

Talkback



Latest news from Basildon and Brentwood CCG - Issue 2 2019

Summer health tips make life a breeze

During the warmer weather, we enjoy longer days and sunshine, however this can result in some unwanted health issues. Together with our GPs we have put together advice and tips to help you stay well this summer.

Keep this issue as a useful guide to help you keep cool and stay healthy. The following pages include useful information to advise you on what to do if you are affected by some of the more common ailments over the summer.

If you become unwell or are injured this summer, it's important to choose the right NHS service to make sure you get the best treatment as quickly as possible. In Basildon and Brentwood, there are numerous ways to access health care advice and treatment - check out your options on page 3.

Hearing Help Essex provides help and support to people living with hearing loss in Essex.

There are walk-in sessions at Pitsea Library on the 1st Wednesday of every month from 11.30am-1.30pm and at Wickford Library on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 2pm-4pm.



Summer shop for your home medicine cabinet



Painkillers

Aspirin, paracetamol and ibuprofen are highly effective at relieving most minor aches and pains

Antihistamines

They are useful for dealing with allergies and insect bites. They're also helpful if you have hay fever

Oral rehydration salts

Oral rehydration salts can help restore your body's natural balance of minerals and fluid lost through diarrhoea, fever and vomiting

Anti-diarrhoea tablets

Diarrhoea may be caused by food poisoning or a stomach virus and can happen without warning - do not give to children under 12

Indigestion treatment

If you have stomach ache or heartburn, a simple antacid will reduce stomach acidity and bring relief

Sunscreen

Keep a sun lotion of at least factor 15 with UVA protection.



LET'S TALK
LONELINESS

CERVICAL
SCREENING
SAVES
LIVES

Hi, I'm your doctor's
receptionist...

Please don't be
offended if I ask what
the problem is when
you call to make an
appointment



New season brings new challenges for asthma sufferers

As the weather heats up and pollen levels rise, health experts at Basildon and Brentwood CCG are advising people who suffer from asthma how best to manage their condition this summer.

Dr Subrata Basu, respiratory clinical lead the CCG, said: "It's really important for those who have a long term condition such as asthma to really understand it. By taking responsibility for your own health and following medical advice, you can lead a more fulfilling life. Knowing the triggers and managing your condition can also mean fewer admissions to hospital so you can really enjoy time with friends and family without having to worry." Research shows there are two key things, as an asthma sufferer, you can do to reduce the effect of asthma triggers:

Firstly, manage your asthma as much as possible. This means taking preventer medication as prescribed. Most of the time you won't even know it's working, but it is and it helps reduce your body's reaction to triggers. Keeping a note of the circumstances of when you have an attack means you can work with your GP or asthma nurse to put together an action plan. Regular reviews can make sure you're taking exactly the right medication. **Secondly**, understand your triggers. When you know your triggers you can work with your GP or asthma nurse on the best way to stop them causing symptoms. Obvious triggers start within minutes of coming into contact with your trigger. Other triggers aren't as easy to pinpoint and can sometimes be a delayed reaction. If you can't work out why you're having an attack keep a diary of everywhere you go and what

you were doing. This will help you spot patterns so the right treatment can be agreed.

Take time to explain your condition to loved ones. Tell them about your condition, the medications you have and what they can do to help. Then should you suffer an attack they will know exactly what to do. If you know someone with asthma take time to understand the symptoms. Ask them about their triggers and medication and whether there's anything you can do to help.

The guidance also applies to parents of children with asthma and anyone caring for someone suffering from the condition.

If you have any concerns about your condition, or your child's condition, it's important to talk to your GP or asthma nurse so they can review your/their health care plan. Find more information at www.asthma.org.uk

Here comes the sun...all the factors you need to know

Health experts from Brentwood and Basildon CCG are offering safety advice to help all residents stay safe in the sun.

Sunburn doesn't just happen when you're on holiday. You can burn when you least expect it. Sitting in the garden, walking the dog or tending the garden are just a few activities that can catch you off guard, even if it's cloudy or cool.

With more than 2,000 people a year dying from malignant melanoma it's even more important to take precautions. A moderate amount of sunshine is recommended for all of us. It provides essential vitamin D, which we need for good health, to improve our mood and to help promote better sleep. Too much sun can be damaging, so protecting ourselves from the sun not only prevents painful sunburn but also significantly reduces the risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

Minor sunburn is best treated at home by gently sponging with cool water and applying soothing after sun or calamine lotion. Your local pharmacy can advise on the best over the counter treatment to help ease symptoms and reduce inflammation.

