



K I N S O N
R O A D
M E D I C A L

Dr Andrew Brewer BSc MBBS

Associate Doctors:

Dr Philip Doust BM MRCGP BSc DRCOG

Dr Emma McFarland BM DRCOG

Dr Andrea Siggers BMBS MRCP MRGCP DFFP

Dr Neeta Somani MBBS MRCGP DFFP FRACGP

A GUIDE TO OUR PRACTICE SERVICES

440 Kinson Road Kinson Bournemouth BH10 5EY

Tel: 01202 574604

Fax: 01202 590029

Welcome To Our Practice

Kinson Road Medical Centre is led by Dr Andrew Brewer with the support of four associate GPs, Dr Phil Doust, Dr Emma McFarland, Dr Andrea Siggers and Dr Neeta Somani. The practice is contracted to NHS England but also is contracted to provide healthcare services on behalf of other organisations, for example the CCG and the Local Authority.

We have approximately 8500 patients. Our main surgery is in Kinson Road and our branch surgery is in West Howe. We aim to provide a high standard of medical care to all our patients and to provide a range of services to meet their needs.

This booklet is designed to give you details of the services we offer.

When you join the practice you will be registered on the practice list and you may see any doctor you wish, subject to their availability. On occasions, we also have approved locum doctors working with us. You may also attend either surgery.

When making an appointment, just let the receptionist know who you would prefer to see and at which surgery. The receptionists will do their best to accommodate your preferences but, if your preferred

full, you will be offered an appointment with one of the other doctors or the triage nurse.

Surgeries are held every morning and afternoon at the main surgery and most mornings at the branch surgery.

In June 2014 the practice was inspected by CQC. As it was a pilot inspection we were not officially rated but were found to be fully compliant with CQC's standards.

Some of the comments made by CQC about the practice were that

“it was safe, effective and caring; it was responsive to patients' needs and patient feedback; patients were treated kindly, appropriately and with dignity; there was a culture of care which put patients' needs first: patients said doctors and nurses explained things well and they were able to ask questions, patients felt respected and involved in making decisions about their care; reception and clinical staff spoke kindly and appropriately when dealing with patients in person or on the telephone.”

THE DOCTORS AND STAFF

THE DOCTORS

Dr Andrew Brewer (m)

BSc MBBS (1983 London) Trained at St. Thomas' Hospital, London, and completed his postgraduate training at Poole General Hospital. His main medical interests are bone and joint disorders and exercise related health.

ASSOCIATE DOCTORS

Dr Philip Doust (m)

Dr Philip Doust went to medical school at the university of Southampton. After completing his training in 2005 he worked in Southampton General Hospital for 2 and a half years, before moving to Poole General Hospital for a further 2 years on a medical rotation. He moved to Northamptonshire to do his GP training and following this in 2013 worked locally as a GP. He and his family moved back to Dorset in 2015.

Dr Emma McFarland (f)

Dr McFarland trained at Southampton Medical School and completed post graduate training at Dorset County and Salisbury District Hospital. Her main medical interests are women's health and contraception/sexual health and she inserts and removes contra-

ceptive implants for the practice. Outside of work she enjoys travelling, outdoor activities and spending time with family.

Dr Andrea Siggers (f)

Dr Siggers trained locally as a GP before moving to Devon then Hampshire. She is pleased to be back in Dorset permanently now and has a medical interest in all of General Practice, particularly women's health and respiratory medicine. When not working she runs around after two children and a spaniel and loves to run, swim, sail and generally make the most of where we live.

Dr Neeta Somani (f)

Dr Somani trained at St George's Medical School, London and worked in Kent before completing GP training in Bournemouth. She has worked as a full-time GP locum widely in Dorset and also in rural Australia.

PRACTICE MANAGER

The Practice Manager, Matthew Haden, is responsible for the finance and administration of the practice and the smooth and efficient running of the surgeries. A team of receptionists, medical secretaries and administrative/computer staff supports him. He will be pleased to help you with any administrative or non medical aspect of your healthcare. He is also available, by appointment, to discuss any suggestions or concerns you have about our service.

