



## The Patient Reference Group Newsletter

# Cherrymead Chat

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### NEWS



- ♥ The brand new Cherrymead Surgery web site is up and running and now with a section for the Patient Reference Group (PRG). See:

<https://www.cherrymeadsurgery.co.uk/>

- ♥ Please use the facility available on the web site to provide comment and feedback on everything.
- ♥ Following a suggestion from the PRG, a water fountain has been installed in the waiting room.
- ♥ The PRG is organising a Prostate Cancer Information evening in Reception on 26th November @ 7.30pm.
- ♥ The PRG plans to hold "Meet the PRG" daytime sessions at the surgery on 2nd and 9th December.

## NHS Health Check



The NHS Health Check aims to prevent a number of health conditions. These include heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease. The Check may also be used to detect early symptoms of dementia. If you are aged 40-74, and are not known to have any of those conditions or their risk factors, you will be invited to have the free health check once every five years.

### Questionnaires

The Check has two questionnaires. The first is to obtain some of your key personal details. These include:

- Age: older people are at an increased risk
- Ethnicity: some ethnic groups are at an increased risk
- Smoking status: smokers have increased risk
- Family history: a history of these conditions in the family gives you increased risk
- Physical activity: people doing little or no exercise are at increased risk

The second questionnaire has ten questions on the amount of alcohol you drink. Drinking above recommended levels increases your risk to vascular [arteries and veins], and liver diseases. It takes about three minutes to complete the questionnaire.

### Health Tests

The Check also includes at least three health tests. The first is to take a sample of your blood, often by

pricking your finger. The sample is used to measure the level of cholesterol in the blood. Evidence suggests that too much cholesterol can increase the risk of vascular disease. The cholesterol can build up in the walls of the blood vessels. It can then slow or stop the flow of blood to your heart, brain, and the rest of your body.

The second test measures your blood pressure. High blood pressure increases the risk of serious health problems such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. If your blood pressure is high, you will be offered a blood test to check the function of your kidneys. You may also be offered a test to check your risk of developing diabetes.

The third health check is to measure your height and weight. They will be used to calculate your Body Mass Index [BMI]. That is a measure of whether you are a healthy weight for your height. A high BMI puts you at a greater risk of heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.

Your personal history, blood pressure, and BMI will be used to determine whether you have an increased risk of developing diabetes. If so, you may be offered further tests to check your blood sugar level. If that is high, you will need further testing for diabetes.

### Health Check Results

After all the test results are available you will be given your BMI, cholesterol levels, blood pressure and an alcohol use score. You will also receive an overall risk score. In addition, a new lifetime risk calculator can provide your 'heart age'. The results predict how many years you can expect to live before you have a heart attack or a stroke compared with someone without those risk factors. Usually the details are provided in writing, at the Health Check, and explained by the healthcare professional at the end of the Check. The exception is if you need any further tests.

Details of the Health Check scores can be found at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/Pages/Understanding-your-NHS-Health-Check-results.aspx>

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## A Worthwhile Exercise?

If the implications of the results are explained well, Health checks should help to reduce illness and the rising costs of the NHS. However, they are controversial.

Some professionals and patients believe that money for the Checks could be better spent elsewhere, as there is little evidence that the checks are meeting their aims.

Large numbers of patients at low risk of developing the conditions are being checked. In addition, there is some evidence that the results details provided can differ according to who does the Checks. There are also reports that explanations are not clear, and not understood by patients. These come with complaints that some healthcare professionals are following scripts. Hence, are not treating the patients as individuals.

The Jury is out. Only time and experience will determine which views are correct.

Les Taylor

## Self Care

### What is Self-Care?



Medical Definition - The duty that doctors have to encourage their patients to maintain good health through healthy lifestyle choices. This involves educating them on how to maintain and improve

their health and well-being.

### Why is Self-Care important?

Apart from the obvious benefits to your welfare, it helps reduce the reliance on NHS resources. GPs and hospitals may then concentrate on the more serious issues. This is particularly important in the winter months where Self-Care can prevent colds and 'flu. Or, if you succumb to them, it may answer any queries saving you having to contact your GP.

### What does Self-Care involve?

Self-Care means looking after yourself in a healthy way.

If you have a long-term condition, there are extra things you may need to consider. Such as making changes to your diet, different types of exercise or different types of medication you may need to take.



Self-Care also means staying active by doing things that are important to you. Such as gardening, seeing friends and family, going on holiday, or

continuing to work, if possible.

Living a healthy lifestyle is an important part of Self-Care for everyone.

### Where can I learn all about Self-Care?



A good starting place is the Self Care Forum:

<http://www.selfcareforum.org/>

Here you will find loads of information, resources and fact sheets.



