

# Melbourne Grove Medical Practice

Newsletter November 2016

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## Long-term conditions and how to have a safe winter

Now that the weather is getting chilly, it's the time of year where we all start thinking about the seasonal holidays and knitwear! However, at Melbourne Grove, it is also the time of year that we make plans to help our patients have the safest and healthiest winter possible.

As such, we send invitations to all our patients who have long-term conditions, to have annual reviews by a nurse or GP. This includes patients who have COPD (chronic bronchitis), asthma, heart disease, stroke, mental health problems, rheumatoid arthritis, high blood pressure and diabetes.

We also invite patients in for annual health checks if they are carers, and also those who have a learning disability. Some patients are calculated as high risk for being admitted to the hospital, and we review individualized care plans with this group of patients too.

So, if you are in any of these groups, we look forward to seeing you ASAP!

Remember, one of the best things you can do to protect yourself and your family is to have your seasonal influenza vaccination. Please prioritize this – the vaccine is safe and effective and available to those aged 2-4 years, those with long-term conditions, carers, and patients aged over 65 years.

Warm regards,

**Dr Jonathan Love, Clinical Lead GP**

### Opening Times

Monday	8am – 6:30pm
Tuesday	8am – 6:30pm
Wednesday	8am – 6:30pm
Thursday	8am – 6:30pm
Friday	8am – 6:30pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm (Pre-booked only)



Contact us (comments, complaints, and ideas):

Telephone: 020 8299 0499

Email: [souccg.mgmp@nhs.net](mailto:souccg.mgmp@nhs.net)

## Blood pressure and cholesterol

Many patients are concerned about their BP and cholesterol. It is true that if these readings are raised, you may be at a higher risk for heart disease or stroke.

If you have a high BP or cholesterol reading, what can be done?

### HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Below are some changes you could make to your lifestyle to reduce high blood pressure. Some of these will lower your blood pressure in a matter of weeks, while others may take longer.

These include:

- **cutting your salt intake to less than 6g (0.2oz) a day**
- **eating a low-fat, balanced diet** – including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables
- **being active**
- **cutting down on alcohol**
- **losing weight**
- **drinking less caffeine** – found in coffee, tea and cola
- **stopping smoking**
- **getting at least six hours of sleep a night if you can**

Your GP will speak to you about medications that can be used to reduce blood pressure if needed.

### HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Try to avoid or cut down on the following foods, which are high in saturated fat:

- **fatty cuts of meat and meat products, such as sausages and pies**
- **butter, ghee and lard**
- **cream, soured cream, and ice cream**
- **cheese, particularly hard cheese**
- **cakes and biscuits**
- **milk chocolate**
- **coconut oil, coconut cream and palm oil**

**Statins** block the enzyme (a type of chemical) in your liver that helps to make cholesterol. This leads to a reduction in your blood cholesterol level. You'll usually be started on a medication called atorvastatin. Other statins include simvastatin and rosuvastatin.

Statins will only be prescribed to people who continue to be at high risk of heart disease, because they need to be taken for life. Cholesterol levels start to rise again once you stop taking them.



### Meet the team: Biola Odusanya

I have been working in Melbourne Grove for over 3 years as practice nurse and I have BSC HON in Practice Nursing from South London University.

My nursing experience before Melbourne Grove was quite broad and included midwifery, hospital setting, community nursing and general practice.

As a trained health promotional I am interested in empowering and supporting my patients in all their general health issues such as long term conditions, asthma, COPD, diabetes and obesity management.

I co-ordinate and run the diabetes care management every Friday morning with medical input from Dr Love. I do a wide range of nursing activity for the practice, such as baby immunisations, sexual health and travel health advice, smoking cessation and cervical smear tests. I am also interested in wound and ulcer management due to my experience in tissue viability.

I am married with children, and am involved in a women's empowerment group charity organisation.



### Ambulatory 24-hour Blood Pressure Monitoring

At Melbourne Grove we have a special BP monitor called a "24-hour" or "ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM)".

We fit you with the blood pressure cuff, that you take home and return to us the next day.

Your blood pressure is tested automatically around every 30 minutes over a 24-hour period using a cuff attached to a portable device worn on your waist.

ABPM can help to give a clear picture of how your blood pressure changes over the course of a day.

Please ask our receptionist for more details if you are interested!

## Over-40's NHS Health Checks

If you are aged over 40 and do not have a long-term health problem such as diabetes or heart disease, you will be invited to have an “over-40's NHS Health Check” with our Health Care Assistant. During this appointment, we will check your cholesterol, check you for diabetes, your weight, smoking history, and review your blood pressure. But why is this important?



Think of the NHS Health Check as a midlife MOT.

It's not only an opportunity to put right emerging problems, but to get personalised advice on keeping yourself healthy and active in the future. Our bodies have many important systems, but one that is central to all of them is our vascular or circulatory system.

At its centre is our heart, pumping blood every second of every day through a 100,000-mile network of veins and arteries, which, if lined up end to end, would circle the equator four times. It's not only a system that all others depend on, but also one that suffers wear and tear.

This can lead to a range of debilitating, sometimes life-threatening, conditions such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes and certain types of dementia. Together, these conditions are the biggest cause of preventable deaths and disability in the UK.

The vascular system is what the NHS Health Check is designed to monitor and protect. It tells you how well your vascular system is performing and predicts how it will hold up in the future. Most importantly, it points out changes you can make to get your vascular system running more efficiently, which will reduce wear and tear.

The NHS Health Check gives you an overall score that you can keep track of and improve over time. Some think of this as their “heart age”.

This single figure is calculated from up to 20 other snippets of information about you, but there are three important statistics that you should know and, from time to time, monitor.

These are your:

- Blood pressure
- BMI (body mass index)
- Cholesterol count

As important as the NHS Health Check is, the action plan for health improvement that comes with it is the real game changer.

Some people end up with a NHS Health Check score that is better than normal and no changes will be necessary. But for most of us, some change will be recommended. For example, you may be advised to be more physically active or cut down on the amount of fat, salt or sugar in your diet.

If your NHS Health Check suggests you are at higher risk, you might also be offered medicines to control your blood pressure or lower your cholesterol, along with help to take action with losing weight or stopping smoking.

# Feedback from the patient participation group

We are a GP practice that listens very closely to the opinions and thoughts of our patients, through the questionnaires in reception, from complaints and compliments received in person, from the NHS Choices website, to name a few.

We have a very active patient participation group (PPG) who meet every 3 months and discuss ideas and ways in which the practice can evolve to meet the challenges of local health care. Below are some key points from our most recent PPG.

- Chair Person Assigned
- What is expected of PPG for direction of group
- Practice Charter Questionnaire
- Telephone Improvements



The PPG minutes are available to read in reception, and also on our website.

Look out for our new “you said, we did” poster in reception, to see how your comments are helping improve the practice.

Our next PPG is 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 so we look forward to seeing you. If you would like to join, look for the posters on display in the surgery in December, or ask our receptionist to add you to our PPG list and you will be contacted in advance of future meetings.

## **In the next issue:**

***HIV testing and debunking HIV myths for World AIDS Day 1.12.16***

***Keeping warm and well this winter***

***Sleeping rough? Helping the homeless at Melbourne Grove Medical Practice***

## **Melbourne Grove Medical Practice**

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