RECEPTIONISTS & SECRETARIES

Our receptionists and secretaries are here to help you and provide you with a friendly and efficient service. Any information given to them is treated in confidence and they are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as doctors and nurses.

THE NURSING TEAM

Your nursing team consists of:

- Practice Nurses
- Health Care Assistant
- Health Visitors
- District Nurses
- Phlebotomist

The Practice Nurses offer the following services: family planning, well-woman and well-man checks, cervical smears, diabetes and asthma care, hypertension care, as well as general nursing care including dressings, ear syringing, immunisations, travel vaccinations and healthy lifestyle advice.

Practice Nurses:

- Kim Mitchell RGN
- Maria Gartshore RGN
- Sara Green (HCA/phlebotomist)

COMMUNITY NURSING TEAM

We have an attached team of district nurses and a midwife who work from our main practice and our branch surgery at West Howe.

District Nursing Team

Sister: Anne-Marie O'Sullivan RGN BSc (Hons) Specialist Practice.

Staff Nurses:

- Claire Mooney RGN
- **Health Care Assistant:**
- Liz Bryant

The community nursing team provides a high quality professional service 24 hours a day, every day of the year to the acutely sick, frail or elderly, the terminally ill, and to patients who are discharged from hospital. They offer support to patients and carers on how best to care for themselves between visits and give help and advice through and after a period of illness. They also advise on how to obtain assistance from other agencies, e.g. benefits etc. and how to follow a healthier lifestyle upon recovery.

Health Visiting Team (Tel. 01202 456790)

The health visiting team, based at Bournemouth Learning Centre, Ensbury Avenue, Bournemouth BH10 4HG, provides a high-quality professional and confidential service Monday to Friday. They can provide group sessions to promote health (including smoking cessation programmes and advice) or give individual advice and counselling. They are also involved in local and national 'Health Campaigns'. They support new parents from the birth of their baby and throughout the formative years, as well as giving advice on immunisation, feeding, development, safety and behavioural problems. They can be contacted on 01202 456790 .

Community Midwife

The Midwife holds antenatal clinics each week, appointments are booked through Bournemouth Hospital and currently take place at the Hub. During the postnatal period patients are seen in postnatal clinics when possible and they usually get at least one visit at home. Parent craft classes are available for labour, birth and breastfeeding.

STUDENTS

From time to time, final-year medical students, nursing and health visitor students are attached to the practice as part of their training and will accompany our staff in surgery or on visits. Please feel free to let us know if you would prefer not to have a student present at any particular consultation.

HOW TO REGISTER WITH THE PRACTICE

If you wish to register with the practice, please bring photo identification (e.g. passport or driving licence) and confirmation of your address (e.g. utility bill, rent book). The receptionist will give you an application form (GMS1). New patients will be asked to complete a health questionnaire.

Visitors/holidaymakers may register temporarily with the Practice and a registration form is available at reception.

**APPOINTMENTS: TELEPHONE
01202 574604**

(appointments line is open 08.30 - 12.30 and 13.00 - 18.30 Monday to Friday)

SURGERY HOURS

The main surgery at **440 Kinson Road** is open: **Monday - Friday 08.30 - 18.30** (the main telephone (01202 574604) lines are open from 08.00 - 18.30)

The branch surgery at **West Howe** is open: **Monday – Friday 08.45 – 11.45**

A receptionist is available during these times to answer any queries you may have. In general, morning surgery is between 08.30 - 11.00 and evening surgery between 14.00 - 18.00. All consultations are by appointment. You can make an appointment to see any of the doctors or the practice nurses. Surgeries are also held at our West Howe branch surgery each morning between 09.00 – 11.30. If you wish to have an appointment at the branch surgery please ring the either the branch surgery

(01202 581981) or the main surgery and ask for an appointment at the West Howe surgery. We also offer early morning appointments (07.30-08.00) on Monday and Friday mornings and evening appointments on Mondays (1830-1930).

TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS

A number of five-minute telephone consultations with the doctors and our nurse prescriber are available each day. These can be booked in advance. Please ask reception for a telephone consultation.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO KEEP AN APPOINTMENT, PLEASE LET US KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT WE CAN REALLOCATE THAT APPOINTMENT.

