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MILL ROAD SURGERY

NEWSLETTER

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Compiled by The Patients Participation Group (PPG)

SURGERY NEWS

Staffing

Dr Clair Carpenter has now officially retired from Mill Road Surgery, with her last working day being 30th January 2026. Staff and patients wish Dr Carpenter the very best for retirement, and pass on well wishes and thanks for all the support she has given the surgery over the years

Dr Hein Leonhardt is now Senior Partner for Mill Road Surgery. Dr Leonhardt has been integral to the success of the surgery over the past 20 years and we are grateful for his experience and leadership as Senior partner to take Mill Road surgery on to its new chapter.

We also said goodbye to Margaret, our receptionist who retired in January after over 15 years with Mill Road Surgery. We welcome on board Sharon who has already been building great rapport with patients both on the telephone and at the front desk.

AccuRx

Triage System We are aware of the challenges that our AccuRx system has brought of late, notably the winter pressures and the impact having an open access online form can have on our demand and capacity balance. Since keeping our system open between 07:30 and 18:30 from 1st October 2025, we swiftly accrued a backing of over 700 GP appointments by December 2025, which incurred a wait time of approximately 40 days for a routine GP appointment. We were concerned that this figure was only going to continue on the new trajectory, and therefore after discussion with the Integrated Care Board (ICB), we decided to close our triage list early each day when demand had been used.

This is on a temporary basis whilst we establish a new strategy that allows us to meet the requirements of Modern General Practice, both keeping our triage open between 08:00 and 18:30 without risking unsustainable wait times and demand on staff.

Dispensary

We are experiencing incredibly high demand in our surgery dispensary team, with a significant number of queries relating to timeframes of ordered medications. Please be aware we currently require 3 working days to process any medication requests, this is to allow for time for staff to process these and for the note to be sent to the receiving pharmacy.

APPOINTMENTS

DNA's (Did not Attend)

Last Quarter

743

(NOVEMBER – DECEMBER - JANUARY)

If you are unable to keep your appointment **Please** cancel by phone, as this leaves a space for other patients, **IN TURN**, if other patients cancel their appointment, this will leave a space for **YOU**.

MEASLES OUTBREAK DON'T WAIT VACCINATE

Measles is a highly contagious disease. It transmits easily from person to person through the air (for example, when an infected person coughs or sneezes) and spreads rapidly in communities among people who have not been vaccinated or are not fully immunised.

Among those diagnosed with measles between the beginning of 2024 and early 2025 with information available on their vaccination status, 25 503 (86%) were unvaccinated — this means that eight out of ten people who fell ill with measles during that period had not been immunised. The same applies to children aged one to four years (even though this age group is the focus of national immunisation programmes): 84% of those children with information available on their vaccination status had not been vaccinated when they contracted measles.

Check vaccination status: ensure that you and your children are up-to-date with the MMR vaccination schedule, whether you are staying at home or plan to travel. If unsure about your own vaccination history or if you need guidance on vaccinating children, consult a healthcare professional. An infectious disease such as measles will only be unlikely to spread from person to person if a sufficiently large proportion of the population achieve immunity.



HELP AND ADVICE ON AGING

We know it's not just about living longer. It's about living healthily and happily for longer. Follow these tips for ageing better.

Watch what you eat and drink

It sounds obvious, but having a balanced diet is crucial for good health, energy and preventing illness. An ideal diet should be low in saturated fat, with lots of fruit and vegetables, wholegrains, oily

fish, and small amounts of low-fat dairy and lean meat. Don't forget to top-up with lots of water to avoid dehydration. Tea, coffee and fruit juice will also help you to stay hydrated, but avoid sugary fizzy drinks. If you drink alcohol, keep at least two days per week alcohol-free to give your liver time to recover from the effects of alcohol.

Look after your teeth

Helps to prevent gum disease by removing pieces of food and plaque from between the teeth.

If it's left to build up you might notice sore or bleeding gums, and gum disease can also be linked to diabetes, strokes, heart disease and rheumatoid arthritis. Have regular check-ups and, if you wear dentures or have a bridge, ask your dentist to check that they fit properly.

Stay active

Daily exercise helps you to stay strong and healthy. This will lower your risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and even cancer. If that wasn't enough, staying active can boost your self-esteem, improve your sleep, and give you more energy. Government guidelines recommend that older adults do 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week, as well as strengthening exercises twice a week. If that sounds like a lot, start small and as you get stronger you will be able to work up to those amounts.

Have regular health tests.

It's an idea to get some routine tests done at the doctors to check your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. High readings increase your risk factor for stroke and heart disease but any problems are completely reversible with medication. Whilst you're there, why not ask your doctor about the seasonal flu jab? It's free once you reach 65, or if you have a health condition that puts you at risk of more serious problems if you caught the flu.

Get a vitamin boost

Lots of people have a vitamin D deficiency and don't know it. In fact, it's estimated that it affects half of the adult population. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to cognitive impairment, bone problems and also cardiovascular disease.

Try to get outside in the sunshine for at least 15-20 minutes a day for a vitamin D boost. It can also be found in food such as eggs and oily fish. Alternatively, talk to your doctor about a vitamin D supplement.

