December

Neetside Newsletter 2026 Issue 12

Welcome to our final newsletter of 2026

Our Festive Reminders

Order your prescriptions in time:

- Check you have enough medication to last over the
- festive period.
- Don't leave ordering repeat prescriptions until the
- last minute.
- Allow sufficient time for prescriptions to be processed.
- Use the NHS App to order repeat medication
- Avoid ordering more medication than you need.

- Cancel appointments you cannot attend
- Ensure we have your up-to-date contact details
- Check appointment texts and messages
- Use the NHS App for prescriptions and health information
- Check our surgery website for the latest updates. (NEWS)
- Follow our surgery on Facebook and Instagram
- Read our monthly patient newsletter



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR OPENING HOURS

Our surgery will be closed on:

Friday 25 December 2026 – Christmas Day
Monday 28 December 2026 – Boxing Day bank holiday
Friday 1 January 2027 – New Year's Day

For urgent medical help when we are closed, visit 111.nhs.uk or call NHS 111.
In a life-threatening emergency, call 999.

Your Doctors
Dr Julia Bloemertz
Dr Angus Macdonald
Dr C Jones (m)
Dr P Anthony (f)

Neetside Partners
Dr Julia Bloemertz
Dr Angus Macdonald
Spencer Ward (Paramedic)

Telephone
01288 270580

Practice Manager
Spencer Ward

Opening Times
8.30am—1pm every day 2pm—8pm (Monday) 2pm—6pm (Tues—Fri)
Closed Saturday & Sunday

If you need access to GP services in the evenings, or at weekends, there are now improvements to where, when and how appointments can happen.
Monday evening appointments up to 8pm are available, please contact us for details.

Call 111 for medical advice and direction.
Call 999 for life-threatening emergencies.

Health and Wellbeing over the Festive period.

The festive season can bring both joy and stress, affecting mental health and overall wellbeing. Here are some practical tips to help manage health and wellbeing during Christmas:

Seek Support: Reach out to friends, family, or mental health support services for help. Sharing your feelings can provide comfort and understanding - **MIND**

Budgeting: Create a budget to help manage financial pressures during the holiday season. Keep track of expenses - **MIND**

Set Boundaries: It's ok to say no to things that don't support your mental health. Prioritize what's important and break larger tasks into manageable parts - **Mental Health UK**

Self-Care: Take time for yourself to engage in activities you enjoy. This can help reduce stress and improve your mood - **MIND**

Try to avoid comparisons: Christmas seen on social media or TV adverts don't reflect reality and can make us feel bad about ourselves. Take a break from social media - **MIND**



Getting support

If you're struggling this Christmas, you may want to find support for your mental health. There are a few ways that you can do this:

- **Call Samaritans on 116 123 (freephone). Their English language line is always open.**
- **Text SHOUT to 85258. This is a free 24/7 crisis text service run by Shout.**
- **Clear Christmas support hub for young people in Cornwall tel: 01726 982140**
- **0800 678 1602 ageuk.org.uk Information and support for older people.**
- **Age UK's English helpline is open 8am to 7pm, every day of the year.**
- **Helpline: If You Need to Talk to Someone Urgently**
- **Samaritans - Open 24/7 Call: 116 123**
- **NHS 111 - Call 111 and select the mental health option (option 2). 111 will tell you the right place to get help.**
- **C.A.L.M - Open 5pm - midnight every day, call: 0800 58 58 58**





Coping with grief at Christmas

Whether it's your first Christmas without someone, or they died many years ago, you might find that your grief is more intense throughout the holiday season. If you're struggling to cope with the sadness, anger or any other emotion brought up during this time, we're here to help. ⬇️

https://www.cruse.org.uk/understanding-grief/managing-grief/christmas/

December Health Campaign - Bowel Cancer

What is bowel cancer?

Bowel cancer is also called **colorectal cancer.** It affects the large bowel, which is made up of the colon and rectum.