URGENT APPOINTMENTS: TELEPHONE 01202 574604

If you have an urgent problem you will be seen on the same day, but not necessarily with the doctor or nurse of your choice. The Practice Nurse may initially assess your problem and refer you to one of the doctors, if appropriate.

TELEPHONE ADVICE: 01202 574604

If you want to get telephone advice from a doctor or nurse, the best time to ring is 10.30 -12.00 on weekdays. If the doctor is still in

surgery or out on visits, you may be asked to ring back at a later time.

HOME VISITS: TELEPHONE 01202 574604

Home visits are for patients who are too ill or infirm to attend surgery. Home visiting is extremely time consuming for the doctors - a doctor can see three patients or more in surgery in the time it takes to do one home visit, so please make every effort to attend surgery. Visits are allocated to the doctors at 10.30 so please try to call before then if a visit is required. The receptionist will need to take some details of the problem so that urgent visits can be arranged promptly.

ONLINE FACILITIES

You can now book and cancel your appointment, order your repeat prescription or view parts of your medical record (medication, immunisations, allergies and adverse reactions) online. This facility is available to all patients aged 16 and over who have a mobile phone and an email address. Please call in at reception to complete a registration form.

We will then register you for this and give you a letter with your registration details. You will need to collect this letter from the

practice and at the same time provide some form of photo identification, e.g. passport or driving licence. You must then register on the Patient Access website:

<https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk>.

Select the 'patient access' tab on the toolbar to do this. There is a link to this website on the practice's web site

www.kinsonroadmedicalcentre.co.uk.

You cannot use online appointment booking until you have registered on the Patient Access website.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL UNWELL

To receive the right treatment at the right time by the right healthcare professional this simple guide aims to help you to decide how to receive the most appropriate treatment when you are unwell.

WHEN THE SURGERY IS CLOSED

If you are unwell in the evening, overnight or at the weekend, you can contact the NHS 111 service. This service is for urgent medical situations if you, or a member of your family, become ill and you are concerned but it is not a 999 emergency.

It is not for routine enquiries, such as booking an appointment with your GP, repeat prescriptions, test results etc. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Call 111 if

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.
- you think you need to go to A & E or need another NHS urgent care service.
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully-trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straightaway to the local service that can help you best. That could be A & E, an out of -hours doctor, an urgent care centre, an emergency dentist or a late-opening chemist. If NHS advisers think you need an ambulance they will arrange immediately for one to be sent.

Self Care

Keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet will help you with many common illnesses.

Pharmacies

Pharmacists and their team can offer advice on how to get the most out of your medicines. They can also offer advice on common ailments such as coughs, colds, aches and pains and other health issues, such as healthy eating and giving up smoking. They can help you decide whether you need to see a doctor.

Accident & Emergency/999

If you are worried about the sudden onset of new symptoms or have suffered a serious injury or illness, then you should go to A&E or call 999 as soon as possible. A&E departments are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They are for emergencies only (i.e. a critical or life-threatening situation such as chest pain or suspected heart attack, head injury, severe loss of blood). It is not for minor injuries or health problems nor an alternative to seeing your GP or for a second opinion' if you have already seen a GP.

Chaperones

We are committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment, where patients and staff are confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of paramount importance. All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation or procedures

where they consider one is required. The chaperone may be a family member or friend but, on occasions, a formal chaperone might be preferred. There are occasions when the doctor or nurse needs to give you a full or partial examination. If you feel embarrassed about this we can arrange for someone to be there with you. Just ask the doctor for a chaperone. If you would prefer to be examined by a health professional of the same gender as yourself, please let us know and we will do our best to comply with your wish. If we can't provide someone straight away you may need to return for the examination.

Practice website

The practice website (www.kinsonroadmedicalcentre.co.uk) contains lots of useful practice and health information, as well as the facility to order your repeat prescription, cancel your appointment and update your personal and health details.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Our repeat prescriptions are computerised and each time you receive your repeat prescription you will also receive a tear-off list of all your repeat medication. To reorder your medication:

- Return this list either by post or by handing in to reception (or put in our repeat prescription box) or register to do this online the next time you require your repeat prescription. Please tick the items that you require. You can also reorder your repeat prescription at any time via the practice website

www.kinsonroadmedicalcentre.co.uk.

