

## Missed Appointments

An average of nearly 200 patients a month are failing to turn up for appointments at the Burbage and Wolvey surgeries. And repeat offenders are warned that they risk being asked to find another doctor.

In March, April and May of this year, 555 people failed to tell the practice that they couldn't get to the surgery or no longer wanted their appointment - wasting 130 hours which could have been allocated to other patients. The figures were revealed to the patient group this month whose members said they were disappointing. Patient group chairman John Moore said: "We appreciate emergencies can occur which prevent people from attending but there is no excuse for people not letting reception know as soon as possible. Patients should contact the surgery as soon as they know they can't attend, even it is on the same day as their appointment. There is a huge demand for appointments. If the receptionists know, the slot can be offered to someone else who urgently needs to see a doctor."

Mr Moore said: "We fully support the surgery doing that. Demands on the surgery are continually increasing. Five hundred and fifty five missed appointments is a huge amount of lost time - collectively nearly 8,000 minutes when it would have taken people just a couple to tell the surgery they couldn't make an appointment." Practice manager Wendy Shaw said: "Missed appointments are a significant problem for the surgery and the NHS as a whole. It is such a waste of valuable appointments, time and money. The surgery is unable to accommodate or tolerate this and we would ask patients to cancel their appointments if they are unable to keep them. Any patients registered for on line services may use this access to cancel appointments as well as booking appointments"

### Average Appointment breakdown March to May 2016 (telephone and face to face appointments)

Month	Total No of Appointments	Burbage Missed Appts	Wolvey Missed Appts	Time Wasted (minutes)
March	6087	204	26	3839
April	5286	131	15	1789
May	5347	166	13	2171

Letters are now being sent to patients who fail to attend three appointments, advising them that failing to turn up for further appointments would result in them being asked to register with another practice. Patients are also reminded that they have a responsibility to attend their appointments on time or risk not being seen if turning up late. Clinicians make every effort to run their surgeries on time but if patients are late for their allocated appointment slot this can result in considerable delays for other patients booked into the same clinic.

### New PPG Members

Three new members have joined the surgery patient participation group. They are Helen Jenner and Stephen Smith-Phelps, who were welcomed at this month's meeting, and Anthony Sheldon who will be attending from the August meeting.

## MANY OF YOU WILL SOON BE OFF ON YOUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY.

Please read the following advice that should help you stay healthy while you are enjoying your break!

### Overview of Skin Cancer

Rates of skin cancer are increasing faster than any other cancer, with figures doubling every 10 to 20 years. And in some areas, studies have revealed a rise in melanoma cases of 18 percent in just two years, according to the British Association of Dermatologists. More than 8,100 cases of malignant melanoma the deadliest form of skin cancer are diagnosed every year in the UK and over 1,700 will die from the disease this year alone.



Further information is available on the following websites:

- [www.skcin.org](http://www.skcin.org)
- [www.cancerhelp.org.uk](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk)
- [www.skincancerfacts.org.uk](http://www.skincancerfacts.org.uk)
- [www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk)



### The Facts About Skin Cancer

- Skin cancer is a big problem.
- Skin cancer is the no.1 cancer of fair skinned populations
- The number of recorded cases of non melanoma skin cancer in the UK in 2003 was > 67,000
- The true annual incidence could be over 125,000 new cases annually in England and Wales
- It is a massive and growing public health problem not just in the UK but worldwide in populations of fair skinned individuals
- Skin cancer is an all-encompassing term for over 30 types of skin cancer. However almost all skin cancer (>95%) fall into the 3 following types:

#### Basal cell carcinoma = BCC

#### Squamous cell carcinoma = SCC

#### Malignant melanoma = MM

- BCC & SCC are often synonymous with NMSC - non melanoma skin cancer, although any skin cancer that is not a melanoma is a NMSC
- The vast majority of skin cancers are BCC (approx 80%)
- Malignant melanoma can be fatal and claims approx 1800 lives in the UK per year
- Squamous cell carcinoma can be fatal
- Basal cell carcinoma is rarely fatal as it only rarely (almost never) spreads to other parts of the body
- The percentage of people with BCC and SCC who develop a second BCC or SCC within 3 year period = 44% and 18%

#### But surely it won't happen to me?

Wrong. It doesn't matter whether you're young, middle-aged or old, melanoma doesn't discriminate where age is concerned. The simple fact is that if you fail to protect your skin in the sun and allow your skin to burn, you're putting yourself at risk. According to the British Association of

Dermatologists, one in ten people don't bother using sunscreen and a third of those who do are using below the recommended SPF15. Skin cancer used to be most prevalent amongst 50-somethings, the commonest age for most cancers to strike, but research has shown that men and women born around 1970 and now in their early to mid-30s are being diagnosed with melanoma at an alarming rate.

According to dermatologists you don't have to lay on a beach every day for two weeks to be at risk though. Spending just ten minutes walking or sitting around in strong sunshine at lunchtime, for instance, without wearing sunscreen can be enough to get sunburned and cause damage to exposed skin. The good news is that skin cancer can be almost totally prevented just by adopting some simple and inexpensive sun care habits and it's never too late to start protecting yourself properly.

There's no getting away from the fact that sunshine makes us feel good, it's essential to enable our bodies to produce vitamin D and it triggers the release of the so-called "happy" chemical, serotonin, that boosts our mood. Casual sun exposure of the hands and face (approximately 30-60 minutes per week) is sufficient to give most people adequate vitamin D levels to sustain bone health.

#### What can I do to help myself?

The best method of prevention of any type of skin cancer is to stay out of the sun. If you do need to go out, keep covered up with a broad brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt or blouse and long trousers. Wear a high protection factor sunscreen on exposed skin (SPF 25-30) any time you go out of doors, even on overcast days

#### Clothing

Clothing protects the skin from ultraviolet (UV) radiation by creating a barrier between the skin and the

sun. The Cancer Council Victoria recommends clothing that protects the wearer from as much UV radiation as possible, such as collared shirts, and at least three-quarter-length trousers and tops. Always use sun protective clothing in combination with other sun protection measures; shade, hats, sunscreen and sunglasses.

#### Hats

Common sites of skin damage and skin cancer are the neck, ears, temples, lips, face and nose. Wearing a broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat can help protect these areas from ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Hats should shade the whole face, neck, ears and head.

#### Get in the Shade

Shade alone can reduce overall exposure to the sun's harmful UV radiation by about 75%. It will not totally block out all UV radiation, as indirect UV radiation can scatter in the atmosphere and reflect from surfaces such as water, sand and concrete. Maximum UV protection can be achieved using shade in conjunction with sun-protective clothing, hats and sunscreen.

#### Sunglasses

Eyes, like skin, can be damaged by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Repeated exposure of unprotected eyes to UV radiation can cause short-term and long-term damage.

#### Remember

- Avoid sunbeds
- Protect children from sunburn
- Wear a large hat
- Wear broad spectrum sunblock and re-apply frequently
- SPF 25-30 rating
- Long sleeve clothing
- Loose trousers

Should you notice a non-healing "sore" or a rapidly developing lump please get in touch with your doctor as soon as possible