



PRESCRIPTION LINE

On the **4th January 2016** we launched a new telephone line for the ordering of medication only.

The prescription line is open from **10am-4pm Monday to Friday** and can be accessed on **01205 319856**.

Please do not call before or after the specified time, as you will be unable to get through as the line will be closed. We would value your feedback on the introduction of the extra telephone number and how you feel this has impacted on the main telephone lines. Please fill out one of our Friends and Family cards at reception or visit our website to fill one out online and share your opinion.

ONLINE SERVICES

Did you know that you can order your repeat prescriptions and book appointments online? If you wish to use our online services, it couldn't be easier. Simply come into surgery with some form of photographic I.D and one of our reception team will provide you with a username and password to enable you to log onto the website first time. Once logged in, you will have access to a range of online services including booking appointments with a GP or First Contact Practitioner, ordering repeat prescriptions or filling in travel vaccination forms prior to going on holiday abroad. New appointment slots are made available at midnight everyday so you have the freedom to book an appointment time which is most convenient to you.

Please be aware that the use of our online system must be done so responsibly.

One patient has said; "booking my appointment by using my computer at 6.30am was really quick and easy and I had a good choice of appointment times and doctors to choose from".

HAYFEVER MEDICATION – PRESCRIPTION VS. PURCHASING

Cetirizine and loratadine are the two most widely prescribed antihistamines for hay fever in Lincolnshire with prescribing costs across the county exceeding £177,000 each year. East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group are asking patients to purchase their own antihistamines rather than asking their GP for a prescription.

At a time when the NHS is facing increasing financial pressure, the continued provision of low cost, commercially available antihistamines on prescription is no longer considered to be an appropriate use of limited NHS funds. Patients suffering from hayfever who currently receive cetirizine or Loratadine on prescription are asked to consider purchasing their own supply from a supermarket, community pharmacy or other retailer. Generic versions of both of these products are now available for as little as £1 for 28 tablets.

The main focus for this year's Allergy Awareness campaign is to raise the profile of seasonal allergic rhinitis or 'hay fever'. This is considered to be the most common allergy, with one in four of the UK population suffering with it every year. Each year, the number of allergy sufferers increases by 5% with half of those affected being children.

At this time of year, many people start to be affected by allergies due to larger quantities of airborne grass pollen, suffering from symptoms such as sneezing, runny, blocked or stuffy nose, itchy eyes and post-nasal drip. Some people are allergic to other types of pollen, such as tree or weed pollen, and may be affected at different times of the year.

PARACETAMOL CAMPAIGN

Lincolnshire East Clinical Commissioning Group spent £446,000 last year on **all** prescribed Paracetamol. Across the whole of Lincolnshire the amount spent was in excess of £1.2m.

Patients are being asked to reconsider before they request Paracetamol 500mg tablets on prescription for short-term conditions, such as colds, flu, headaches and other aches and pains. Every home should have a medicines cabinet, adequately stocked with low cost generic treatments that can be used for the short-term relief of common conditions. A box of 16 Paracetamol 500mg tablets can cost less than 30p from a supermarket, health food store or community pharmacy.

Many people are prescribed regular Paracetamol up to a maximum of four times daily to reduce inflammation and provide pain relief for long-term conditions, such as arthritis. This is entirely appropriate and it is not the intention to prevent those people from continuing to receive prescriptions for Paracetamol on the NHS. However, patients in East Lincolnshire are being asked not to expect Paracetamol to be prescribed for short-term use for minor conditions.

Dr Peter Holmes, GP and Chair of NHS Lincolnshire East CCG explains, "At a time when the NHS is facing huge financial pressures, providing small quantities of these painkillers on prescription is not an effective use of funds. Every time a doctor writes a prescription, the NHS incurs additional charges through dispensing and administrative fees, and if GP time is also included the cost rises even higher.

"These painkillers can be bought from a shop or pharmacy for far less than the price the NHS pays when providing them on prescription. For that reason, we're asking people to make this choice. By doing so they will help us save money that can be spent locally providing care for our patients in East Lincolnshire.

STAFF UPDATE

We are pleased to welcome Dr Oranugo who will be joining the Greyfriars team. He will be providing a GP clinic four days a week, his day off will be a Tuesday. We have sadly said goodbye to Dr Wiles who has now left the surgery as he is moving out of the area. We wish him every luck with his future endeavours. Lynn Townsend has also retired from the surgery after 28 years' service to Greyfriars Surgery. Both of them will be missed by both patients and staff.

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE: GET THE RIGHT RELIEF FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS

Coughs, sore throats and blocked noses are all sign of an Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI).

A URTI is caused by a virus. Viruses do not respond to antibiotics and may even cause unpleasant side effects such as diarrhoea, thrush or a rash.

As a result of using too many antibiotics, bugs can become superbugs and therefore can become too powerful for antibiotics to work.

The more we use antibiotics, the greater the chance that bacteria will become immune to them and we can no longer use them to treat infections.

If you are experiencing symptoms of a URTI then speak to your pharmacist for suitable medicines to treat your specific symptoms.

If your symptoms do not then improve, then make an appointment with a Doctor or First Contact Practitioner.

REMINDERS

1. Since the 4th January 2016, the main telephone line opens **at 8.15am** for you to call and book an appointment on the day.
2. Please let the surgery know if any of your details change including address, mobile phone numbers etc. This will ensure that we can get hold of you quickly if we need to.
3. We have had great success with our free text messaging service; if you would like to sign up to be reminded of your appointments with a text message, please ask for a leaflet at reception.

SELF-CARE

Self-care means keeping fit and healthy, as well as knowing how to take medicines, treat minor ailments and seek help when you need it. If you have a long-term condition, self-care is about understanding that condition and how to live with it. For more information on your condition, visit our website at www.greyfriarssurgeryboston.co.uk, where you will find lots of information on treating your symptoms taken from the NHS choices website.

It is important that during the winter period that you keep your medicine cabinet well stocked with medicines for minor illnesses such as cough colds etc. It is important that you keep your medication out the reach of children.