- Signed prescriptions can be collected Monday - Friday between 10.30 - 13.00 and 14.00 - 18.30.

We ask that you give us at least two working days to prepare your prescription (up to 5 days if changes/additions are requested). Requests made on Friday will normally be ready by Tuesday. If you require a prescription urgently, please let the receptionist know and we will do our best to get it ready for you. Repeat prescriptions can be posted to you if you enclose a stamped-addressed envelope with your request. To prevent errors from occurring, telephone requests for repeat prescriptions are not accepted. Prescriptions can be sent to a designated chemist who will prepare your medication ready for collection. You will need to allow additional time for the chemist to collect and prepare your medication.

Please contact reception for details of which chemists offer this service. If you wish to use this facility, please write the name of the chemist you wish the prescription to be sent to at the top of the reorder list. Your repeat prescriptions are regularly reviewed by the doctors, and you may be occasionally be asked to attend for a review appointment with the doctor or nurse if you do not attend the surgery regularly. Many of the local chemists operate a prescription collection service. Please speak to your local chemist if you would like to use this facility.

TEST RESULTS: TELEPHONE 01202 574604

Some test results are ready in a few days; others can take much longer. Please check with the doctor when you will learn the result. If the doctor feels that it is necessary to see you again or that further action is required as a result of the test, we will notify you either by phone or letter. If you still wish to enquire about a test result please ring the surgery late morning onwards when it is less busy and let the receptionist know the specific test result that you require. However, please bear in mind that results will not be given to a third party.

CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS

Please remember to let us know if any of your personal details change, e.g. address, name or telephone number, so that we can keep our records up to date.

ACCESS FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED

Most of our surgeries are held on the ground floor. Wheelchair access is available through the front entrance and there are designated parking bays at the front of the surgery. Toilet facilities for the disabled are also available.

CARERS

Are you caring for someone who has a long-term health condition?

If so, please let us know. We may be able to give you important help and advice. It will be helpful for the doctor to know that you are a carer as it may affect your own health and treatment. The practice's lead worker for carers is Lorraine Churchill. Please ask if you would like to talk to her. When you tell us that you are caring for someone we will place your details on our Carers' Register so that practice staff are aware you are a carer. We will not share this knowledge with anyone else unless you tell us that we can. We may be able to offer you other services to help you care for your own health.

We will try to help you if your caring responsibilities mean that you have difficulties attending appointments. If you are giving regular and substantial help to the person that you care for, you will be entitled to a Social Services Carers Assessment. The Assessment gives you advice and information. You and the person that you care for may be entitled to practical help and support. Contact the Social Services Department where the cared for person lives to ask for an assessment. This is a free service.

To receive local information about services, support, breaks for carers and cared for people contact your local Carers' Information Service:

Bournemouth & Poole 01202 458204

Bournemouth email carerstream@bournemouth.gov.uk

Poole email carersservices@poole.gov.uk

National Information Service for Carers

NHS Carers Direct 0808 802 0202
www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Services for the cared for person

Bournemouth Borough Council

Care Direct 01202 454979

Borough of Poole Social Services
Helpdesk 01202 633902

PRIVATE FEES

Healthcare is free to people resident in the UK. However, a charge will be made for those services that are outside the NHS, such as pre-employment medicals, insurance reports, fitness to drive medicals, and some travel vaccinations. A list of these charges is available at reception.

PATIENT CLINICAL INFORMATION

We ask for information about yourself so that you can receive the best possible care and treatment. We keep this information, together with details of your care, to ensure that your doctor or nurse has accurate and up-to-date information. We are required to supply information about you and the care you receive with the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) under its care, data service. Information such as your postcode and NHS number, but not your name, plus clinical data will be used to link all your medical records (including any hospital and community service events) and will be used by others to help plan and improve services for all patients.

OTHER SERVICES OFFERED BY THE PRACTICE

Appointments are necessary for these, so please contact reception to make an appointment.