Another great web site full of useful information is

<http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

Where, apart from all the tools you expect to find there you will find:

- Health A-Z - Conditions and Treatments
- Symptom Checks
- A-Z of Medicines

It includes such topics as:

- The NHS guide to long-term conditions and Self-Care

And there is a complete section on Healthy Living for Everyone titled "Live Well"

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/Pages/Livewellhub.aspx>

Where, apart from excellent information on what is "A Balanced Diet"

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>

There is an excellent section on the importance of the classic "Five a Day"



<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Pages/Why5ADAY.aspx>

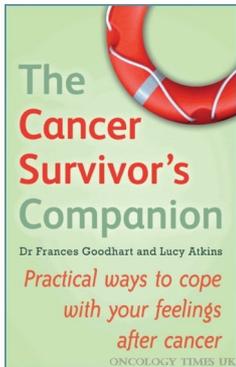
A collection of NHS-approved interactive tools that are simple and fun to use. They will help you live a more healthy, active life and feel better as a result.



Chris Ransted



## The Cancer Survivor's Companion by Dr Frances Goodhart and Lucy Atkins Piatkus, 2013.



I was asked to review this book for Cherrymead Chat by Dr King. She had been advised that it would be a useful resource to recommend to patients. It promises to help cancer patients to deal with the emotions of having cancer. The eleven chapters deal with worries, depression, anger, self-esteem and low body image.

They also include relationships and sex, fatigue, sleep and relaxation. Each chapter is filled with case studies, tips and exercises.

I was surprised that it had been written by an NHS professional psychologist, as well as a journalist. I was also very surprised that it had received two book awards. We are all individuals. Hence, I do not think that its style would suit everyone who has cancer.

There were far too many case studies to read through. I did not relate to very many of those. Many of the examples were rather simplistic. I found its manner of speaking to the reader to be patronising at times.

There was too much use of hospital jargon, and instructions to discuss every concern in detail with other people.

That could become rather tiresome, no matter how much they wanted to be of help. None of this advice is of help to people who live alone with no relatives, or none within a reasonable distance. They do not want to burden their friends with all the details of their illness.

I think it would have been far more useful to have produced a comprehensive booklet of useful web-sites and telephone contact numbers. They could be referred to as and when needed.

**Joyce Lambert**

### **Medicine and Marketing—A Personal View**

A perceived problem is that there is so much information offered to us that it is impossible to sort the wheat from the chaff. In this case, the wheat is the medicine; the chaff is the marketing produced by companies whose whole strategy is to expand their profits.

Here are two examples. I'd like to start with water.

The government's Manual of Nutrition states that water makes up some two thirds of the body's weight. It is the medium or solvent for nearly every body process. It adds that in temperate climates, like here, at least 1 litre (two pints) of water or other fluid should be drunk each day. More will be needed if heavy work is done.



That is the science or medicine. For the last ten years or so the marketing of bottled water has encouraged much higher consumption of water. There the cost is between about 50 pence and £2 per litre. That is between £500 and £2000 per cubic metre, or per metric tonne. I pay about £1.30 for the same tonne, and defy anyone to say that the product is in any way inferior. That is the cost argument.

Now the volume argument. If you empty your bladder about three times per day you are taking enough liquid in. Any extra is totally wasted. I have a friend who is so addicted to bottled water that she has to rise two times nightly, to drain the excess. Wonderful for her and her husband's health.

So, listen to the voice of common sense, be healthy, and save a small fortune.

The next marketing swizzle is in the sale of extra vitamins. If you have a modern, balanced diet with plenty of fruit and fresh vegetables, you do not need any extra vitamins. Some people have medical conditions which do require treatment, but that is for your doctor to prescribe.



All those fish pills that you buy "just in case", or "might help", are a total waste of money. The body cannot store extra; it is excreted, provided you are drinking at least one litre of fluids per day. This applies to all vitamin supplements, but the main culprits are Vitamin C and Vitamin D.

In the case of the latter, exposing the skin of the face and neck for about twenty minutes per day, even in winter, will generate enough. So, save your money and buy some fruit. And please listen to the voice of common sense.

**Stan Grierson**

(The writer's background was science, not medicine)



**Profile:**  
**Anne Hewitt—Practice Manager**

When I joined Cherrymead in January 2013, I had not been a Practice Manager before. I have however had lots of roles over the years that have transferable skills. For example, I trained as a nurse and worked my way up to the dizzy heights of Operating

Theatre Sister at Wexham Park. I spent some time working for the Royal Air Force as a Nursing Sister with the rank of Flying Officer. I looked after service personnel and lived in the Officer's Mess - a few tales to tell there!

