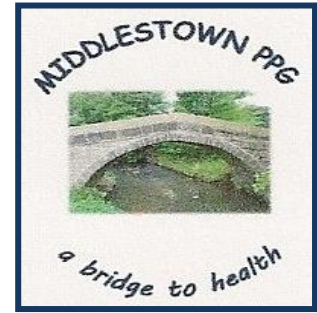
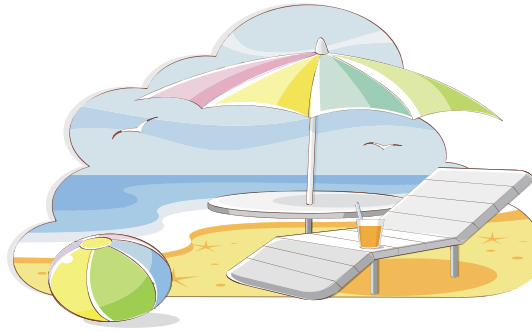


# MIDDLESTOWN PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP



## NEWSLETTER



## Summer 2014

### HAY FEVER (SEASONAL ALLERGIES)

Hay fever (seasonal allergic rhinitis) is caused by an allergy to pollen. Common hay fever symptoms are a runny, itchy and/or blocked nose, sneezing and itchy eyes. Pollen is the fine powder that is produced by plants, trees or flowers. Hay fever is caused by an allergy to grass or hay pollens. Grass pollen is the most common cause and tends to affect people every year in the grass pollen season from about May to July. The term is often used when allergies are caused by other pollens, such as tree pollens which tend to affect people from March to May. Other people may be allergic to weed pollens; weeds tend to pollinate from early spring to early autumn.

Symptoms are due to your immune system reacting to the pollen. Cells on the lining of the nose and eyes release histamine and other chemicals when they come into contact with pollen, causing inflammation in the nose (rhinitis) and eyes (conjunctivitis). Sometimes the sinuses and throat can also be affected.

#### Who gets hay fever?

Hay fever affects about 2 in 10 people in the UK. Symptoms return for a season each year, but the condition eventually goes away or improves in many cases. Hay fever tends to run in families. You are also more likely to develop hay fever if you already have asthma or eczema. Equally, if you have hay fever, you are more likely to develop eczema or asthma. The conditions asthma, eczema and hay fever are known together as atopic conditions or atopy. A tendency to atopy can run in families.



#### Common symptoms:

Runny and itchy nose, a blocked nose, sneezing, itchy and watery red eyes and an itchy throat. In some cases only nasal symptoms occur and in some cases only eye symptoms occur.

Less common symptoms: loss of smell, face pain, sweats and headache.

Asthma symptoms: wheeze and breathlessness, which may get worse if you already have asthma. Some people have asthma symptoms only during hay fever season.

#### \*\* MEDICINES UPDATE \*\*

Following advice from our colleagues in Medicines Optimisation we have been asked to review all of our patients taking Diclofenac and PPI treatments.

Diclofenac, commonly used in arthritis, has been recently shown to increase the risk of heart disease, so we are taking steps to discontinue its use and prescribe alternatives.

PPI medicines include Omeprazole, Lansoprazole and Esomeprazole, and have been implicated in causing mineral imbalances increasing risk of confusion and hospital admission. We will be looking at reducing prescribing and safe dose reduction in patients on these therapies.

If you are taking any of these treatments, or are concerned, we would recommend that you contact us before taking any other action. We will discuss your treatment with you at a future medicine review.

## Will it help if I avoid pollen

- Stay indoors as much as possible, keep windows and doors shut.
- Avoid cutting grass, large grassy places and Camping.
- Shower and wash your hair after being outdoors, especially after going to the countryside.
- Wear wrap-around sunglasses when you're out.
- Keep car windows closed .

## What are the commonly used treatments?

These are antihistamine nasal sprays, antihistamine tablets, steroid nasal sprays, and eye drops. If your hay fever symptoms are not controlled on the medication that you are taking after 2-4 weeks, you should discuss this with your doctor.

Antihistamines taken by mouth: There are several brands of antihistamines that you can buy at pharmacies or get on prescription.

Steroid nasal sprays and drops: A nasal spray usually works by reducing inflammation in the nose to clear all the nasal symptoms; it can also ease eye symptoms. A steroid nasal spray tends to be the most effective treatment when symptoms are more severe.

It is important you attend surgery for your annual asthma review to promote/maintain good lung health.

Further help and advice: Allergy UK, 3 White Oak Square, London Road, Swanley, Kent BR8 7AG Allergy Helpline: 01322 619898 Web: [www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)



'Dementia' is a word we don't like much. It is just a word, however - an umbrella term for a number of symptoms that go with several diseases that make changes in the brain. It is not an inevitable part of growing older; plenty of older people do not have dementia. There are forms of dementia that affect younger people.

We tend to think of dementia as memory loss but it can also affect thinking, communication, perception, inhibitions and everyday tasks. It is different for every person.

So it's really important to see the **person** not the **dementia**.

'Dementia Friends' workshops allow us to explore dementia further and to work on ways in which we can sensitively help people living with it. It's part of a wider programme to make our society a better one for people with dementia.

For more details go to [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)

**Tip for a healthy lifestyle:** Try to do some physical activity every day, so it becomes part of your routine. Walk or cycle to get to places - whether you're going to work, the shop, or doing the school run. If you need something to motivate you, why not sign up for a sponsored event?



**Carers Wakefield & District**, support unpaid family carers across the Wakefield Council area.

A team of dedicated support workers, who each focus on different localities, are there to help you. Whether you need information and advice, guidance on how to ask for services to assist you in your caring role, or emotional support and a listening ear, they will be happy to assist.

If the need is for more specialist knowledge they regularly work closely with other organisations, such as Alzheimer's Society, Stroke Association, and Together for Mental Health, as well as professionals in health and social care. All information is handled in the strictest confidence and no details will be discussed without your consent.

The support workers who cover the Middlestown Surgery area are Jean Hales and Patricia Lynch. You can contact them at our offices at 25 King Street, Wakefield, WF1 2SR, telephone 01924 305544 or email us at [info@carerswakefield.org.uk](mailto:info@carerswakefield.org.uk)

PPG **One Day** Event 25.09.2014 - see separate information sheet

You can e-mail your thoughts and ideas to us at:

[Middlestown.ppgroup@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk](mailto:Middlestown.ppgroup@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk)

Please be aware that we cannot enter into any discussion regarding your own health, the treatment you receive from the surgery, handle any complaints or deal with any other confidential issues arising from your own personal circumstances.

You can also view this Newsletter on our PPG webpage at [www.middlestownmedicalcentre.nhs.uk](http://www.middlestownmedicalcentre.nhs.uk)  
Please pass this Newsletter on to family or friends after you have finished with it.