Around **48,200 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer in the UK each year.** It is the **4th** most common cancer in the UK.

Both men and women can get bowel cancer. It is more common in older people.

The **risk of developing bowel cancer depends on many factors, including:**

- age
- family history
- genetic conditions such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP), Lynch syndrome and other polyp syndromes
- long term (chronic) inflammatory bowel conditions such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease
- diet and lifestyle factors

Find out more ➡️ **https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bowel-cancer/risks-causes**



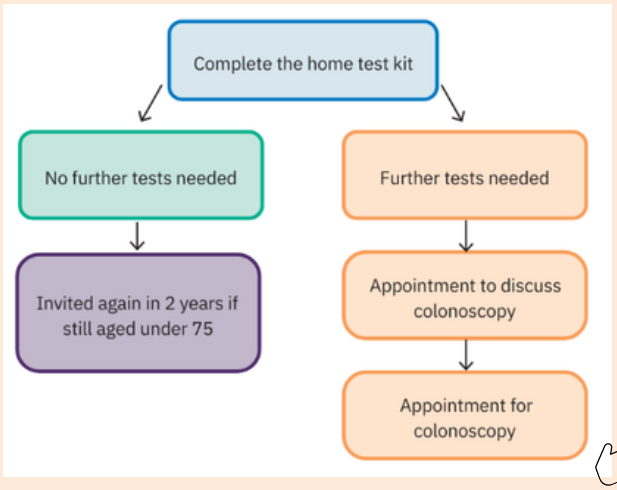
Bowel cancer screening is a test you do at home that checks for signs of bowel cancer. **It's offered to people aged 50 to 74.**

Screening does not stop you getting bowel cancer, but it is the best way to find cancer at an **early stage.**

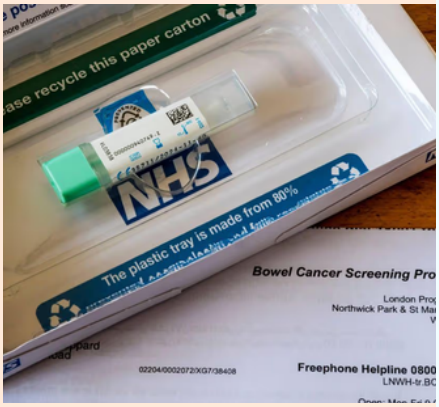
You'll usually get the results of your bowel cancer screening home test (FIT kit) within 2 weeks after sending your poo sample.

Read more ⬇️

https://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/bowel-cancer-screening/



For most people, no further tests are needed. We offer people who do need further tests an appointment to discuss colonoscopy.



https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bowel-cancer-screening-benefits-and-risks/nhs-bowel-cancer-screening-helping-you-decide

Main symptoms of bowel cancer

Symptoms of bowel cancer may include:

- changes in your poo, such as having softer poo, diarrhoea or constipation that is not usual for you
- needing to poo more or less often than is usual for you
- blood in your poo, which may look red or black, bleeding from your bottom
- often feeling like you need to poo, even if you've just been to the toilet
- tummy pain, a lump in your tummy
- bloating
- losing weight without trying
- feeling very tired or short of breath – these are signs of anaemia, which can be caused by bowel cancer



https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer/

Managing Diabetes Over Christmas



If you have diabetes, or are close to someone who does, you may find that this time of year can make managing your diabetes more difficult, with so much tempting Christmas food and drink to choose from.

Enjoy the festive season while keeping your diabetes under control!

Watch portion sizes – enjoy festive treats in moderation.
Eat balanced meals – include vegetables, protein and sensible carbohydrate portions.
Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water.
Be mindful of alcohol – it can affect blood glucose levels and increase the risk of hypos.
Keep active – enjoy a festive walk after meals.
Monitor blood glucose – check your levels as advised.
Take medication as prescribed – don't miss doses or change your routine.
Plan ahead – order repeat prescriptions and stock up on testing supplies before Christmas.
Be prepared for illness – know your diabetes sick-day rules.