If you feel unwell or have any concerns about your sunburn, particularly if you are burnt over a large area, have blistering or swelling of the skin, chills, dizziness, sickness or a high temperature (fever) of 38C (100.4F) or above, call NHS111 - available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Just dial 111 and you'll be put through to someone who can tell where you can go for help. **Remember, if you notice any changes to moles or unusual skin growths make sure you speak to your GP.**



Sun safety advice is so timely

- Even if it's cloudy or overcast you can still burn, so make sure you apply sun screen before you go out. Take it with you so you can top up throughout the day
- The sun's rays are at their strongest between 11am and 3pm, so try to avoid exposing your skin to too much sun during these times
- Make sure you apply a sunscreen that protects you against harmful UVA and UVB rays. A sun protection factor [SPF] of 50 gives the best protection
- Cover up with loose clothing, such as a baggy t-shirt with sleeves. Your shoulders and neck are the most common areas for sunburn. A floppy hat with a wide brim will also help to shade your face and neck and sunglasses will protect your eyes. But be sure to check they meet the British Standard (BSEN 1836:2005) and carry the "CE" mark

HELP US, HELP YOU

STAYWELL THIS SUMMER







Many people enjoy hot weather but there can be serious health consequences from too much heat and vulnerable groups are at risk in particularly hot spells.

The top ways for staying safe when the heat arrives are to:

look out for others, especially older people, young children and babies and those with underlying health conditions

- close curtains on rooms that face the sun to keep indoor spaces cooler and remember it may be cooler outdoors than indoors
- drink plenty of water as sugary, alcoholic and caffeinated drinks can make you more dehydrated
- never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals
- try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm
- take care and follow local safety advice, if you are going into the water to cool down
- walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat, if you have to go out in the heat
- avoid physical exertion in the hottest parts of the day
- wear light, loose fitting cotton clothes
- make sure you take water with you, if you are travelling

Teresa Kearney, Chief Nurse for Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group, says: "For some people such as older people. Those with underlying health conditions and those with young children, the summer can bring real health risks. That's why we're urging everyone to keep an eye on those who may be at risk this summer. If you are able, ask if your friends, family or neighbours need any support."

					
<p>Health A-Z guide</p> <p>Live Well</p> <p>Care & Support</p> <p>Health news</p> <p>Services near you</p>	<p>Cuts/injuries</p> <p>Strains</p> <p>Sprains</p> <p>Sports injuries</p>	<p>Ear pain</p> <p>Stomach ache</p> <p>Asthma/COPD</p> <p>Long term conditions</p>	<p>Diarrhoea</p> <p>Colds/cough</p> <p>Headache</p> <p>Stop smoking</p> <p>Sexual health</p> <p>Aches/pains/</p>	<p>Think you need medical help right now?</p>	<p>Hangover</p> <p>Grazes</p> <p>Sore throat</p> <p>Cough</p> <p>Colds</p> <p>Diarrhoea</p>
Online at www.nhs.uk	Orsett Minor Injuries Unit	GP surgery	Pharmacy	Call NHS 111	Self Care

Do you know what to do when it's not an emergency?

Bugbear! What to do when insects bite

Many of us enjoy the outdoors but spending time in a garden, park or countryside can mean insect bites or stings.

In most instances being stung or bitten is a minor nuisance. The affected area may get a little red or swollen and it may be slightly painful or itchy but it usually clears up within several hours. But to a child it may feel like the worst pain they've ever experienced resulting in lots of tears and anxious parents.

So, what's the best thing to do? And how will you know if the reaction is more serious?

Dr Anita Pereira, Clinical Lead for Self Care at Basildon and Brentwood CCG, advises: "Most insect bites and stings are fairly minor and can be treated at home. The best thing to do is wash the area with soap and water and place a clean flannel or cloth soaked in cold water over the affected area to reduce swelling. Try to get your child to avoid scratching the area as this could cause infection. One way to help is to keep your child's fingernails short and clean.

"If the bite or sting is painful or swollen, you can wrap an ice pack, such as a bag of frozen peas, in a towel and place it on the swelling. To help ease symptoms painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen can be taken. Make sure you don't give your child aspirin if they are aged under-16.

"Use a spray or cream that contains local anaesthetic, antihistamine or mild hydrocortisone (1%) on the affected area to prevent itching and swelling. An antihistamine tablet can help to reduce swelling but make sure you follow advice from your local pharmacist."

