

December 20 Newsletter

Dear fellow patient of Grove Park Surgery,

Sorry to not be in touch for so long and then arrive with a flurry of news.

Well we seem to be getting another of those in/out/in/out patches of Covid-19 advice. I started writing this in tier 2, it's now 3, so who knows where we'll be when I finish! Yes three Chiswick households can still make a bubble for Christmas lunch at home but... please think of all the risks. Most people I know with anybody at all vulnerable in their family is just playing it safe this year. But it's not easy. Fingers crossed for dry days so we can be outside from the 23rd.

Which brings me to the vaccine. Which will not help any of us THIS festive season. It's three weeks between jabs and another week for the second jab to fully protect. While Heart Of Hounslow health centre has started vaccinations, I believe the first over-80s in the Chiswick area will get invitations for their vaccinations late next week (Christmas present?) or week after. Our surgery had hoped that supplies would arrive for this Saturday but National Health Service England decided to wait until next week at the earliest.

The plan seems to be for people to go to a "centralised" location, managed by all eight practices in Chiswick, rather than individual surgeries administering the inoculation. At least to start with. The invitation text will come from the surgeries and I understand will ask people to "opt in or out" so that they can be sure to invite the correct number of people to use up all the supply. So maybe think about that, if it's you or someone you care for, so you can reply quickly. Those over-80s who have not signed up for text messages will be phoned.

You may not be aware that Hounslow is inviting all residents who wish to, to be tested for Covid, even without the obvious symptoms. The asymptomatic spread is a bit worrying. You don't have to be a key worker. You can book an appointment at a testing site by visiting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

I'm sorry any of the above is out of date by the time you read it!

I don't know if any of you attended or signed up for our talk on Vitamin D last week, but if you are interested it is now available as a YouTube video (not edited so me waffling on at the start and finish, I'm afraid). I had been wondering why we were hearing about Vitamin D mentioned as a possible defence against Covid symptoms? Well, in Dr Channa Jayasena, it was like having our own SAGE scientist on tap. And he answered some very probing and interesting questions by our fellow patients, I do recommend listening to those alongside the talk. He explained that scientifically there is not yet enough hard evidence (the research had been put on a bit of a back burner because of the arrival of the vaccine) but he does recommend everyone taking Vitamin D in moderation, he suggested daily 400iu-1000iu, (iu means international units, not mcg!) for all-round health.

Here is the link <https://youtu.be/6BcPKq4wJJw> it lasts about an hour but just scroll to where he starts talking.

Lastly, the surgery is busy at the moment with the normal winter season ailments so if you want to speak to a doctor I do recommend that you either phone to be triaged for an appointment or fill in the electronic consultation form that "pops up" on the website. Some people really love this way of explaining their symptoms. The surgery reviews it and gets back to you either with an urgent appointment or over-the-phone advice.

All good wishes to you for now and let's talk again in the New Year.

And, if I dare, Merry Christmas. Liz