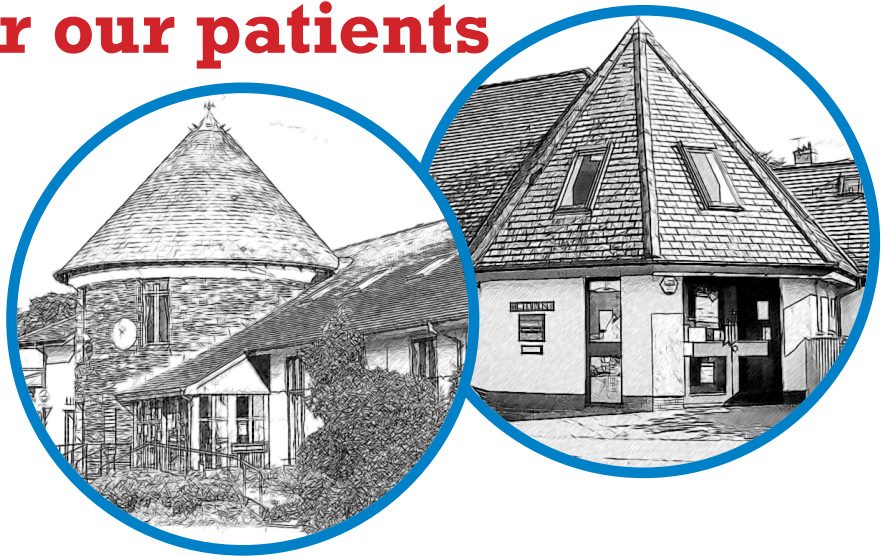


Newsletter for our patients

April 2024

Riverside Surgery
Bovey Tracey
01626 832666

Tower House Surgery
Chudleigh
01626 852379



Scan to go to our website



Dr Stanley



Dr Collins



Dr Brook

Bovey Tracey and Chudleigh Practice, along with Dr Thea Collins and Dr Charlotte Stanley, as a Partner in April.

“I am enthusiastic about good patient care, and hope to ensure this continues at such a fantastic and welcoming practice.

“I completed my GP training here, and I can't wait to get back working within the team.”

The Practice is very fortunate to have three of its doctors ready to commit to Partnership status. This will be of great benefit not only to the Practice itself, but above all to our patients in these difficult times.

Our three new Partners

Dr Thea Collins and Dr Charlotte Stanley are to become Practice Partners in April.

This was announced in the December 2023 Newsletter, where both doctors said enthusiastically how they were

very much looking forward to being Partners.

Now we are very pleased to tell you that Dr Heather Brook will also become a Partner in April.

Dr Brook says, “I am really looking forward to starting at The



Dr Maybin

Dr Maybin retires

Dr Maybin says, “As you are probably aware I'm retiring from General Practice.

“It has been a real pleasure caring for this community. I wish you all the best for the future.”

Our patients and all our staff and doctors at Riverside and

Tower house wish Dr Maybin a long and happy retirement.

Staff News

Our Practice Manager, Ben Bishop, has now left us and we are in the process of recruiting his replacement. We'll be letting you have more news soon,

when the new appointment is confirmed.

Help someone, and help yourself

Recent research seems to show that if you can do someone else a good turn, without thought of any return for you, you'll feel

Easter Opening Hours

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Thursday, 28th March | 8:30 – 1:00pm & 2:00 – 6:00pm |
| Good Friday, 29th March | CLOSED |
| Easter Monday, 1st April | CLOSED |
| Tuesday, 2nd April | 8:30 – 1:00pm & 2:00 – 8:00pm |

Please note, our phone lines are staffed continuously from 8:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

On the days when we are closed, you can call our usual telephone numbers and you will be redirected to the out-of-hours service, just as you are throughout the rest of the year. Alternatively, please call 111.

Our 'Enhanced Hours' evening sessions usually take place on Mondays and Tuesdays, so we shall also be open until 8pm on Tuesday 2nd April.

better in yourself. If you make an effort and do something good for someone each day, your overall mood will be improved.

There's similar thought behind the suggestion that we should all make a point of interacting with another person (outside our close family) at least once a day, even if it's just to say "Good morning" or chat about the weather, or one of the many other subjects forming the basis of casual conversations.

In other words, take an interest in other people: it'll be good for you (and for them!).