In rare cases, some stings can be painful and trigger a serious allergic reaction. If the redness or itching gets worse, it doesn't clear up in a few days or you are concerned, visit your GP or call NHS 111 for advice.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All you need to do is dial 111 and you will speak to a trained advisor who will direct you to the best medical care for you.

Eau dear what can the matter be?

Everyone is at risk of dehydration in hot temperatures, but babies, children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable.

Remember fluid requirements are higher than normal in hot weather and after strenuous activity. To replace fluids lost through sweating, drink plenty of fluids - water, lower fat milks and tea and coffee are good options. Fruit juice, smoothies and soft drinks do count towards your fluid intake, but can be high in sugar. Limit fruit juice or smoothies to a combined total of 150ml a day and swap sugary soft drinks for diet, sugar-free or no added sugar varieties.

Look out for signs of dehydration such as increased thirst, a dry mouth, dark urine, and urinating infrequently or small amounts.

Dehydration can happen more easily if you have diabetes, heatstroke, have drunk too much alcohol, sweated too much after exercising, have a high temperature of 38C or more, or been taking medicines that make you pee more.

Help the people you care for by making sure they drink and offering foods with a high water content such as melons or jellies. If you've been sick or have diarrhoea and are losing too much fluid, ask your pharmacist to recommend some oral rehydration salts.

Call 999 or go to A&E if you have any of these symptoms: unusually tired; you feel confused and disorientated, you haven't peed for eight hours, your pulse is weak or rapid or you have fits (seizures).

Under-5s should get plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. It's quite common for young children to become dehydrated and it can be serious if it's not dealt with quickly.

Take your baby or child to the GP urgently or go to A&E if they seem drowsy, breathe fast, have few or no tears when they cry, have a soft spot on their head that sinks inwards (sunken fontanelle), have a dry mouth, have dark yellow pee, have cold and blotchy looking hands and feet.

Out and about? #BeTickAware



Ticks (pictured above) are small, spider like creatures that feed on the blood of animals, including people.

Some tick bites can result in infections such as Lyme disease, so it is important to be aware of what ticks are, where they are found, and how to remove them safely and quickly to protect you and your family.

Ticks are found throughout the year, but are most active between spring and autumn.

They are often found in moist areas with leaf litter or longer grass, like woodland, grassland, moorland, heathland and some urban parks and gardens.

There are simple steps you can take to prevent being bitten by ticks while out and about with your family, including walking on clearly defined paths, using insect repellent and performing regular tick checks. Ticks can be removed safely with fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool.

If you feel unwell with flu-like symptoms or develop a spreading circular red rash after being bitten or spending time outdoors, you should visit your GP or call NHS 111.

Remember to tell them where you have been and if you were bitten.

Cervical screening campaign tackles decline in numbers of women getting tested

Cervical cancer affects around 3,000 women in the UK every year and is the most common form of cancer for women under the age of 35.



NHS Basildon and Brentwood CCG is supporting a nationwide cervical screening campaign with the message 'Cervical screening saves lives'.

Attending a cervical screening – known as a smear test - is the best way to help prevent cervical cancer. The latest published figures reveal that cervical screening coverage in women aged 25-64 years in the East of England Region (which includes Basildon and Brentwood) was just 74.5 per cent.

Anita Pereira, a GP at Laindon Medical Group, is backing the campaign. She explains: "I urge women aged between 24 and a half to 64 to book in for their smear when they get a letter from their GP inviting them to make an appointment. It's such a quick and simple test, and it really does save lives. 83% of all deaths from cervical cancer could be prevented if all eligible women attended this screening – so please don't ignore that letter."

The NHS offers a screening for all women, starting around their 25th birthday and up to the age of 49 every three years, and all women aged 50 to 64 every five years.


You will receive an invitation by letter from your GP practice when you are due for a cervical screening. However, the CCG is urging women to contact their GP if you are over the age of 25 and have not been screened before, or if you think you may be overdue for an appointment. Your GP practice team can check for you.



Cervical screening can stop cancer before it starts

Two women die every day from cervical cancer.

Don't ignore your cervical screening invite. If you missed your last cervical screening, **book an appointment with your GP practice now.**



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New non-emergency patient transport service

Non-emergency patient transport is an NHS service that provides transport for patients to attend NHS funded hospital or clinic appointments. To use the service patients must meet the eligibility criteria which are based on medical need.

