

Patient Information Leaflet

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www.almapartnership.co.uk – for practice news and
information



Appointments

FOR PRACTICE NEWS & INFORMATION

www.arnewoodpractice.nhs.uk

Making an Appointment

When you contact us to make an appointment, you will be asked by the receptionist if you can tell us what the appointment is for. This information is to help you to get the right appointment with the right clinician—please remember, the team are not making arbitrary decisions regarding your care, but making sure you receive the best possible treatment in the most efficient way. If you do not wish to impart this information, the receptionists will respect your decision.

The receptionist may be able to help you immediately; take a message to a clinician and contact you with the answer; arrange a telephone or a face to face consultation—either with our in house Clinical Pharmacist, a Nurse or a Doctor.

Routine Appointments

Routine appointments with a doctor can be pre-booked up to four weeks in advance. We recommend you try and plan ahead to ensure you get an appointment with your first choice of doctor. The practice believes in continuity of care, and we encourage you to see the same doctor for your particular medical condition on each occasion. There will be times, however, when your first choice of doctor is not available, due to training or leave.

Urgent Appointments

If you have a medical problem which you feel needs to be dealt with urgently, for example an acute infection or severe pain, please telephone the practice and advise the receptionist that you would like to see a doctor urgently. A number of appointments become available for booking the same day. If we cannot offer you a suitable appointment, the receptionist will take your details and we will return your telephone call as soon as possible.

The clinician will discuss your symptoms by telephone, and if they agree that you do need to be seen urgently, you will be offered an appointment to be seen the same day. Alternatively, you may be given telephone advice, advised to attend your local pharmacy, offered a routine appointment, or advised to attend the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

Please note that it is ultimately the clinician's decision whether you are given a same day appointment or not. Please do not come to the practice initially if you have an urgent medical problem, as we do not offer a walk-in service, and it may be that your problem can be dealt with over the telephone. Many infections, particularly the flu and flu-like illnesses, are due to viruses, which cannot be cured by doctors. Attending the practice with this type of illness increases the risk of infection to other vulnerable patients who may be attending the practice.

If you have a life-threatening emergency, please call for an emergency ambulance by dialling 999.

Appointment Lengths

The majority of GP and nurse appointments are ten minutes duration. We ask that you try to observe the 'One appointment, one problem' ethos. We strive to deal with each medical problem to the highest standard, and this proves impossible if we are expected to deal with a number of problems in one appointment.

Also, your appointment is booked for you only, so please do not expect the doctor to deal with the problem of a relative or a child in addition during your appointment. Please make a separate appointment for your child if they need to see a doctor as well as yourself.

Telephone Consultations

If you are uncertain if you need to see a doctor face to face, need medical advice by telephone, have a query about a referral, or want to find out the results of tests, we encourage you to contact the practice by telephone first rather than book a doctor's appointment.

Please advise the receptionist of your query as they may be able to help you themselves without disturbing the doctor – if you do need to speak with a doctor then the receptionist will book a telephone consultation for you, and this may be the same day, or again can be booked in advance.

If you ask to speak to a particular doctor, regarding an on-going problem, your returned call may take a little longer depending on the doctor's scheduled working times. If your usual doctor is on leave, then they will have assigned a deputy who will try and help you in their absence.

Online Booking

A selection of appointments can be booked online, eliminating the need to wait on the telephone to book your appointment. You will need to register for this service in advance; please enquire at reception

Chaperones

We recognise that intimate examinations by health care professionals (e.g. breasts, genitalia, rectum, or any examination where it is necessary to touch or be close) can be distressing or embarrassing for patients. Wherever possible, you will be offered the security of having an impartial observer (chaperone) present during an intimate examination.

Please feel free to advise the receptionist in advance of your appointment, if you think this will be the case, and do not hesitate to ask the doctor or nurse for a chaperone if you are not offered this option during your consultation. If you would prefer to see only a doctor of a specific gender to discuss your medical problem, then again please advise the receptionist of this when booking your appointment.

Home Visits

We believe that home visits, when appropriate, are an important component of general practice in the United Kingdom. Home visits are for the infirm, or when your medical condition prohibits you from attending the practice. Most medical problems can be brought to the practice however, and this may mean you needing to take public transport or a taxi to reach us.

Children can almost always be brought to the practice, and there is no harm in bringing an ill child to the practice if requested by the doctor. Lighting, equipment, and examination facilities are far superior in the practice compared with the home environment.

If you do feel, despite the above, that a home visit is necessary, please telephone the practice as early in the day as possible and select the option for home visits. A receptionist will take your details and symptoms; a doctor may call you to discuss the visit request further as soon as possible. Please note that it is ultimately the doctor's decision whether a home visit is necessary, or not.

Out of Hours

If you need medical advice or treatment when the practice is closed, this is accessed through the NHS 111 service—simply 'phone 111

This service can offer telephone advice, and will arrange face to face consultations or home visits, or ambulance if medically indicated.

Ambulance Service

If you have a life-threatening emergency, please dial **999**, request the ambulance service, and be prepared to give the operator full details and location of the emergency.

Late Arrivals

If you are late for your appointment, you may be asked to rebook your appointment for another day and time. It is at the doctor's or nurse's discretion whether a late arrival can still be seen and we ask that you respect their decision.

The content provided in this leaflet is for information purposes only.. Information obtained in this leaflet is subject to personal interpretation and can become obsolete, thus accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Please consult your own healthcare provider regarding any medical issues. Last updated February 2017.