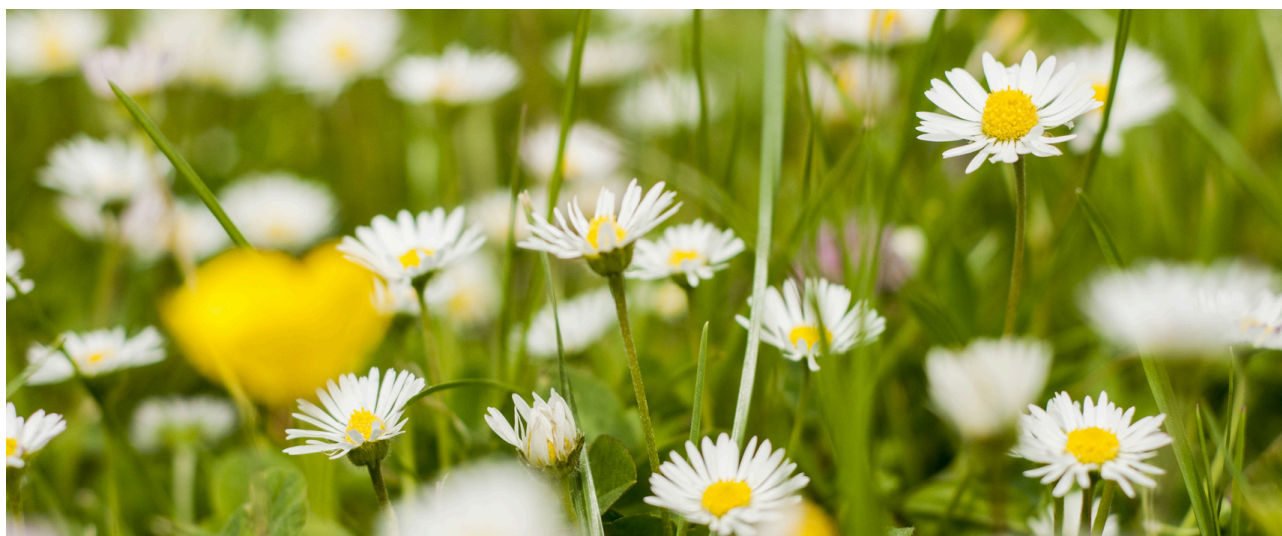


# Monthly Patient Newsletter



## Spring Booster Covid Vaccinations

As we wrap up our Spring Covid Booster Clinics, we'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who came along — we were able to vaccinate 5,161 of you!

If you missed out, don't worry — the National Booking System is now open, with appointments now available. If you're eligible, you still have plenty of options to get your booster.

- Visit a walk-in vaccination clinic or book through a local community pharmacy.
- Use the NHS walk-in finder to locate a convenient site near you : [Find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site - NHS](#)

Eligible patients include:

- are aged 75 or over (including those who will be 75 by 17 June 2025)
- are aged 6 months to 74 years and have a weakened immune system because of a health condition or treatment
- live in a care home for older adults

In this newsletter you can expect:

[Understanding GP lingo](#)

[Check your Weight, whilst you Wait](#)

[Spring is in the air - So is Pollen!](#)

[Trailing AI Medical Scribes](#)

[New Parking System at Coniston Medical Practice](#)

And so much more!

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## Understanding GP Lingo...



### Routine Appointment

For non-urgent health concerns, follow-ups, or ongoing care (e.g. medication reviews, chronic condition check-ins, general health advice). These appointments are typically scheduled in advance – within 2 weeks of eConsult submission.



### Urgent Appointment

For issues that are not life-threatening but require attention within a short time frame (e.g. new symptoms, infections, worsening of a known condition). These are offered on the same day through our Duty Doctor list. You may be asked to visit an alternative surgery instead of your preferred site.



### Emergency

For severe or life-threatening conditions that require immediate medical attention (e.g. chest pain, severe difficulty breathing, suspected stroke). These situations should involve calling 999 or going to A&E.

## Check your weight, whilst you wait!

Why not make the most of your time at the surgery by using our Self-Health Kiosk? You can quickly check your **weight, height, and blood pressure** — no appointment needed.

**Why It Matters** - Keeping an eye on your weight helps reduce the risk of conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Even small changes can make a big difference to your health.

**Easy to Use** - Just follow the on-screen instructions. You can print your results and share them with your clinician if you'd like to discuss further at your next appointment.

If you would like to use this before your appointment, please give plenty of time.





## Spring is in the air – So is the Pollen!

As the days get longer and flowers begin to bloom, pollen levels start to rise – and for many, that means allergy season is in full swing. If you suffer from hay fever (seasonal allergic rhinitis), you're not alone. Millions across the UK experience sneezing, itchy eyes, a runny nose, headache, and general fatigue during the spring and summer months.

However, if you have asthma, pollen allergies can be more than just an inconvenience — they can trigger serious asthma symptoms and even lead to asthma attacks. That's why it's especially important to take steps to manage both your hay fever and your asthma effectively.

### **Top Tips for Managing Pollen Allergies (and Staying on Top of Your Asthma)**

- **Check Pollen Forecasts Daily:** You can find daily updates on pollen levels via the Met Office or most weather apps. If the count is high, take extra precautions.
  - **Take Antihistamines Early:** Start taking antihistamines regularly before symptoms start — especially if you know you're sensitive to pollen.
  - **Keep Windows Closed:** Especially in the morning and early evening when pollen levels peak. Use air purifiers with HEPA filters if possible.
  - **Shower and Change Clothes After Being Outdoors:** Pollen can stick to your hair, skin, and clothing — bringing it inside with you.
  - **Wear Sunglasses and a Hat:** Sunglasses and hats help shield your eyes and face from direct pollen contact when outdoors.
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- **Keep Asthma Under Control**

- Take your preventer inhaler regularly as prescribed, even if you're feeling well.
- Always carry your reliever inhaler with you.
- Ensure your asthma action plan is up to date.