Antenatal and postnatal care

Antenatal care is provided on a shared-care basis with the midwives, the GPs and sometimes the hospital if a patient is considered to be high risk. The midwives hold antenatal clinics each week at Bournemouth Hospital. Antenatal appointments with the doctor are held during normal surgery. The health visitor normally sees antenatal patients during the 34th week of pregnancy to explain her role and takes over their post-natal care from the midwife around 10 days after delivery. There is a drop-in clinic for all postnatal patients at the Pelhams Clinic between 13.00-14.00 on Tuesdays and at the West Howe Clinic on Thursdays between 09.30-11.30.

Blood tests

There is a phlebotomy service within the practice on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and daily at Pelhams Clinic. Appointments are to be made through reception.

Family Planning

The Practice offers a full contraceptive and family planning service.

Please make an appointment to see one of the Practice Nurses or Doctors.

Minor Surgery

The Practice performs a range of minor surgical procedures, including joint injections and epidurals.

Cervical smears

Cervical smears are done routinely for all women aged 25 - 64 and patients will be sent a reminder when their next one is due. Please make an appointment with the Practice Nurse.

Diabetic management

We like to see our diabetic patients every six months, sometimes more frequently. If you would like an appointment with our diabetic nurse, please contact reception.

Asthma management

Our asthma nurse normally sees asthmatic patients at least once a year. You will normally be sent a reminder when your review is due; however if you wish to be seen before then please contact reception to make an appointment.

Flu Vaccination Clinics

Flu vaccination clinics are held in the autumn (often on a Saturday morning) for our over 65 and "at risk" patients.

Child Development Appointments

These are held during normal surgery. Appointments are made by the surgery.

Child Immunisations

We will send you an appointment when your child's immunisations are due. If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let reception know so that an alternative appointment can be arranged.

Over 75's Check

An annual health check is available to all our patients aged over 75. Please make an appointment with the receptionist. If you are infirm and unable to attend the surgery a home visit can be arranged.

Health Checks aged 40—75

We no longer carry our NHS health checks. Please contact Public Health Dorset for more information on 01202 451 828.

Travel Vaccinations

The Practice Nurses offer a full travel vaccination and travel advice service. As it can take up to 8 weeks to complete a course of immunisations, please book an appointment in good time before your date of travel.

A charge is made for some vaccinations and the practice nurse will advise you of this when discussing your immunisation requirements.

Tetanus immunisations

Are you up-to-date? If you are not sure, please ask your doctor or the nurse next time you attend surgery, or make an appointment with the practice nurse.

DORSET CCG

The practice is part of the Dorset CCG, Canford House, Discovery Court Business Centre, 551-553 Wallisdown Road, Poole BH12 5AG.

Tel: 01305 368926 Email: complaints@dorsetccg.nhs.uk

SOCIAL SERVICES

The Social Services Department may advise on problems relating to housing, finance and caring for the young, elderly or handicapped. (tel: 01202 458000).

COMMENTS/DIFFICULTIES

We endeavour to give you the best service possible at all times, but there may be occasions when you feel you wish to express dissatisfaction. We offer an in-house procedure to deal with your concerns.

This procedure does not deal with matters of legal liability or compensation, but we hope you will use it to give us an opportunity to look into and, if necessary, correct any problems that may have arisen or mistakes that have been made.

If you wish to make a complaint, please contact our Practice Manager, either directly, by telephone or by letter if you prefer. He will take full details of your complaint and decide how best to undertake the investigation. If appropriate, you will be offered a meeting with a senior member of staff, normally within seven days, to discuss the matter. This slight delay is to enable us to investigate the matter fully. You may bring a friend or relative with you to the meeting if you wish.

We hope to address your concerns fully, provide you with an explanation and discuss any action that may be taken. We trust that, at the end of the informal meeting, you will feel satisfied the matter has been resolved. However, if this is not the case, you can contact any of the following organisations:

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group

complaints@dorsetccg.nhs.uk

Telephone: 01305 368926

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

www.ombudsman.org.uk

Email:

phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

NHS England
NHS Commissioning Board
PO Box 16738
Redditch B97 9PT

Tel: 0300 311 2233

www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaint/

Email: **nhscommissioning-board@hscic.gov.uk**

Dorset Advocacy

If you need help or support with or information on making a complaint please contact:

Dorset Advocacy
13-15 Jubilee Court
Paceycombe Way
Dorchester DDT1 3AE

Tel: 0300 343 7000

email: **nhscomplaints@dorsetadvocacy.co.uk**

VIOLENT OR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The practice has a zero tolerance policy with regard to violent or verbally abusive behaviour.

