

MMR, written by a member of the patient participation group

The on-going debate about the value of the **MMR Vaccination** has



been in the news again recently.

I was **saddened to learn** that the number of individuals, and in particular children, in the UK [and Worldwide] **taking advantage of the MMR vaccine is in decline.** I therefore undertook some research on behalf of the PPG.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella [MMR] are diseases that have **serious complications. Measles** can cause **a range of symptoms** including ear infections, pneumonia, bronchitis, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), convulsions (fits) and brain damage. **Measles can be fatal.**

Mumps can cause viral encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), deafness, miscarriage, inflammation of the pancreas and pain

and swelling in the testicles in men.

Rubella causes major birth defects in unborn babies and even miscarriage if the mother gets rubella in pregnancy. Babies may have some degree of deafness, blindness and damage to their heart or brain.

The MMR vaccine has caused controversy in recent years, following a study published in The Lancet in 1998 by Dr Andrew Wakefield. It appeared to show a link between the MMR vaccine and autism and bowel disease. However, **his research was not carried out correctly and has since been discredited.**

Extensive research into the MMR vaccine, involving thousands of children, was carried out in the UK, the USA, Sweden and Finland. It showed that there is **no link between MMR and autism.** In Denmark, researchers looked at the records of over half a million children and found the risk of autism was the same in immunised children as in children who had not been immunised. Experts

from around the world, including the

World Health Organization, agree that there is **no link between MMR and autism**

After the MMR vaccination a child may feel discomfort, redness or swelling where the injection was given. There may also be some minor side effects however these are not contagious. **Children usually recover from these side effects in a day or two.**

In rare cases, a child may get a small rash of bruise-like spots about two weeks after the injection. This side effect, linked to the rubella vaccine, is known as idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP). It has been estimated that ITP develops in less than one in every 22,000 doses of the MMR vaccine and that there is a **greater risk of developing the condition from the diseases that the vaccine prevents.** ITP usually gets better on its own, but, as with any rash, advice should be sought from a doctor.

Finally, people who have been recently immunised

cannot infect others with the viruses contained in the MMR vaccine.

My researches also revealed a 2010 House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report on homeopathy which said that **homeopathic remedies (for MMR) perform no better than placebos (dummy treatments).**



In conclusion, my researches confirm that the benefits of the **MMR vaccine** to a child, the child's family and to society as a whole are both **significant and essential.**



What is flu? Flu is an acute viral respiratory infection. It spreads easily from person to person; at home, at school, at work, at the supermarket, on the train. It gets passed on when someone who already has flu coughs or sneezes and is transmitted through the air by droplets, or it can be spread by hands contaminated with the virus. Symptoms can include fever, chills, headache, muscle pain, extreme fatigue, a dry cough, sore throat and stuffy nose. Most people will recover within a week but flu can cause severe illness or even death in people at high risk. It is estimated that 10,000 deaths in England and Wales are at-

tributable to influenza infections annually

Why should I get a flu vaccination? Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent influenza. Although anyone can catch flu, certain people are at greater risk from the implications of flu, as their body may not be able to fight the virus. If you are pregnant, 65 years or over, a child*, morbidly obese (with BMI \geq 40), suffer from severe asthma, chronic liver disease (cirrhosis, biliary atresia, chronic hepatitis), diabetes or immunosuppression, have a heart, kidney or lung condition, have suffered a stroke or transient ischaemic attack, you are considered at greater risk from flu and the implications can be serious. If you fall into one of the “at-risk” groups above or you are a carer or a healthcare worker you are eligible

for a free flu vaccination. Speak to your healthcare professional today to book your free flu vaccination. If you are not eligible for a free flu vaccination, you can still protect yourself and those around you from flu by getting a flu vaccination at a local pharmacy. To find out more about flu and vaccination, visit: www.dontforgetaboutflu.co.uk***Check with your GP about child age eligibility.**

Will a flu vaccination give me flu? No. All injectable available flu vaccines are inactivated and do not contain live viruses. One vaccine, an intranasal vaccination, contains live attenuated viruses that have been weakened and adapted. None of the influenza vaccines can therefore cause flu. However, a flu vaccination can take up to 2 weeks to begin working

so it is possible to catch flu in this period. A flu vaccination is designed to protect you against the most common and potent strains of flu viruses circulating in your country during the season. However, there is still a small chance you could catch a flu virus from a strain which is not included in your annual flu vaccine. Flu vaccination does not offer protection against the common cold, so you may still catch cold viruses circulating in your community

why do I need a flu vaccination every year? Influenza viruses are constantly changing and vaccines are developed to protect against the predicted strains each year so it is important to get vaccinated against the latest strains for the UK.