Vaccinations

Take-up for certain important vaccines has reduced over the years after some misleading anti-vax stories were printed and covered in a large number of media outlets including TV, newspapers, magazines, and, above all, on popular social media.

Being vaccinated for common diseases is vital, so we're repeating here what you need to know, in the hope that this reminder will encourage our patients to have any of these vital vaccines they've missed.

If you know you've not had some of these vaccinations, please arrange to have the missing ones soon, then you won't have to suffer the misery that can be caused by the diseases.

The MMR vaccine

This vaccine protects against measles, mumps, and rubella. Unfortunately, this vaccine is one for which take-up has markedly reduced.

The MMR vaccine is part of the routine NHS childhood immunisation schedule.

Your child should be given a first dose when they're around 12 to 13 months and a second booster dose at 3 years and 4 months.

The two doses will give lifelong protection against all three diseases.

Measles

Measles is not a trivial disease. It is extremely infectious, and spreads very rapidly among the unvaccinated, causing severe harmful complications in some people.



The measles rash starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body.

Measles was almost dying out in the UK but has started to increase again as not enough children and adults are being vaccinated.

Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent it.



The spots of the measles rash are sometimes raised and join together to form blotchy patches. They're not usually itchy. The rash looks brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small white spots in their mouth.

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

Rubella

Rubella (also known as German measles) is a rare illness that causes a spotty rash. It usually



The rubella rash looks red or pink on white skin. It can be harder to see on brown or black skin, but might feel rough or bumpy.

gets better in about a week, but it can be serious if you get it when you're pregnant.

Rubella in pregnancy

Rubella is very rare in pregnancy. But if you do get it when you're pregnant, rubella could harm your baby.

Rubella can cause:

- ❖ loss of the baby (miscarriage)
- ❖ serious problems after the baby is born — such as problems with their sight, hearing, heart, or brain

The risk is highest if you get rubella early in pregnancy.

There's not thought to be a risk to your baby if you get rubella after week 20 of your pregnancy.

Urgent action needed

Call your midwife, maternity unit, or GP immediately if you're pregnant and either:

- ❖ you have a new rash
- ❖ you've been in close contact with someone who has rubella

Mumps

Mumps is most recognisable by painful swellings in the side of the face under the ears (the parotid glands), giving a person with mumps a very distinctive "hamster face" appearance.

Other symptoms of mumps include headaches, joint pain, and a high temperature, which may develop a few days before the swelling of the parotid glands.

Who's affected

Most cases of mumps occur in younger adults who did not receive the MMR vaccine as part of their childhood vaccination schedule and did not have mumps as a child.



Typical facial swelling caused by mumps

Older adults who were born in the UK before the vaccine was introduced are likely to have had mumps as a child. Once you have been infected by the mumps virus, you normally develop a life-long immunity to further infection.

The MMR vaccine was introduced in 1988. Adults born between 1980 and 1990 may not have been vaccinated as children, and are less likely than older adults to have had mumps as a child.

Mumps is currently most common among people born in the late 1990s and early 2000s who missed out on the MMR vaccine as children.

When to see a GP

If you suspect mumps, it's important to contact a GP so that a diagnosis can be made.

While mumps is not usually serious, the condition has similar symptoms to more serious types of infection, such as glandular fever and tonsillitis.

Your GP can usually make a diagnosis after seeing and feeling the swelling, looking at the position of the tonsils in the mouth and checking the person's temperature to see if it's higher than normal.

Let your GP know in advance if you're coming to the surgery so they can take any necessary

precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

If your GP suspects mumps, they should notify your local health protection team (HPT). The HPT will arrange for a sample of saliva to be tested to confirm or rule out the diagnosis.

Mumps usually passes without causing serious damage to a person's health.

Serious complications are rare, but mumps can lead to viral meningitis if the virus moves into the outer layer of the brain.

Other complications include swelling of the testicles or ovaries (if the affected person has gone through puberty).

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

Who should have the MMR vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is given to babies and young children as part of the NHS vaccination schedule.

The vaccine is given in two doses, one at age 1 and the second at 3 years and 4 months.

When older children and adults should have the MMR vaccine

We are now looking through our patients' health records to find patients who are at highest risk from measles, mumps and rubella and who have not been recorded as having had two doses of the MMR vaccine.

We will be inviting all those patients to make an appointment to have their MMR vaccination.