Any patient displaying such behaviour will be removed immediately from the practice list and the incident reported to the police.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

To help us provide the best possible service to all our patients, we ask that our patients respect the following:

- **Be punctual and notify the practice if they are unable to attend an appointment (please give as much notice as possible)**
- **Always behave courteously to all our staff**
- **Always allow a minimum of 2 working days for the processing of repeat prescriptions**
- **Only ask for a home visit if it is truly necessary**
- **Inform us if you change your name, address or telephone number**

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Hospitals

Poole General 01202 665511

Royal Bournemouth General 01202 303626

Eye Unit Bournemouth Hospital
01202 704181

St Ann's Hospital 01202 708881

Social Services

Bournemouth 01202 458000Care
Direct 0800 444000

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Bournemouth 01202 7510927
Ferndown 01202 893838

NHS 111 Service 111

Dorset CCG 01202 541400 or 01305 368900

Smoking cessation 0300 30 38 038

Dental Helpline To find a dentist in Dorset 111

THE AREA WE COVER

Herbert Avenue
East Avenue
Charminster Road

SELF HELP AND COMMON MINOR PROBLEMS

Many conditions will get better on their own. All that is needed is time, and some simple medicines that can be obtained from a chemist without a prescription. Your local chemist is trained to advise you about simple medicines. NOTE: Aspirin should never be given to a child under 16 years.

Backache

Many acute strains and sprains will respond to a few days' rest and regular paracetamol for the pain. Backache will usually respond to a few days spent lying on a firm flat bed on your back or tummy with regular periods of gentle exercise, and by taking painkillers regularly. Sitting for long periods of time will make things worse! If it has not settled after several days or if you have pain or numbness in your legs you should consult the doctor.

Burns

If you burn yourself put the burn under cold running water immediately. Keep it there until the pain goes. This can take up to 15 minutes. If it is a small area and only blistered keep it clean and dry but if it is more than a few inches across or if the skin is broken, come and see the doctor or go to Casualty.

Coughs and colds

These usually start with a runny nose, cough, temperature and aches. They are caused by viruses and antibiotics are of no use in their treatment. Treatment consists of taking recommended doses of paracetamol for the temperature and aches, and drinking plenty of fluids.

Do not worry if you don't eat for a few days, you will come to no harm. Decongestants, cough linctus and soothing agents for the throat can all be useful.

Chicken-pox

Small spots which develop into blisters. Early spots turn crusty while new ones are still appearing. Calamine lotion and cool baths will help with the itching and Paracetamol will help to lower the temperature. Cases remain infectious until all the spots have dried and crusted.

Diarrhoea and vomiting

In adults and older children, diarrhoea and vomiting will usually get better on its own. Treatment consists of replacing the fluid you have lost and resting the tummy by having nothing to eat and only water to drink for 24 hours. Diarrhoea can be greatly helped by simple medicines from the Chemist. If the diarrhoea contains blood or there is severe pain or high fever, you should discuss this with your doctor. Diarrhoea and vomiting in babies and young children should be treated with caution and the doctor will be happy to advise you about this over the telephone and arrange to see you if necessary. Again – eating is not important, but drinking water is.

Eyesight

You don't appreciate the importance of your eyesight until you start to lose it. Everyone should have regular checks with their optometrist. If you can't read this from a distance of 18 inches then you may need glasses and should consult an optometrist. The optometrist has the skill, equipment and expertise to test your eyesight more readily than your doctor. Make use of him and do not be put off by examination charges; your sight is worth much more. You may be exempt from fees if you are in one of the

following categories:

- under 16, under 19 and in full-time education or over 60
- receiving income support or family credit
- receiving disability working allowance and under a limit of capital
- registered blind or partially sighted
- diabetic
- suffering from glaucoma, a family history of glaucoma and you are over 40.

