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| **Covid -19 Update** |
| Please do not listen to gossip or hearsay about what you should do if you believe you may have Covid 19 / Coronavirus. There have been so many fake messages on social media.  Please only use the official government website  <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>  which is available from the surgery website <http://www.wansteadplacesurgery.co.uk>  If you believe you have the virus, DO NOT visit the surgery or A&E. Either go online to seek a test or call 119. Keeping safe and not infecting others is vitally important.  If you have a non-urgent question for your GP/Surgery you can now send them an emailvia the surgery website [www.wansteadplacesurgery.co.uk](http://www.wansteadplacesurgery.co.uk)  There is now a section on the website called  e-consult and ‘Contact your doctors online’. Initially you have to identify the issue you want to message and you will be asked if you want advice to help yourself/via the pharmacy or advice from your GP. You will be asked a series of health question and you will need to put in your personal details.  Subject to workload you should get a response the next working day.  If you have an urgent issue or need an appointment please book one online or phone for an appointment. |

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| **Blood Tests** |
| Unfortunately due to Covid-19 there is no blood testing at Wanstead Hospital. For any Redbridge facility you can book via <https://10to8.com/book/nelftbookabloodtest> or phone 0300 300 1045  **Whipps Cross Hospital** Area1 Outpatients (020 8539 5522 ext. 6568) and **Forest Medical Centre**, Loughton (020 8535 6888) are walk in centres.  Waltham Forest Clinics including the **Silverthorn Medical Centre**(Chingford) and **Langthorne Health Centre** ( Leytonstone) can be booked at [www.nelft.nhs/wf-blood-test](http://www.nelft.nhs/wf-blood-test)  To get a blood test you will first need to collect a blood test form from the surgery. Preferably the receptionists can email the form to you, which needs to be printed prior to visiting the blood test clinic. |
| **Appointments** |
| If you need to see a GP you can now have a telephone or email consultation. The GP will call you back and then decide whether or not you need to be seen face to face. The phone calls occur in the morning and afternoon, face to face appointments take place in the afternoon only.  So far only a small number of patients are seen face to face. It is also possible to have an appointment via a video link. This is suitable for non-urgent issues. The morning calls are carried out between 8.30-1.00pm and the afternoon sessions are from 1.30 -6.30pm.  If you have requested a phone consultation then it is essential that you can be contacted under the number you have given to the receptionist. If the surgery cannot contact you then sadly another appointment needs to be made.  To maintain social distancing measures at the surgery the GPs have organised a rotation with some doctors being in the surgery and others working remotely. The nurses are seeing patients for routine appointments but not for travel vaccinations.  If you are seeing either a doctor or nurse at the surgery the procedure is as follows:  Ring the front doorbell and make sure that you are wearing a MASK. Only 1 patient is admitted at a time unless you need to have a carer with you.  This triage system is not likely to change in the near future. In many respects this has been quite an efficient process however there are drawbacks for both patients and doctors. As part of your telephone appointment you may be asked to email a photo of the part of your body that is causing an issue. The image will be stored against your name on the computer system and can only be accessed by the doctors themselves so is secure. Whilst it is not the best way to see a problem, the doctors have found it very beneficial as a number of images can be stored and compared to help with a diagnosis. These images can also be passed on to a specialist if necessary. It is possible that in the future when face to face appointments are back more photos will be taken to provide a good back up of information in your notes. |

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| **Staff** |
| During this pandemic the Patients’ Group would like to thank all the staff that have worked throughout this difficult time; it t has not been an easy task.  We have four senior doctors who have many decades of experience and they supervise up to four trainee GPs who are in their third year of training. They work under the supervision and guidance of the senior staff.  On the nursing side, we are lucky to have the very experienced Annette who returned to the practice in February. She works Tuesday to Thursday. There is a Health Care Assistant working on Mondays and a locum nurse works on a Friday.  The office staff often go unseen, but they are an essential back up to the other staff and help with the smooth running of the surgery. You may meet some of these staff but there are others who are more likely to have back office roles. |

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| **Flu Jabs** |
| These should be available for the over 65 year olds from this week. Unlike previous years you have to book an appointment via the patient access link. The first clinic was on 5th September and another will be provided on the 19th September followed up by a third session in October**.** Flu jabs for the over 50s will be available in November.  There will be no queuing this year and patients will be seen one at a time.  If everyone is prepared for their jab this should only take 2 minutes per person.  Please check the practice website for information about a ‘pass-by’ lunchtime or afternoon clinic which will be set up in late September and early October. No appointments will be necessary, eligible patients can just come along. |

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| **Mental Health** |
| As these difficult times are continuing, a lot of people are still suffering with their mental health. Although talking and Counselling help, there are addition always that can be of benefit to you.  **Nature**  A lot of people have been gaining the benefit of nature this year, and there are still positive benefits as we head into Autumn. Although bird songs may not be as plentiful as in Spring, there are still many songs to listen out for, which can be very relaxing and therapeutic. There are also CDs available or online birdsong, and migrating birds to look out for in your garden.  **Art Therapy**  Drawing, painting, and making things are another way to help your mind to relax, getting in touch with your creativity, can be a benefit.  **Meditation**  There are a number of guided meditations available online, from breathing techniques to  Visualisation strategies. Try a few, and find one that is suitable for you. Meditation is a good way to help your mind to become calmer.  **Courses**  If you’re not able to or ready to get out yet, there are a number of courses online for people to do; these can be very beneficial to keep your mind occupied. Some colleges may also be conducting some online courses this year.  Please contact one of our doctors if you feel you are struggling. |

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| **Prescriptions** |
| The online prescription service is working well however there is a great deal of wastage in the system which can be avoided. It is important that patients only order items that they need and that they are clear about this. If the pharmacist requests a prescription on your behalf then you automatically get everything! Items cannot be reused so even if you try to return something the pharmacist has to destroy that item. Please avoid this if at all possible. |