The five NHS clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) within mid and south Essex are working together with patients and local stakeholders to design and formally procure a single new patient transport service for all patients living in Mid Essex, Basildon and Brentwood, Castle Point and Rochford, Southend and Thurrock CCG areas. Currently there are several separate patient transport services for patients living in these areas.

We have held workshops for patient representatives and NHS staff to patients and to make sure the new service will meet the needs of patient transport service users within mid and south Essex.

The CCGs have also carried out a survey of people with recent experience of booking or using patient transport services, either as a patient or as a carer.

The feedback from the workshops and the survey will be incorporated into the service specification for the new patient transport service. The new provider will be expected to meet all the requirements set out in the service specification.



Let's talk loneliness to tackle the stigma of feeling alone

Retired teacher Marion Wilson, a member of Basildon and Brentwood CCG's Patient and Community Reference Group (PCRG), is a passionate campaigner on the issue of loneliness.

She works with Essex County Council and the National Pensioners Convention to raise awareness of the effect of loneliness on public health and recently attended a forum on loneliness and social isolation organised by Basildon CVS during Loneliness Awareness Week.(17-21 June).

Marion says: We need a better awareness of the effects of loneliness and that we can all do something. It's not just the old. Young people can feel very lonely and for students at university, it can be their first time away from home, but it's the old people I am focusing on because I think they are hit the worst really. "

It is estimated there are 1.2.million lonely people - half a million over the age of 60 usually spend every day alone and nearly half a million more often go more than five or six days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all. Two-fifth say the television is their only company.

It matters because it is said that loneliness is as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and worse than obesity. You are more likely to suffer dementia, heart disease and depression if you are lonely. It can increase your risk of death by 29 per cent.

There are simple thing that everyone can do to make a difference. It can be something as simple as talking to someone at a bus stop, talking to your next door neighbour to see if they are OK and hosting an afternoon tea on a Sunday. You may be the only person they speak to that day.

The Government has launched the Let's Talk Loneliness campaign to tackle the stigma of loneliness and encourage people to speak out.

The campaign is bringing together charities, organisations and businesses - including the Marmalade Trust and the Jo Cox Foundation - to help people talk about their feelings.

Essex County Council plans to launch an Essex-wide initiative later this summer which will encourage individuals, organisations and businesses to work in partnership to tackle loneliness in Essex.



Tips to help end loneliness

Get involved in your community

Take the time to get to know your neighbours and your community. Is there a community group that meets regularly? Join in and get involved. You could chat to people in your community via a local Facebook page or use [Next door](#) – a website that tells you what's happening in your local area.

Start a conversation with a stranger

Everyone has a story and something interesting to say, so try and be open to having a random chat. Unplug your headphones and put down your phone. Make eye contact. Smile. Talk about the weather or the bus being late. For some people who are isolated this can be the only conversation they've had in weeks. Small talk can make a big difference.

Don't invite food poisoning to your barbecue

It's summer and time to make the most of alfresco dining but do you know how to prepare and cook your food safely to minimise the risk of food poisoning?

The safest option is to fully cook food in your oven and then put the cooked food on the barbecue for a short time so the flavour can develop.

This can be an easier option if you're cooking for a lot of people at the same time.

If you're only cooking on the

barbecue, the two main risk factors are:

- undercooking meat
- spreading germs from raw or undercooked meat on to food that's ready to eat

When you're cooking most types of meat on a barbecue, such as poultry (chicken and turkey, for example), pork, burgers or sausages, make sure:

- the coals are glowing red with a powdery grey surface before you start cooking, as this means they're hot enough
 - frozen meat is fully defrosted before you cook it
 - you turn the meat regularly and move it around the barbecue to cook it evenly.
- Most types of meat are safe to eat only when:
- the meat's steaming hot throughout
 - there's no pink meat visible when you cut into the thickest part
 - any juices run clear
- Remember cooking with disposable barbecues can take longer.



Meat, such as steaks and joints of beef or lamb, can be served rare (not cooked in the middle) as long as the outside has been properly cooked. This will kill any bacteria on the outside of the meat.

Food made from any type of minced meat, such as pork sausages and beef burgers, must be cooked thoroughly all the way through.

Let's meet VitaMinds

Vita Health Group are delighted to be delivering the Basildon and Brentwood (IAPT) service supporting people with common mental health conditions. The local service is called **VitaMinds** and has been in operation since 1st of April 2019.

Mental health is an important issue, with one in six people in the UK experiencing a mental health problem every week, it is important that people have timely access to the right support. **VitaMinds** provides treatment and support for adults who are experiencing difficulties such as persistent low mood or depression, anxiety or persistent worry, panic attacks, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, social anxiety and specific phobias. Patients are able to access the service by self-referring on line or by telephone and also through their GP. So far over 1,000 people have accessed the service.