Very young children can have a sight test. They do not need to be able to read or recognise letters as special tests have been devised.

An eye examination should be carried out at least by the age of three, or earlier if you think there may be a problem. The earlier a problem is detected the more effectively it can be treated. You can discuss this with your Health Visitor.

Earache

Earache is often caused by congestion, as happens during colds or minor infections. Simple painkillers and decongestants will usually help. If it does not settle in 12 to 24 hours, then you need to see a doctor.

Fevers – High Temperature

A high temperature commonly occurs with many minor infections. It is not in itself serious except when very high (more than 39 degrees Centigrade). However it can make you feel very unwell. Bring a temperature down by using Paracetamol (or Aspirin for adults only) on a regular basis is usually all that is necessary together with regular, small cold drinks. Also it is wise to remove all unnecessary clothing and if necessary have a cool (not cold) bath.

German Measles (Rubella)

Rash appears in small pink patches. It does not itch. Sometimes the joints ache. Infectious from 2 days before the rash appears until 4-5 days afterwards.

There is a danger to unborn babies and it is important that pregnant mothers are informed so that they can consult their doctor.

IMMUNISATION CAN PREVENT THIS.

Headaches

Most headaches, although unpleasant, are not serious. They are often caused by viral illness and will get better with simple painkillers. However, if the headache is severe, or lasts for a long time it is best to see the doctor. Please read the notes on Meningitis later in this section.

Head Lice

These creatures prefer clean hair and are not a sign of poor hygiene. Medicated shampoos can be obtained from the chemist without prescription.

Measles

A blotchy red rash, which starts over the chest and abdomen and is usually accompanied by a fever. Measles can have serious consequences and medical advice is advisable.

THIS DISEASE CAN BE PREVENTED BY IMMUNISATION.

Meningitis

This is fortunately rare. The symptoms are severe headaches and high fever which do not respond to simple medicines, pain and stiffness in the back of the neck and pain behind the eyes when exposed to bright light. There may also be severe vomiting. Anyone with these symptoms, especially if they are accompanied by a skin rash, or if they appear to be drowsy, confused or disorientated, should see a doctor immediately.

IMMUNISATION CAN HELP TO PREVENT THIS DISEASE.

Moles

These are increasing in frequency with increased exposure to sunlight and may occasionally become malignant. Prevention is better than cure and young children especially under 6 months old, should always be covered either by clothes or sunblock whenever out in strong sunlight. Sunburn in pre-school children predisposes to skin cancer in later life. The following things are features of moles which may be worrisome: if it has changed, got bigger or has an irregular edge/if it has changed colour/if it has itched or bled. However, if you are in any doubt whatsoever, please consult your doctor.

Nappy rash

Nearly all babies get a nappy rash at some time. If baby's bottom is starting to look red, then treat it as soon as possible. The trick is to keep the baby's skin dry. Change the nappy every time it is wet or dirty, use liberal amounts of cream, such as Zinc and Castor Oil or Drapolene and, if possible, take the nappy off and let the air get to the baby's bottom for as long as you can.

Nose bleeds

Sit in a chair (leaning forward with your mouth open) and pinch your nose just below the bone for about ten minutes, by which time the bleeding usually stops. If the bleeding continues, contact your doctor or local A&E department for further advice. Once the bleeding has stopped, your nose will feel very blocked. Do not try to blow it clear - this will only start the bleeding again.

Sore throats

Most sore throats are caused by viruses and, unfortunately, antibiotics are of no use. They usually get better within a week. The best thing to do is gargle regularly with soluble aspirin (if you are 16 years old or more) or paracetamol and then swallow it down.

This helps to sooth the throat, keep your temperature down and ease the aches and pains. Often you feel you cannot swallow. Eating is not important, but drinking is. Provided you can drink tepid water easily, you are all right.

Stomach Aches

Most are not serious and are usually caused by indigestion or wind. A hot water bottle will often relieve the symptoms with the help of some regular paracetamol. If the pain lasts for longer then eight hours or becomes increasingly severe, you should consult your doctor. If you know you have acid indigestion problem then you can use any of the indigestion medicines available at the Chemist.

Notes: