

**USEFUL  
INFORMATION:**

**NHS Choices** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The huge NHS website includes comprehensive health information, service directories, and reviews and ratings of health and social care services.

**Patient** [www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)

Started by GPs and now owned by EMIS, the computer system provider for GPs, it has just the right level of detail on health and medicines.

**Healthtalk** [www.healthtalk.org](http://www.healthtalk.org)

Patients are recorded talking about their conditions, from atrial fibrillation to arthritis. Great for finding out what it's really like to have a condition.

**Join our Patient  
Participation  
Group (PPG)!**

Sign up on the practice website [www.bicesterhc.co.uk](http://www.bicesterhc.co.uk) via the "sign up for our patient group" link

Or

pick up a leaflet at the PPG information stand in the front waiting area.



**Help Your GP  
to Help You**



**Hints and tips from the "Which" article of the same title ("Which" magazine Sept 2017 <http://www.which.co.uk/>) with further input from our Patient Participation Group and own GPs.**



*This leaflet is one of the projects by the Bicester Health Centre PPG to help practice and patients.*

*Each GP practice in England has a Patient Participation group which you can join..*



## **DO YOU ACTUALLY NEED TO SEE A GP?**

Help reduce the time it takes to see a GP by ensuring that booked surgery appointments really are necessary. If you tell the receptionist what the issue is, they can direct you to the best person to deal with your problem.

Many minor problems can be dealt with by the local chemist, e.g. warts, verrucae, athlete's foot, head lice, threadworms and minor ailments such as coughs and colds.

It is possible to book a "telephone consultation" when you think you don't need to see the GP in person, e.g. to discuss your medication or a recent test result.

Self-certification sick notes up to and including 7 days can be collected from reception. You do not have to see a GP. To extend the sick note after 7 days, please telephone in the first instance. You can return to work at

any time before your sick note runs out. There is no need to contact your GP in this instance.

Problems with hospital care and outpatient appointments need to be dealt with by contacting the hospital directly or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01865 221473.

## **PLAN YOUR APPOINTMENT**

If there is more than one problem you wish to cover, please prepare a clear "list" and let the GP know immediately at the start of the consultation what all the issues are.

Be realistic: a "10-minute appointment" includes the time taken to review your notes before you are seen and make records afterwards. This leaves limited time to deal with a single significant problem, particularly if an examination is needed. If you think you have more than one significant problem, please ask for a double appointment.

If you are attending the surgery for a follow-up, for example of test results, give a 10-second précis of why you're there. For example, "I'd been feeling very tired, and so you organised some tests".

## **TELL YOUR GP WHAT YOUR IDEAS, CONCERNS AND EXPECTATIONS (ICE) ARE.**

**Ideas:** What do you think the diagnosis could be? Are you worried about cancer?

**Concerns:** What worries you about this problem or the impact this will have on your life?

**Expectations:** What were you hoping the GP could do for you (reassurance, tests, treatment or referral)?

## **IF YOU MAY NEED AN EXAMINATION PLEASE DRESS ACCORDINGLY.**

Loose trousers to show your knee, or slip on shoes rather than lace up boots if you'll need to remove them.

## **WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO HELP YOUR GP LOOK AFTER YOU.**

Try asking your GP "what can I do to help myself?"

Remember your follow up plan. For example, if you have been told your next review is in 12 months and that you should have a blood test before, please make a note on your calendar to do this.

## **GET ONLINE AT THE SURGERY.**

By registering for our online service, you could avoid the queues – you can book appointments and order repeat prescriptions online.

## **NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR CARE?**

Remember GPs are people. We are patients too. We are fallible. We do our best under unprecedented pressure, but things do, and will, get missed occasionally. So, don't feel uncomfortable to come back and tell us your concerns and work with us to make things right for you, or to help us learn how to do better next time.