

## **Newsletter February 2026**

### **International Prenatal Infection Month**

February is International Prenatal Infection Month.

There are several infections that can affect your unborn baby if you're pregnant. It's also important to be aware that if you catch an infection, that infection may pose a risk to others.

Here are some tips on preventing infection:

- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly
- Avoid changing cat litter
- Ensure meat is fully cooked
- Avoid unpasteurised (raw) milk and foods made from it
- Stay clear of other people with infections
- Stay up to date with vaccinations

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/infections-that-may-affect-your-baby/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/foods-to-avoid/>

### **Cost of living**

Many people are struggling with the cost of living. The Government has some suggestions and resources to help and support.

If you're really struggling to feed yourself or your family, foodbanks could help you manage for a few days. They can also help and signpost you to other support.

<https://www.trussell.org.uk/emergency-food/find-a-foodbank>

<https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living/managing-money>

### **Keeping active when you don't feel like it**

The weather in the UK can be cold and miserable during the winter, and days are shorter, so finding motivation to keep exercising can be challenging.

Exercising helps to keep you fit and healthy, and it can boost your mood when you're feeling

low. These helpful articles contain some brilliant hints and tips to help you stay active during the cold winter months.

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeand...eep-exercising-in-the-cold-dark-winter-months>

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-living/fitness/easy-winter-exercise-tips-help-you-stay-fit/>

### **Depression**

Depression is often misunderstood, but it's more than a passing low mood. Mild depression can mean you're unable to enjoy your normal activities, while severe depression can make you feel suicidal or as if life isn't worth living.

If you're struggling with feelings of depression, there are things you can do to help your mood. Getting outdoors and doing exercise are some of the well-known tips for helping mood, but what are the others? See the article below for some self-help advice.

However, if you're suffering from severe symptoms, please make an appointment.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/cope-with-depression/>

### **Stay well in winter**

If you remain cold over a period of time, you can become unwell, particularly if you're in a more vulnerable group, such as those with chronic conditions, older adults or young children. It's important to stay warm to reduce the risk of illness and unplanned hospital admissions.

There are a few things you can do to help keep you and your family safe and well over the winter months:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well/>

### **Heart awareness**

Did you know that someone dies from a heart or circulatory condition every three minutes in the UK?

February is Heart Month, so let's raise awareness and help reduce this number.

If you'd like to check your blood pressure, please speak to our team.

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/support-our-campaigns/heart-month>

### **Measles**

Last year saw an increase in measles cases, taking the number of cases to the highest it has been in decades. Vaccination is important to ensure the long-term health of your child, and of the nation as a whole.

Vaccinations for children in the UK are changing, with many children now being eligible for a vaccination that includes protection against chicken pox as well as other conditions that can cause serious complications.

If you're not yet vaccinated, you should make an appointment to see your GP practice.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

### **Tinnitus awareness, 2nd–8th February**

Tinnitus is unique to each person who experiences it. It's the perception of sound when there is no external source. People with tinnitus may hear ringing, buzzing, hissing, whistling or other noises. The sound may be constant or intermittent, and its volume can vary from one episode to the next.

The effect of constant noise on mental health can be significant.

<https://tinnitus.org.uk/join-the-cause/tinnitus-week-2026/>

### **World Cancer Day, 4th February**

Everyone's cancer journey is unique to them. In the UK, we're lucky to have access to healthcare free at the point of need.

Over the last 50 years, the proportion of the UK population dying from cancer (the cancer death rate) has fallen by more than a fifth, which is amazing news, but there is still much work to be done.

These figures are a testament to the progress we've made in preventing, detecting and

treating cancer. Today, 1 in 2 people diagnosed with the disease will survive it for at least ten years, compared to just 1 in 4 in the early 1970s. And we're on the cusp of many more improvements.

Let's help to raise awareness. <https://www.worldcancerday.org/>

### **Time to Talk Day, 5th February**

These longer, colder months can be really difficult; winter can make us feel less motivated and sometimes lonely.

Conversations are important for our mental health. Whether that's a quick chat or something more meaningful, let's make Time to Talk!

<https://www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/time-to-talk-day/>

### **International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, 6th February**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that deliberately alter, injure or remove parts of the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's a harmful practice that has no health benefits and can cause serious physical and psychological consequences. FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women and is illegal in many countries.

FGM is most often carried out on girls from infancy to adolescence, though it can occur at any age.

If you're concerned that someone may be at risk of FGM, it's important to take those concerns seriously.

Raising awareness, listening without judgement, and knowing how to seek help are key steps in protecting those at risk. Everyone has a role to play in preventing FGM and supporting affected individuals, ensuring they're safe, informed and supported.

<https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation-help-advice>

### **National HIV Testing Week, 9th–15th February**

9th February marks the start of National HIV Testing Week, an annual campaign that encourages people to know their HIV status and understand the importance of regular testing. HIV testing is a vital part of protecting your own health and the health of others, as many people living with HIV don't experience symptoms for years and may be unaware they

have the virus.

Testing is free, confidential and quick, and is available through a range of services.

<https://www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/campaigns/national-hiv-testing-week/>

### **Eating Disorders Awareness Week, 23rd February–1st March**

This year, Eating Disorders Awareness Week highlights the vital role that the community plays in supporting people affected by eating disorders. Support can take many forms, including family members, friends, peer support groups, healthcare professionals, schools, workplaces and online spaces.

Eating disorders affect people of all ages, genders and backgrounds. They're complex mental health conditions influenced by biological, psychological and social factors.

By fostering kindness, connection and understanding, communities can play a crucial role in promoting recovery and wellbeing. Eating Disorders Awareness Week is an opportunity to learn, listen and stand together in support of those affected, reinforcing the message that recovery is possible and that no one has to face an eating disorder alone.

<https://edaw.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>



## In January 154 patients failed to attend appointments here

**26 HOURS  
WERE  
MISSED**

**Equivalent  
to  
7.5 GP  
Clinics**

**154  
PATIENTS DID  
NOT ATTEND**

If you are unable to attend **always** cancel your appointment



Call us on **01773 602141**



Contact us @ [www.somercotesmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.somercotesmedicalcentre.co.uk)



Visit the practice in person