



September 2021

Dear All,

Covid Numbers are on the up!

Finally the sun re-appeared and we enjoyed some warm sunny days and wonderful sunsets, before the children returned to school and the number of tourists started to decline.

Across the media, you will have seen or read that the Covid numbers in Cornwall have increased, and this is true for our beautiful area of East Cornwall too, with Covid cases at our surgery more than doubling in recent weeks. See the useful newsletter from [Cornwall Council](#).

Whilst as a community we have really rallied to the calls to be vaccinated, although it is really important that we continue to be cautious. Being double jabbed does not mean that you can't get Covid, or be a carrier and pass it on to others.

Some important things to remember:

- If you are eligible, please come forward to get vaccinated, or complete your vaccination course (if you had your first vaccine at least 8 weeks earlier). We are still administering Covid vaccines locally with our **next clinic on Monday 13th September 2021**. If you haven't booked an appointment already, you can drop into the Millpool Centre between 09:00-12:00 noon.
- Please undertake lateral flow tests twice a week, as these are vital to help identify people who are asymptomatic. These tests can be picked up from local pharmacies, and if you test positive you should go and have a PCR test, with the nearest testing centre situated in Liskeard. To [book a PCR test](#).
- PCR test results are typically returned within 24-48 hours, and please isolate whilst you are awaiting your results. If positive **you must isolate for the full isolation period**, as notified by the test and trace team, even if you are asymptomatic or feel better ahead of the isolation end date. You cannot short cut the isolation period, as Covid is a highly infectious disease and with or without symptoms you are contagious and we are sure you wouldn't want to spread Covid further across our vulnerable community.

- If you have come into contact with someone who has subsequently tested positive for Covid, it is important that you follow the instructions by the test and trace team. If a member of your household has tested positive, you may be asked to isolate and you will need to take a PCR test as soon as possible. If they are not in your household, you will be assessed by the Test & Trace team to identify the potential risks, with their advice ranging from daily lateral flow tests, wearing a mask in all public areas, or undertaking a PCR test immediately if you become symptomatic. Please follow their instructions, to help protect yourself and public health in general, as we need to minimise the spread and continue to protect our community and the NHS.
- If you become symptomatic, whether it's a high temperature, loss or change to taste and smell, flu like symptoms, sore throat or persistent cough, **please arrange for a PCR test immediately**. Do NOT use a lateral flow test. Please do not self-diagnose that it's not Covid, that it's simply a 'summer cold' or just 'my chest playing up', as even GPs can't be sure without a PCR test and the risks are just too great to not get tested.
- If you are confirmed positive and symptomatic, please rest-up, with plenty of fluids and take paracetamol to help control your symptoms. If however, you find yourself struggling to breath, please contact the Surgery, 111 or 999 if it is an immediate life threatening situation.
- To help with monitoring the oxygen levels in your blood, a pulse oximeter is really useful and can be purchased online or over the counter at a pharmacy, from as little as £12-£15. Deteriorating oxygen levels are a really important sign that medical intervention is required, and will help clinicians to assess how you are getting on as quickly as possible. The Surgery has a limited supply of pulse oximeters available to borrow, if deemed appropriate by one of our Clinicians.
- In the meantime, with Autumn approaching, you might want to consider vitamin D or multi-vitamin supplements to help support and boost your immune system.

On a positive note, on the most part, being vaccinated against Covid really is helping to protect patients from developing the serious symptoms seen before the roll-out of the vaccination programme. However patients are still feeling quite unwell, so we really must do everything possible to help the spread of the infection, remembering to wear a face mask and maintain social distancing (where possible) and to wash hands and surfaces regularly.

Covid Passport Reminder

- For those that have been double vaccinated, you can use the NHS app to see your COVID passport, or request a paper copy [here](#).

Flu Jabs on the horizon!

Whilst we still await the final decision on whether Covid top-ups or boosters will go ahead, and who will be eligible, we strongly recommend that patients come forward to be vaccinated as soon as they are called by the Surgery. The NHS remains under extreme pressure, and anticipates that there will be a surge of flu this year which, alongside Covid, could put catastrophic pressure on our services.

Our first clinic was scheduled for Saturday 18 September 2021 however, due to lorry driver shortages, flu vaccine supply has been delayed. The initial priority group to be called will be patients aged 70 years & over. Some of our clinicians plus Dr Benton and the Looe Lions will be there make sure everything goes smoothly.

The first clinic is now schedule on Saturday 2 October 2021 taking place at Looe Community Academy (with thanks to the Academy, once again). Subject to confirmation, we hope to deliver **Covid and flu vaccines** as part of the same appointment and we'll be in contact with eligible patients as soon as possible. Further clinics will be held at Looe Community Academy and/or the Millpool Centre over the coming weeks. We appreciate your patience and support and the continued wearing of masks for these offsite appointments.

Changes at the Surgery

Finally, we have commenced a programme of refurbishment at our Surgery in Looe. Starting with upstairs, we will try and keep disruption to a minimum and thank you in advance, as we work to improve our facilities for staff and patients.

Thank you for your ongoing kindness and support.

Drs Kodde, Mogford and Buchanan
Partners, Old Bridge Surgery, and the Surgery Team