Who cannot have the MMR vaccine

As a precaution, the MMR vaccine is not recommended during pregnancy.

You should also avoid becoming pregnant for 1 month after having the MMR vaccine.

It's best to let your GP or midwife know if you had the MMR vaccine while you were pregnant. Evidence suggests there will be no harm to your

baby, but it's better to let them know.

The MMR vaccine is not recommended for people with a severely weakened immune system. For example, people receiving chemotherapy.

If you have a medical condition, or are taking medicine that may affect your immune system, check with us if it's safe for you to have the MMR vaccine.

Spring Covid booster campaign

Our Practice will be taking part in the April-to-June Covid Booster Vaccination Campaign.

Who is eligible?

Two groups are eligible:

- ❖ People over 75
- ❖ Any immunocompromised adults under the age of 75.

We will notify these patients as soon as we have appointments available to book.

The shingles vaccine

Shingles is a common condition that causes a painful, (even very painful) rash. It can sometimes lead to serious problems such as life-long severe pain at the site of the rash, hearing loss or blindness.



Shingles rash, on a leg in this example.

As you get older, or if you have a severely weakened immune system, you're more likely to get shingles, and it's more likely to cause you serious problems, .

Get advice from 111 as soon as you suspect you have shingles. You might need

special medicine to help speed up your recovery and avoid longer-lasting problems.

This treatment works best if taken within 3 days of your symptoms starting.

111 will tell you what to do. They can arrange a phone call from a nurse or doctor if you need one.

What the shingles vaccine is for

The shingles vaccine:

- ❖ reduces your chances of getting shingles
- ❖ reduces your chances of getting serious problems if you do get shingles

Who should have the shingles vaccine

The shingles vaccine is recommended for people at higher risk from shingles, including all adults turning 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those aged 50 and over who have a severely weakened immune system.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/shingles-vaccination/>

Who cannot have the shingles vaccine

Most people who are eligible for the shingles vaccine can have it, unless you've had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine, or an ingredient in the vaccine.

One of the shingles vaccines (called Zostavax) contains a weakened version of the virus that causes shingles. This vaccine is not suitable if you have a severely weakened immune system so you'll be given a different one (called Shingrix).

How to get the shingles vaccine

We will usually contact you when you become eligible for the shingles vaccine. This will usually be by letter, text message, phone or email. Sometimes you might be offered the vaccine

during a GP appointment you're having for another reason.

Let us know if:

- ❖ you think you're eligible for the shingles vaccine, but you've not been contacted about it
- ❖ you did not have the vaccine when you were contacted and you're still under 80 (only people with a severely weakened immune system can get the vaccine after 80 years of age)
- ❖ you're due to have your vaccine and you're feeling unwell—you may need to wait until you're feeling better before having the vaccine.

Pneumococcal vaccine

The pneumococcal vaccine helps protect against some types of bacterial infections that can cause serious illnesses like:

- ❖ meningitis (an infection in the brain and spinal cord)
- ❖ sepsis (a life-threatening reaction to an infection)
- ❖ pneumonia (an infection in the lungs)

The vaccine is recommended for people at higher risk of these illnesses, such as babies, and adults aged 65 and over.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/pneumococcal-vaccination/>

Who should have the pneumococcal vaccine

The pneumococcal vaccine is recommended for babies, older people, and people at higher risk of getting seriously ill from pneumococcal infections. It can also help protect against other illnesses such as sinusitis and ear infections.

Have you missed having the pneumococcal vaccine?

Ask the Practice if:

- ❖ you think you or your child are eligible and you have not been contacted to get the pneumococcal vaccine

- ❖ you or your child have missed your pneumococcal vaccinations, or you're not sure if you've been vaccinated

Our telephone system

At long last, our telephone system is being updated to gain the benefit of digital VoIP technology. This will give us far more flexibility in use and allow us to interact with our patients in a much more convenient way, benefiting our patients and the Practice.

One advantage is that the new system, being digital and software controlled, will be very flexible, making it easy and quick to make alterations to the way that it operates.

The Practice telephone message

Our Patient Participation Group has received many adverse comments about the length of the welcoming message that all callers receive. We therefore intend to reduce its length.

However, the message has to include some facts about the Practice, and also has to stress the need to call 999 if you're calling about a life-threatening situation. This means that the length of the message can only be reduced so far. But we are working on it.