## **When to Seek Help**

If you find yourself using your reliever inhaler more often than usual, waking up at night with asthma symptoms, or experiencing persistent wheezing and breathlessness, please speak to your GP or asthma nurse as soon as possible. You may need a medication review or an adjustment to your treatment plan.

## **Breathe Easy This Season!**

With the right approach, you can still enjoy the outdoors — without letting pollen take over your health. Stay informed, stay prepared, and don't hesitate to reach out if you need support.

### **Speak to a Pharmacist:**

Speak to a pharmacist if you have hay fever. They can give you advice and suggest the best treatments to help with symptoms, such as:

- [antihistamine](#) drops, tablets or nasal sprays
- steroid nasal sprays

Some antihistamines can make you very sleepy, so speak to your pharmacist about non-drowsy antihistamines if you need to.

### **See a GP if:**

- your symptoms are getting worse
- your symptoms do not improve after taking medicines from the pharmacy

For more information and guidance on Hay fever and Asthma, go to the NHS Website - [Hay fever - NHS](#)

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## Trialling AI Medical Scribes to Improve Your Appointment Experience

We are currently trialling an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Medical Scribe system to help maximise the time you spend with your clinician.

The AI Medical Scribe is a secure, real-time note-taking assistant that helps clinicians create clinical notes during your appointment. This means less time spent typing and more time focused on you.

The system is safe and secure. We believe introducing this technology will make an exceptional difference to your care experience. However, if you would prefer your clinician not to use the system during your appointment, simply let them know at the start.

Important Information:

- Do I need to give consent?

Yes — your consent is essential.

Clinicians are encouraged to obtain your consent before using the system.

You can decline or withdraw consent at any time.

- How does it work?

The system transcribes conversations in real-time as they happen. No audio recordings are stored. Only the notes that the clinician saves will be added to your electronic health record.

We would love to hear about your experience if your clinician has used the AI Medical Scribe. Please share your feedback by contacting your surgery:

[Contact Us](#)

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## Bladder Cancer Awareness

Bladder cancer affects thousands of people every year, yet many still think it's uncommon. The reality? It's one of the 10 most common cancers in the UK. Know the signs. <https://actionbladdercanceruk.org/symptoms/>  
#BladderCancerAwarenessMonth

**In the UK, over 20,000  
people are diagnosed with  
BLADDER CANCER  
every year.**



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## Message from the Fraud Prevention Team at Avon and Somerset - Holiday Fraud

The latest data from Action Fraud shows that victims across the UK lost a staggering £11.18 million to holiday fraud last year. They are urging holiday makers to be safe online and do their research before booking their trip.

Unfortunately, many victims of holiday fraud only find out they have been defrauded when they turn up at the airport, or at the holiday destination, only to find that no booking has been made.

How can you protect yourself from holiday fraud?

- Check the travel company is legitimate: about to book a holiday? Do some research first to check that the company is legitimate, especially if you haven't used them before. Use consumer websites, or reviews from people (or organisations) that you trust.
- Look for the logos: look for the [ABTA](#), [ABTOT](#) or [ATOL](#) logos on the company's website. If you're unsure, you can use the links below to verify membership:
  - ABTA - <https://www.abta.com>
  - ABTOT - <https://www.abtot.com/abtot-members-directory/>
  - ATOL - <https://www.atol.org>



- Use a credit card to pay: use a credit card for payments (if you have one). Many of these protect online purchases as part of the [Consumer Credit Act](#).
- Only provide required details at checkout: when making your payment, only fill in the mandatory details (often marked with an asterisk) such as your address. Unless you think you'll become a regular customer, don't create an account for the store.
- Keep your accounts secure: create a strong and unique password for your email. If 2-step verification is available, always enable it.
- Watch out for suspicious links: whether it's in an email or social media post, be wary of promotions for unbelievably good holiday offers. If you receive a suspicious email, report it by forwarding it to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately.

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## New Parking System at Coniston Medical Practice – What You Need to Know

We'd like to inform all patients about important changes to the parking arrangements at Coniston Medical Practice Car Park, which is now managed under a new system introduced by the council.

### **Free Parking for Patients – With Registration Required**

Patients visiting the surgery will continue to receive 2 hours of free parking. However, to benefit from this, you **must register your vehicle** on the dedicated portal located inside the surgery during your visit.

Please ensure you complete this step each time you attend an appointment to avoid receiving a penalty charge.

### **Check the Signs for Guidance**

There are new parking signs installed throughout the car park. We strongly advise all patients to carefully read the signage for full guidance on parking restrictions, permitted duration, and enforcement measures.

Quick Tips:

- 2 hours free parking for patients attending the surgery
- Register your vehicle at the surgery's parking portal
- Always check signage in the car park before leaving your vehicle

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of our reception team.

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## A Warm Welcome to Our New Staff

Over the last few months we have welcomed several new team members to MVMG, including:

- Dr Arshad, GP Partner at Coniston Medical Practice
- Samual Finn, Physiotherapist at Langford Surgery
- Yashkumar Sutaria, Physiotherapist at Langford Surgery
- Gwen Cook, Clinical Pharmacist at Langford Surgery
- Dr Shuhaiber, GP at St Georges Surgery
- Wendy Barratt, Advanced Practitioner at St Georges Surgery
- Robert Randall, Patient Services Manager at St Georges Surgery
- Chacko James, Health Care Assistant at Southmead Family Practice
- Bronagh Weston, Advanced Practitioner at Southmead Family Practice