More recently, I was General Manager for a small local Membership Organisation. Immediately before joining Cherrymead, I was a Project Manager for the NHS Revalidation Support Team. I worked with the various stakeholders, such as the GMC and Department of Health to design the brand new revalidation process for doctors.

I am married with two children: Kat is a final year medical student at Warwick and Will is Front of

House manager at the Walnut Tree pub in Bourne End. My husband, John, is a caterer for corporate meetings and private functions.

When I'm not working, I enjoy a bit of amateur stage lighting. I like dining out (waistline permitting!), and trying to make bread!

**Anne Hewitt**

**Christmas Jokes:**

What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?

*Claustrophobia!*

Why does Santa have three gardens?

*So he can "ho ho ho"!*

Why did Santa's helper see the doctor?

*Because he had a low "elf" esteem!*

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?

*A Christmas Quacker!*

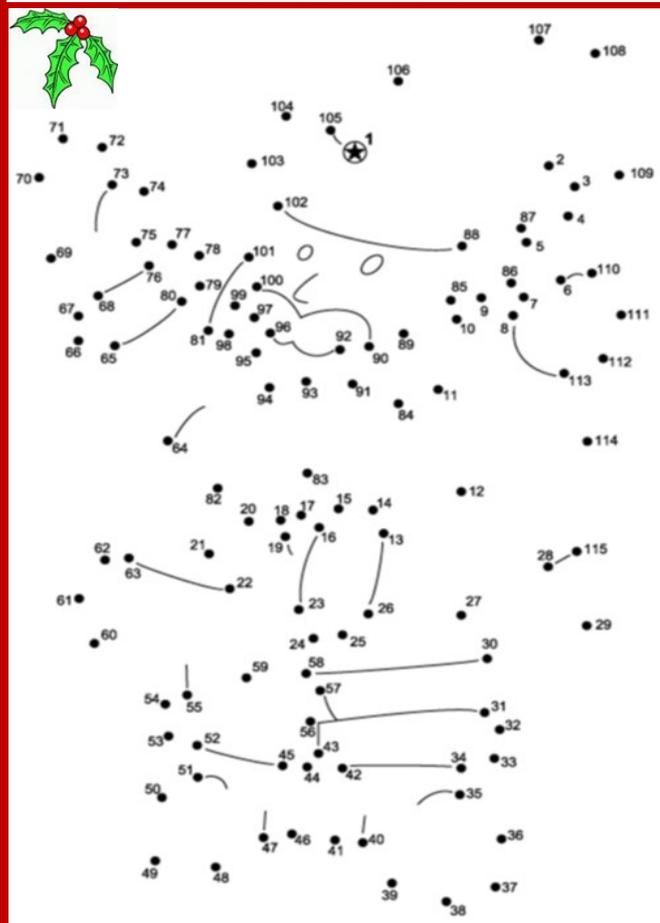
Where does Santa go when he is sick?

*The "elf" centre!*

**Christmas Fun for Children of all ages**

By Sandra Salter and Tracey Dalby

**CONNECT THE DOTS**



**WORDSEARCH**

S	E	I	P	E	C	N	I	M
T	G	C	C	A	R	O	L	S
E	N	I	W	N	E	L	F	G
E	U	C	O	T	K	C	I	N
W	F	L	N	A	S	A	R	I
S	I	E	S	T	A	R	T	D
T	B	A	B	Y	C	R	R	D
U	C	R	I	B	K	O	E	U
N	Y	E	K	R	U	T	E	P
Y	L	L	O	H	W	Y	V	I



- BABY
- CAROLS
- CRIB
- CARROT
- ELF
- FIRTREE
- FUN
- HOLLY
- ICICLE
- IVY
- MINCEPIES
- NUTS
- PUDDING
- SACK
- SNOW
- STAR
- SWEETS
- TURKEY

**Useful Contacts—Pharmacies**

Tesco Pharmacy, London Road, Loudwater, HP10 9RT  
Tel: 01628 659847

Boots, 3 Aries House, Flackwell Heath, HP10 9NB  
Tel: 01628521750

Wooburn Green Pharmacy, 50-51 The Green, Wooburn Green, HP10 0EU Tel: 01628 521397

Rowlands Pharmacy, Totteridge Drive, Kings Wood, HP13 6JH  
Tel: 01494 538393

Lloyds Pharmacy, 1 The Parade, Bourne End, SL8 5SA  
Tel: 01628 520144

Boots, 7 - 9 Station Road, Beaconsfield, HP9 1NL  
Tel: 01494 673320

AQSA Ryemead Pharmacy, 91 London Road, HP11 1BU  
Tel: 01494 451888

Address: The Patient Reference Group, Cherrymead Surgery, Queensmead Road, Loudwater, High Wycombe HP10 9XA

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