**Park View Surgery Newsletter April/May 2024**

Cancer Screening

### Cancer screening involves testing apparently healthy people for signs of the disease. It can save lives by finding cancers at an early stage, or even preventing them. Screening is not the same as the tests a person may have when doctors are diagnosing or treating cancer.

## [The UK has 3 screening programmes](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/screening/understanding-cancer-screening)

[**Bowel cancer screening**](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bowel-cancer/getting-diagnosed/screening)

NHS bowel cancer screening checks if you could have bowel cancer. It's available to everyone aged 60 to 74 years. The programme is expanding to make it available to everyone aged 50 to 59 years. This is happening gradually over 4 years and started in April 2021.

[**Breast cancer screening**](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer/screening/breast-screening)

NHS breast screening checks use X-rays to look for cancers that are too small to see or feel. Screening take place every 3 years for woman aged 50 and 71. You will be invited via post.

[**Cervical screening**](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cervical-cancer/getting-diagnosed/screening)

Cervical screening is a way of preventing cervical cancer. It tests for the human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes almost all cases of cervical cancer. Cervical screening can spot any abnormal cell changes in the cervix so that they can be treated before they have chance to develop into cancer. You may have heard cervical screening called a ‘smear test’. Cervical screening is for anyone with a cervix who is aged 25 to 64.

Pharmacy First

Pharmacists can give you advice on a range of conditions and suggest medicines that can help.

They may also be able to offer treatment and some prescription medicine for some conditions, without you needing to see a GP (this is called Pharmacy First). Conditions they can treat as part of Pharmacy First are:

* earache (aged 1 to 17 years)
* impetigo (aged 1 year and over)
* infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over)
* shingles (aged 18 years and over)
* sinusitis (aged 12 years and over)
* sore throat (aged 5 years and over)
* urinary tract infections or UTIs (women aged 16 to 64 years)

If you go to a pharmacy with one of these conditions, the pharmacist will offer you advice, treatment or refer you to a GP or other healthcare professional if needed.

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| Update from Dr FinlayFollowing on from a health issue last year, I have made the difficult decision to retire from May 2024.   I joined Park View Surgery in October 2000, as the first female partner. Over the last 23 years it has been a pleasure to be your GP and get to know you. You will be missed. As a doctor, we are more used to listening to others health concerns, rather than sharing our own. I hope you will bear with me if I talk about my own health briefly, in the hope that it might prompt even one of you to take up the screening opportunities that are there. On May 12th, 2023, I was told I had breast cancer. I did not have typical symptoms, and I, my GP and the clinician who saw me in the Breast Clinic had not anticipated the diagnosis.  I had attended for my 3 yearly mammograms. In the Breast Clinic the radiologist spotted a change on the mammogram from the one I had had in January 2022. My treatment started. My cancer was caught early, before there was any palpable lump. Hopefully that means I have every chance of it having been ' cured.' My concern, as your GP is, that I know a lot of our patients at Park View do not take up the screening opportunities given to them, for a variety of reasons. Please reconsider this. Encourage family members to attend. You could literally save their life. So:Please do keep your mammogram appointments. Please remember you can ask to be screened with mammograms beyond 70 by phoning the screening service.Please engage with all the other screening services available: cervical screening, bowel cancer screening, and aortic aneurysm screening.  It could find something early, and safe your life. Also, if you have persistent new niggling symptoms that have gone on for 3 weeks or more, see the doctor. Tell them what you are worried about, but get it investigated. Yes, it is scary, but a lack of action might be even worse. Take care of yourselves. Be kind to each other. Best wishes to you allDr Finlay |