Take care of your feet

Look after your feet by applying moisturiser to prevent dry skin and cutting your toenails straight across. Make sure you have footwear that fits properly and supports your feet. If they're sore you may be tempted to stay in slippers, but a pair of trainers could be a good option as they are more supportive. Contact your doctor if your feet become painful, feel very hot or cold or if you have common problems like corns, bunions or ingrown toenails.

Sort out your sleep

Many of us have trouble getting – or staying – asleep as we get older. This can leave you feeling tired and affect your mood. Avoid insomnia by cutting down on daytime naps, establishing a bedtime routine and going to bed at the same time each night. Try a warm drink such as chamomile tea or hot milk before you go to bed.

Stay in touch

Spending time with other people can prevent you from feeling lonely or anxious. If you find that you are no longer able to do the things you used to do. Try to develop new hobbies and interests or think about becoming a volunteer.

Give up smoking

Smoking has been linked to a whole range of different health problems, including heart disease, lung cancer, and bronchitis. The good news is that if you stop smoking, regardless of your age, your circulation, your lung capacity and your energy levels will improve.



From this year the NHS is incorporating menopause discussions into routine Health Checks for women aged 40-74, aiming to spot symptoms, offer support (like HRT), and reduce stigma by adding menopause-specific questions to the five-yearly checks for cardiovascular health, diabetes, etc. A GP, nurse or pharmacist can give you advice and help at any time. There are also menopause specialists who have experience in supporting anyone going through perimenopause and menopause. Talking therapies like counselling or CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) can help with

symptoms of menopause and perimenopause. You can get NHS talking therapies without seeing a GP first.

Menopause Matters

Daisy Network for premature menopause
Menopause Café

Feeling Like You're Not Yourself Lately?

Small, nagging ailments... forgetting why you walked into a room... waking up unrefreshed... sleep that suddenly becomes disrupted and refuses to settle again.

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone.

These are just a few of the many symptoms women may experience during perimenopause and menopause. Many women in their 30s and 40s say they feel as though they're not functioning the way they used to, often wondering what exactly has changed.

The positive news?

We're understanding more about this stage of life than ever before—and we're talking about it more openly. Perimenopause and menopause can influence every part of a woman's life, from work and relationships to confidence, mood, and overall wellbeing. But with the right support, these changes can feel far more manageable. Be kind to yourself. There will be good days and bad days—both are completely normal. Give yourself permission to rest when you need

Make small dietary tweaks. Simple changes—like balancing blood sugar, staying hydrated, and adding nutrient-dense foods—can help boost your energy levels. Consider your sleep routine. Even small shifts, such as winding down earlier or reducing screen time before bed, may support more settled sleep on those restless nights.

Move a little more. Gentle exercise, stretching, or simply getting outside for fresh air can make a noticeable difference to mood, energy, and wellbeing. Talk to your Nurse or GP. They are there to support you. Keeping a record of your symptoms helps you and your clinician understand patterns and explore the right options together.

Here are some links which may be of use:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>

The British Menopause Society

<https://thebms.org.uk/>



As we step into the bright and colourful season of spring, it's time to make the best of the fresh beginnings it brings. Some simple yet effective spring health tips to help you make the most of this rejuvenating season.

Why Do You Need to Adopt Healthy Habits for Spring?

Spring marks a transition from the cold and dark days of winter to brighter and warmer days. It's a time when many of us feel a surge of motivation to engage in outdoor activities and adopt healthier habits.

What is the Importance of Hydration in Spring?

As the temperature rises, it becomes crucial to stay hydrated. With increased perspiration and outdoor activities, our bodies lose more fluids during spring. Adequate hydration not only helps regulate body temperature but also supports various bodily functions, including digestion, circulation, and detoxification..

Embrace Outdoor Exercise

Whether it's a brisk walk in the park, a bike ride through scenic trails, or a yoga session in the garden, outdoor exercise allows you to soak up the sunshine while staying active.

Nourish Your Body with Seasonal Produce

Spring brings an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables bursting with nutrients. Fill your plate with colourful produce such as strawberries, asparagus, spinach, and kale to fuel your body with essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Prioritise Sun Protection

While enjoying the sunshine, don't forget to shield your skin from harmful UV rays. Wear sunscreen with a high SPF.

Practise Mindful Eating

Pay attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues and savour each bite mindfully. Avoid overindulging in heavy, rich foods.

Maintain Clean Indoor Air

As pollen levels rise during spring, keep your indoor air clean and allergen-free, especially if you are prone to allergies. Use air purifiers, keep windows closed during peak pollen times.

Stay Connected with Nature

Spend time outdoors and connect with nature to experience its calming and rejuvenating effects. Whether it's gardening, hiking, or simply enjoying a picnic in the park.

Prioritise Rest and Relaxation

Don't forget to carve out time for relaxation. Aim for quality sleep, practise stress-reducing techniques such as meditation or deep breathing.

Travel Essentials

When travelling during spring and summer break, make sure you pack essential items such as sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitiser, and any medications you may need.

Stay Hydrated

staying hydrated is key. Carry a reusable water bottle and drink plenty of fluids.

Stay Active

Maintain your exercise routine by engaging in swimming, walking or keep fit classes



Patient Participation Group

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)
Please see our PPG noticeboard in the waiting room or contact us via the online form on our website
<https://www.millroad-surgery.co.uk>

Any comments or queries or if you would like to receive future copies by email, send to Mill Road Surgery Patient Participation Group at mrsppgc@gmail.com