There'll soon be more news about our new telephone system when it is brought into full use.

Our Patient Participation Group

Our PPG's purpose is to foster the relationship between Practice and patients, and that benefits everybody.

The Practice interacts with the PPG so that concerns raised by patients can be addressed. Patients' suggestions for improvements can be passed on too. Similarly, the Practice can give the PPG the points of view of the doctors and other staff.

Our Newsletters

The PPG produces regular Newsletters like this one to keep patients informed about the Practice and various other matters likely to be of interest.

Helping the Practice

The PPG also gives the Practice assistance when it is needed, for example by providing volunteer stewards on vaccination days.

For more information on the PPG, have a look at:

<https://towerhousesurgery.co.uk/pages/Patient-Participation-Group-Reports--Other-Surveys>

The Practice website

Our website has been radically updated and now uses the NHS's 'house' style which makes the site much easier to use and therefore more informative.

See what you think:

<https://towerhousesurgery.co.uk/>

Getting ready for an operation

If you know you're soon going to be admitted to hospital for some form of surgery, you should be thinking how best you can prepare for it, and for the days or weeks of recovery afterwards.

Common sense suggests that the fitter you are, the quicker you will recover after your operation. So if you've routinely been having a **brisk** walk for **at least** 20 minutes or more every day, that really will stand you in good stead.

Surprisingly though, it seems that even if you haven't been exercising much recently, you can still improve your recovery time, and reduce the likelihood of post-operative complications, by regular daily exercising in the weeks before your surgery.

Walking is good for you

If you're fit enough to have a daily brisk walk for 20 minutes to

an hour, you'll certainly benefit, and that's true for anyone, whether or not they're going for surgery.

Pharmacy First

The NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service has run since October 2019 and enables patients to be referred to a community pharmacy for treatment of a minor illness or supply of an urgent repeat medicine.

The new service

The new **Pharmacy First** service, which was launched on 31st January this year, adds to the existing service and enables community pharmacies to complete episodes of care for seven common conditions by following defined clinical pathways.

The benefits of Pharmacy First

In May 2023, NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care announced a delivery plan for recovering access to primary care. Part of the plan includes enabling patients to get certain prescription medications direct from a pharmacy, without needing a GP appointment.

This new service is expected to free up GP appointments for patients who need them most, and will give people quicker and more convenient access to safe and high quality healthcare.

The new service includes the supply of appropriate medicines for seven common conditions including earache, sore throat, and urinary tract infections.

The aim of the new service is to address health issues before they get worse.

The old way

As things were, NHS patients in England had to visit their GP to access prescription-only medication, meaning repeated GP visits and delays in treatment.

Community pharmacies offer a more convenient way to access healthcare that includes support with healthy eating, exercise, stopping smoking, monitoring your blood pressure, contraception, flu and covid vaccinations.

Patients' opinions

A survey of public perceptions of community pharmacies found that over 90% of patients who sought guidance from a community pharmacy within the past year reported receiving good advice from their community pharmacist.

Why the service is needed

The government and NHS England are committed to ensuring patients receive the right treatment at the right time. The NHS Long Term Plan highlights the need to make greater use of community pharmacists' skills and their opportunities to engage with patients. That is why the new Pharmacy First service was started.

Accessing Pharmacy First services

The following table shows the seven conditions pharmacists can manage across various age ranges.

| Clinical pathway | Age range |
|--|-------------------|
| Acute otitis media (ear ache)* | 1 to 17 years |
| Impetigo | 1 year and over |
| Infected insect bites | 1 year and over |
| Shingles | 18 years and over |
| Sinusitis | 12 years and over |
| Sore throat | 5 years and over |
| Uncomplicated urinary tract infections | Women 16-64 year |

* Note that distance selling pharmacies will not complete consultations for acute otitis media (ear ache).

Patients will be able to access the seven clinical pathways via referrals from organisations including general practice, urgent and emergency care settings, and NHS 111 (online and via telephone).

In addition, and only for the seven common conditions listed, patients can access the service by attending or contacting a pharmacy directly without the need to be referred by a GP.

Providing high quality health and care services

For the seven common conditions, pharmacists will follow a robust clinical pathway which includes self-care and safety advice

If appropriate, and only then, a pharmacy can supply a restricted set of prescription-only medicines without the need for the patient to visit a GP.