Vita Health Group's Partnership Liaison Officer Sophie Subramani says: "We are passionate about the community and understand the importance of engaging with local people. Since the launch of VitaMinds we have been working closely with representatives from a number of service user groups to try to better understand the current local challenges and how we can best support the residents of Basildon and Brentwood."

Putting the focus on men's mental health

Around 1 in 8 men in England experience a common mental health problem yet only 36 per cent of IAPT referrals are made by men.

Traditional gender roles and expectations from society are thought to partly be the reason for a lack of male engagement. Expectations surrounding how men "should" behave and what masculinity looks like puts large amounts of pressure on men today however they are less likely to discuss how this pressure affects them in the lives. Men are also less likely to confide in their friends and family about how they are feeling and discuss their mental health problems. As a result, research suggests that men are more likely to resort to more harmful methods of coping with their mental health difficulties.

"At VitaMinds we would like to encourage anyone, male or female, who feels they need additional support to contact our service on **01268 977 171**. Following on from a holistic assessment we work closely with patients to provide the right treatment options to suit their individual needs."

GP and nurse appointments now available during the evenings and weekends

Did you know an Extended Hours Access Service is available for patients registered at GP practices in Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford?

GP and nurse appointments are available until 8pm on weekdays with a number of appointments at the weekends and bank holidays. Appointments take place at hub clinics. Contact your GP in the usual way to request an appointment.

Is alcohol causing problems in your life?

Problems with alcohol are very common and alcohol can, and does, affect the lives of people from all walks of life. Phoenix Futures - the Essex Alcohol Recovery Community - provides anyone 18 years old or above with support, advice and information around alcohol use.

Whether you want to reduce the amount you drink, or how often you drink, or abstain completely, Phoenix Futures provides a range of support designed around your personal needs and aspirations. Call 01376 316126 or email essex.arc@phoenixfutures.org.uk

We're here for you, for longer

GP and nurse appointments are now available in your area during the evenings and at the weekend.

To book an appointment, contact your GP practice or for out-of-hours call NHS 111

For more information, visit nhs.uk/GPaccess

Your NHS, here for you.

Our GP extended access service is for patients registered with GP practices in:

Basildon	Brentwood
Billericay	Wickford

Appointments are offered at hubs in Basildon, Billericay, Brentwood or Wickford



Leanne Brooks, Nurse

NHS App goes live in Basildon and Brentwood



Registering for the NHS App is easy. You can download the App on Google Play and Apple app store. Follow the instructions and you're ready to go!

The NHS App is a new, simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

You can use the NHS App to:

- check your symptoms
- find out what to do when you need help urgently
- book and manage appointments at your GP surgery
- order repeat prescriptions
- securely view your GP medical record
- register to be an organ donor
- choose how the NHS uses your data

All GP surgeries in Basildon and Brentwood were connected on 1 July 2019 and many are already providing patients with all the functions of the NHS App.

Once you download the app, register and go through a series of checks to confirm your identity, the app will securely connect to information from your GP surgery. To keep your access secure, a security code is sent to your phone each time you use the app.

If you have any issues using or downloading the app, [check the NHS App help and support page](#) at www.nhs.uk

Even if you don't have a smartphone, you can use a website to sign up to GP Online to use the same features.

Introducing Care Navigation

A new way of helping patients get the right healthcare at the right time is being introduced at GP surgeries across Basildon and Brentwood.

When you ring your GP practice or call in to book an appointment, you might notice the reception team will ask you if you wouldn't mind telling them a little bit about what the problem is. This is simply so they can direct you to the professionals or services most suited to help you with your health issue.

We call this **Care Navigation** and GP practice reception teams have completed specialist training to help you find the best service for your needs. It can often be quicker and may mean you may not need to see a GP at all.

Please be assured anything you share with a receptionist will be kept confidential.

You don't have to provide a receptionist with any details and you will never be refused an appointment but Care Navigation will help your GP practice get the right care at the right time to all their patients.

NHS

Our receptionists are here to help you get to the right service.

Please don't be offended if they ask what the problem is when you call to make an appointment

The receptionist might suggest other professionals or services that could help you better such as:

- Pharmacist
- Physiotherapist
- Nurse
- Counsellor
- Maternity services
- Family services
- Support groups

Visit our practice website to find out more about the full range of services available locally