

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM ARDLEIGH SURGERY PATIENTS

Is the surgery open?

Yes, despite the pandemic we are open but we are finding new ways to work that will keep us all safe.

Can I be seen at the surgery?

Yes, if you have a medical problem other than a cough and fever please phone the surgery. The receptionist will ask you to briefly state what the problem is, he or she will write this down along with your telephone number and the doctor will call you back. When the doctor calls you back he/she may be able to solve the problem over the phone or he/she may offer you an appointment at the surgery. All effort will be made to allocate you to your usual GP but you may be allocated to the next available clinicians.

What happens when I come to the surgery?

Your temperature will be taken at the entrance to the surgery, if you have a fever you will be told to go back home and the GP will call you. If you have a temperature and a cough you should go home and log on to 111 online whilst you wait for the GP to call.

If you have no temperature and no cough then you will be asked to take a seat and wait to be called in by the GP.

Please use the hand sanitiser and seat at least 2 metres away from the closest patient.

What if I do have a cough and fever and I have self-isolated for 7 days and I still do not feel well?

If you are very sick with very high fever, severe shortness of breath such that you cannot speak a full sentence or count up to 7 in one breath and/or you feel faint when you stand up you should call 999.

If you are unwell but not severely then in hours call the surgery. Out of hours call 111

The GP will call you back and get further details about your health. At the end of the conversation you may be advised over the phone with or without medication from your pharmacist or you be asked to come in and see the GP in the afternoon between 1530hrs to 1730hrs.

What happens when I come to the surgery?

Please drive to the back of the surgery, park your car on the right hand side of the care park. Stay in your car, the GP will come and get you.

You will be asked to use the hand sanitiser and put on a face mask.

The GP will be wearing personal protective equipment so do not be alarmed. If you are bringing a child in please explain this to the child prior to coming.

The appointment should proceed as normal. At the end of the consultation you may be treated in the community or be referred to hospital if you are very unwell.

Will I be tested for the covid-19?

At the moment we are not testing any patients in the community. If you have the symptoms you will be given a diagnosis of suspected COVID -19 Infections.

Can I have a sick note if I am self – isolating?

No, for the first 7 days you will have to self-certify, please refer to our sick note page

Can I have a sick note if I am shielding myself for at least 3 months?

No, you will not be able to get a sick note from the surgery; you should have received a shielding letter from NHS England if you are in the high risk group. We are currently waiting for guidance from NHS England to define who is going to be in the next level and lower level of vulnerable patients. When we know which patients are included we will be able to advise you then.

Can I get a sick note if I am self-isolating because I have a cough and fever or someone I live with has the same?

No, to reduce the burden on GP practices a new online system, created by the NHS and the Department for Work and Pensions, is now live for patients to be emailed a digital isolation note. Isolation notes provide patients with evidence for their employers that they have been advised to self-isolate due to coronavirus, either because they have symptoms or they live with someone who has symptoms, and so cannot work. As isolation notes can be obtained without contacting a doctor, this will reduce the pressure on GP surgeries and prevent people needing to leave their homes. The notes can be accessed through the [NHS website](#) and [NHS 111 online](#). After answering a few questions, an isolation note will be emailed to the user. If they don't have an email address, they can have the note sent to a trusted family member

or friend, or directly to their employer. The service can also be used to generate an isolation note on behalf of someone.

Can I get a letter from the surgery to say that I belong to a high risk group?

No, as stated above, if you are not in the group of patients who have already received their letters you will have to wait until we have clear instructions on who is included in the second group of vulnerable patients. If your employer wants documents for their records they can have a summary of your medical problems. You can access this online via your patient access.

I am worried of contracting COVID -19 and my employer insists that you go to work?

If you have receive a shielding letter or text from NHS England or you have generated an isolation note from 1111 then you are within your right not to go to the work place. If you are not included in the high risk group and you are not self-isolating because you or a member of your household is sick, then this is matter for you and your employer to decide. It is not a medical matter.

Can I get a letter to say I cannot go on my holiday?

No, insurers and travel companies will be using the advice from the foreign office to decide whether to compensate you. **The filling in of insurance forms is a private service and will cost at least £36.**

I have asthma or copd; can I have a rescue pack?

If you have never had a rescue pack before we are unlikely to give you one now. If you feel unwell and feel you need a rescue you can phone the surgery and the receptionist will ask you further questions.

I have asthma or copd, can I have an inhaler?

If you have not had a blue inhaler for over 2 years and a brown inhaler for over 1 year we are unlikely to prescribe you one now. Brown inhalers can actually make worsen the course of a COVID-19 infection if used inappropriately.

Can I have more than one month's prescription?

No, at the onset of the pandemic, we did give some patients, namely those with multiple medical problems 2 months' worth of medication. This was not sustainable; we are not back to 1 months' worth of medication only.

Can I take ibuprofen?

There has been some research that ibuprofen may make affect how the body fights chest infection, the research is not complete or clear so for we advise that you use paracetamol to bring fever down and use ibuprofen as a last resort.

Can I take ACE inhibitors?

Yes, there is no direct evidence that ACE inhibitors lead to an increase chance of death if you contract the disease. If your blood pressure is well controlled by an ACE inhibitor is it better to continue using the medication than to stop it and get rebound high blood pressure which can be dangerous.

Can I have chloroquine on prescription?

No, there is no direct evidence that this drug will cure you of the virus infection.

How long does it take for my prescription to be ready for pick up?

Five working days or one week. So if you hand in your prescription on Monday the 30th of March before 1300hrs, your medication can be picked up from the dispensary from 0900hrs on Monday the 6th of April.

I am self-isolating and I have no one to pick up my prescription?

Use the community helpers, IF YOU NEED HELP TO GET YOUR PRESCRIPTIONS PLEASE CALL THE DEDHAM AND ARDLEIGH HELPLINE ON 01206322025 AND LEAVE YOU NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER AND SOMEONE WILL GET BACK TO YOU.

Ask a well relative or willing neighbour to pick it up for you.

And this old chestnuts

I have a fever and cough what do I do?

Go to 111 online and go through the questions to check if you are “well” to stay at home.

If you are “well”, then self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of your illness and your relative living in the same house as you will need to self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of your illness. If you are unwell on the 30th of March, you should stay indoors until the 6th of April because day 1 is the 31st of March not the 30th. Your housemates should self-isolate indoors until the 13th of April.

PLEASE CHECK OUR PRACTICE NEWS FOR FURTHER UPDATES AND USEFUL WEBSITES

