48 hrs if collecting the prescription from reception.**



You can order your prescriptions in the surgery, at your chemist, online, via email at **d-pc.PrescriptionBrannam@nhs.net** or in the post.

## Batch Prescriptions

If you are on stable regular medication we have a service that allows you to order your medication in advance.

- A pharmacy is allocated to handle all your prescriptions and when you are running out you let the pharmacy know and they will make up your medication for you
- You no longer need to fill out request slips or email us.

If you would like to join our Batch Prescribing Service, please speak to the Reception staff.

## Swine Flu Vaccinations for Under 5s

All children aged between 6 months and 5 years are to receive the swine flu vaccination. Our clinics are running from Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January.



Young children are being offered the vaccine to protect them from swine flu and its possible complications. They seem to be particularly vulnerable to severe illness as a result of swine flu, resulting in hospitalisation. Children under five have significantly higher rates of hospitalisation than children aged five to fifteen. Healthy children in this age group are also far more likely to be hospitalised as a result of swine flu than healthy people in other age groups. They also have high rates of admission to critical care and some children under five have died as a result of swine flu. Vaccination is the best way to protect young children from possible complications.

## Why is it a good idea to get my child vaccinated?

Even if your child is healthy, it is important to get them vaccinated against swine flu. The vaccination will help:

- protect your child against swine flu
- protect your family and other people who are close to your child as it is less likely they will pass on the virus
- protect your child against future waves of infection caused by the swine flu virus
- reduce the spread of the virus

The vaccines should not be given to anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine or any component of the vaccine, e.g. egg allergy.

The vaccination is given in one dose.

## Swine Flu Vaccination for Pregnant Women

Pregnant women are being urged to have the swine flu vaccination. Pregnant women are considerably more likely to develop serious complications from swine flu. The risk of complications (including miscarriage and premature labour) is highest during the later stages of pregnancy. Having the swine flu vaccine now could help you avoid catching swine flu and protect your baby.



## Carers

Are you a carer or know someone that is? In Devon there are around 73,000 carers who provide unpaid care for friends or relatives.

At Brannams we praise the work that Carers do, their jobs are very important. But around 1 in 5 carers providing substantial care are not in good health compared to 1 in 10 of those who are not carers.

We are offering Carers a free health and wellbeing check, to improve their lives. Please call the surgery today to arrange your important check up.

Carers are also entitled to a yearly flu vaccination; please call the surgery so we can fit you in for yours. Clinics are running regularly throughout the year.

## Charity Project

For 2010 we have two chosen charities to support; Talking Newspapers and InterAfrica.

Talking Newspapers is a charity run by several small groups of dedicated people who read the North Devon Journal and other exerts that their listeners may find of interest. These readings are recorded onto tape and then sent out to visually impaired people who have signed up to make use of this service. The charity wants to get up to date with the moving technology and start using digital equipment rather than the old tapes, to do this we are aiming to raise approximately £600 to get them started. If you would like to make any donations to this charity or would like more information about the Charity please contact Martha-Rose in reception.



InterAfrica is a charity that takes medical equipment and in date medication over to Africa to help equip hospitals and doctors surgeries. We have already sent a package containing some books and some medical equipment to them but are looking for more items to send. If you have any unwanted unused medication that has at least 15 months left before the 'use before' date that is clearly packaged we would be grateful for your donations to send off to InterAfrica.



## Visit our website

To see what else is happening at the surgery or to subscribe to receive our newsletters via email, just visit our website at:

**[www.brannammedicalcentre.com](http://www.brannammedicalcentre.com)**