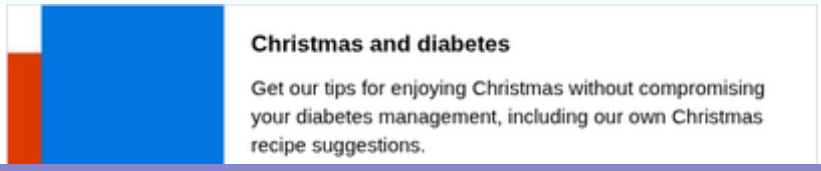




Remember: You don't have to miss out on Christmas treats. Enjoy yourself, make sensible choices and look after your health.

Need medical advice when your GP surgery is closed? Visit NHS 111 online or call 111. In an emergency call 999

When it comes to dessert, the majority of Christmas puddings and cakes can be adapted to be lower in calories, free sugars and saturated fat.



https://www.diabetes.org.uk/living-with-diabetes/eating/christmas-food-and-diabetes

We see cases of influenza (flu), RSV and COVID-19 throughout the year, but in winter they circulate at the same time and can reach high levels.
Read the UK Health Security Agency Blog for more details ⬇️

https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/08/do-i-have-flu-covid-19-or-a-cold-know-the-signs-and-symptoms/

Saying at home when you have symptoms of flu or Covid-19 helps protect those who are vulnerable. Consider wearing a mask around other people.





Norovirus, also called the winter vomiting bug, is a stomach bug that causes vomiting and diarrhoea. It can be very unpleasant, but usually gets better in about 2 days.
For more information please visit ⬇️

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus/

December Health Campaigns



From **1 January 2027, anyone born in or after 2009** will **never** legally be sold tobacco. This landmark change will help create the UK's first smoke-free generation and protect future generations from the harms of smoking.

Smoking remains one of the biggest causes of preventable illness and death in the UK. Around **83% of smokers start smoking in their teens.**

By preventing young people from starting to smoke, the new law aims to create the first smoke-free generation and reduce the number of smoking-related cancers and deaths in the future.

Smoking addiction has devastating consequences. In the UK, around 75,000 people die from smoking-related illnesses each year. On average, that's 205 deaths a day, or 1 death every 7 minutes.

You can visit **https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/tobacco-vapes-act/** to find out more about the changes.

- Around 83% of smokers start smoking in their teens.
- Smoking causes 1-in-4 of all cancers in England.
- The national average spend on tobacco is around £2,964 per smoker, per year.
- Three-quarters of smokers wish they had never started.



Shout out to our local community support groups😊

For the next few months we are giving a 'shout out' to the many community support groups in Bude. In December we thank **Bude Sensory Nature Group.**

Organised by **The Sensory Trust** who help to create accessible and engaging nature experiences for people living with dementia and their carers.



You can join them on the 3rd December for their 'Stroll and festive creative nature activities at Neetside'



You can contact them for more details or to book help with transport



Where: **In and around Bude**

When: **Monthly (Dates differ each month - check website)**

Time: **11:00am**

Contact: Laura/Kate
Email: creativespaces@sensorytrust.org.uk
Tel: 01726 222900
Website: https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk

Did you know?

Geographically, Bude is one of the furthest places from a hospital, in any direction across the UK

Neetside TEAM News

As the year comes to an end, we would like to thank all our patients for their support and understanding througout the year.
We wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

- Order repeat prescriptions early.
- Check pharmacy opening times.
- Keep essential medicines stocked.
- Know where to get help if you, family or friends become unwell ⬇️

Contact NHS 111 online at **https://111.nhs.uk/ or call 111** if you need urgent medical advice when our practice is closed.
Pharmacists provide advice and treatment from common illnesses, opening times will differ over Christmas and New Year.
https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy
Call **999 or attend A&E** for life threatening emergencies.
Use the **NHS APP**
For non-urgent matters, please contact us when we re-open.