Self help - written by Nurse Ann Burch, at Victoria Road Surgery

The aim of empowering patients is to help them to develop self-awareness, self-care and to promote understanding. It is about enabling patients to be joint partners in the decision making processes around their own health and well-being.

It is important for the

patient/clinician relationship to be effective and efficient. For all patients to feel listened to and heard therefore enabling them to make informed decisions in all aspects of their own health.

By involving patients more in the care, planning and management of

their long term chronic health conditions it enables clinicians to deliver a more inclusive, equal and positive course of treatment.

There is a great need for all of us to look holistically at ourselves; we need to look at our life style, our diet, sleep, exercise and mindfulness.

Our diet is not only what we eat; it is what we watch, what we listen to, what we read, the people we mix with and the things we subject our mind and soul to. Always be mindful of the things we put into our bodies; emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Appointments at Victoria road, - written by the Chair of Victoria road surgery PPG

As a patient of Victoria Road Surgery and the Chair of our Patient Participation Group, I am aware that making an APPOINTMENT to see a medical profession is one of the most talked about topics at our surgery.

This subject can raise a number of different emotions in people that can range from anxiety, to frustration or just plain annoyance!

I should probably tell you at this point that the surgery also shares your frustration, there is nothing more that they would like than to offer everyone an appointment, with a doctor of your choice at a time that was convenient for you. Sadly, with difficulties in recruiting GP's, cut backs in funding and an ever increasing population in the Victoria Road catchment area, means that, however hard the surgery tries, it is just not possible.

However, we are lucky in that we have a great management team, dedicated Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacists, medical professionals, ancillary staff and administrators that continue to work together to bring new

and creative ways to meet their patient's needs. I thought I could explain how it all works by using examples of my own recent experience of making appointments.

Husband told by wife (me), to make an appointment (men often have to be persuaded!) Phones at 8am and eventually manages to secure a same day appointment with a doctor.

Following week, no improvements, phones for an appointment, none were available but offered an appointment with a highly trained Prescribing Nurse. Nurse tries new medication and makes an appointment for husband to see doctor after the weekend. Seen by a different Doctor who is able to review symptoms from a new perspective, new medication and referral to hospital.

Last week, after much deliberating, I sat on the phone at 8am and was unable to get through. Checked online appointments just after eight to find a few left, but with a male Doctor. Gave up and tried again the following day. Got through to the queueing system, sixth in line.

Victoria Road have more people on the

phones for the first hour so that when you do get through, the wait is not too long. Get through, appointment for the same day with a female Doctor, result! Doctor requests that I make a further double appointment to discuss symptoms further. I groan as I really can't see that this will be possible any time soon. Surprise! As the doctor has made the request to see me, a double appointment is arranged for two weeks' time; left the surgery a very happy person and very pleased to belong to this surgery!

I guess, I just wanted to say that if you need to be seen urgently, the surgery will find a way to see you. If there are no appointments at the surgery that day, the Duty Doctor or medical professional can arrange to call you, assess the urgency signpost you to the appropriate medical professional or ask you to visit the surgery.

The other evening the poor Duty Doctor was still working at eight pm to ensure that everyone who needed to be seen, was seen!

Your medical need may even be best served by seeing the very professional Nurses or the Pharmacist. While the surgery continues to try and be creative so they can continue to meet our needs, as patients we will

need to embrace these changes to ensure that all our needs can be met!

I blame BREXIT myself (joking)!

DNA,S here at Victoria Road Sur- gery in the last month—

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