These clinical pathways have been developed with input from various experts including practising GPs, pharmacists, and antimicrobial resistance specialists as well as representatives from national organisations such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the UK Health Security Agency.

These measures ensure that care from the Pharmacy First service matches the care patients would receive from general practice and follows the latest national guidelines.

Private consultations

Pharmacies have private rooms that can be used for consultations with patients, and pharmacists can see patients for clinical services without always needing an appointment.

Pharmacists are highly qualified

Every pharmacist trains for five years in the use of medicines and managing minor illnesses, so they are well equipped to provide health and wellbeing

advice to help people stay well. Pharmacists are also experienced in spotting warning signs, otherwise known as red flag symptoms, which may warrant a referral to another healthcare provider.

Keeping the GP informed

After a patient's consultation with a pharmacist, the pharmacy will send a notification to the patient's GP on the same day or on the following working day.

Our Health & Wellbeing Team

Health & Wellbeing Coaching and Social Prescribing are short-term NHS services that provide the kind of help that doesn't come in a tube or bottle.

The Health & Wellbeing Team offers a holistic, non-judgmental approach. By focusing on what matters to you, our team can help improve your health and wellbeing.

Take your time

The team can give you the time to talk about what's affecting your health and wellbeing. This is done at your own pace to help you find the tools to make positive changes.

The team covers Albany Surgery, Bovey Tracey & Chudleigh Practice and Kingskerswell & Ipplepen Health Centre.

Contact Riverside or Tower House, or email: d-ich.nwellbeingteam@nhs.net to find out more.

Social prescribing

Social prescribing could help if:

- ❖ you are feeling lonely or isolated
- ❖ you are living with mild to moderate anxiety or depression
- ❖ you would like to be more active
- ❖ you have financial, employment or housing worries

- ❖ you have caring responsibilities
- ❖ you are facing family or relationship issues
- ❖ you would like a referral to our Health & Wellbeing coaches

Health & Wellbeing Coaching

Health & Wellbeing Coaching could help if:

- ❖ you are experiencing low motivation which prevents you from making positive changes to your health and wellbeing.
- ❖ you are living with, or at risk of developing a long term health condition and would benefit from making some changes.
- ❖ you would like support in setting lifestyle goals, such as healthy eating and exercise
- ❖ you are struggling with anxiety, low mood or stress which interferes with your daily life
- ❖ you are feeling 'stuck in a rut' and would like support in setting goals around future choices

Devon Carers

If you look after an adult, Devon Carers are there to look after you. They will provide information, advice and support to you in your caring role.

There's a great deal of information and knowledge at Devon Carers, which they will use to save you time, and to provide support tailored to your needs.

The quickest and easiest way is for you to register with them. You can complete a full online registration at the link below and you'll be sent a Welcome pack and Carer's ID card within two weeks.

<https://devoncarers.org.uk/>
Phone 03456 434435

If you are struggling with your caring role please get in touch with them straight away.

Veteran Friendly Practice Accreditation

We realise that service in HM Armed Forces is very different from other occupations: apart from the obvious uncertainties and dangers, service people give up some of their own civil liberties and put themselves in harm's way to protect others.

We have long recognised that difference and we have now been awarded the status of being an accredited Armed Forces Veteran-Friendly Practice. This confirms that we're committed to providing the best possible care and treatment for patients who have served in the Armed Forces.

Leaving the services

Around 18,000 service people move back into civilian life every year. Around 2,000 will leave the services on medical grounds. The most common reasons for medical discharge relate to the back, knees, hearing and mental health.

To find out more about our Veteran Friendly GP practice accreditation and what this means for our patients and for the Practice, please visit: <https://gpnen.org.uk/2021/12/02/introducing-veteran-friendly-practice-accreditation/>

Asking for more support

If you're a veteran and need more support in the local area, we encourage you to contact our Health and Wellbeing Team who can put you in touch with groups or services that meet your needs:

- ❖ Visit <https://www.towerhousesurgery.co.uk/pages/The-Health-and-Wellbeing-Team>
- ❖ Speak to a member of our Practice administration team: they will refer you to our Health and Wellbeing Team
- ❖ Self-refer to the team by sending an email to d-icb.nwellbeingteam@nhs.net

You can view a short video showing what the Health and Wellbeing Team do:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9azfXNcqD8>

HPV vaccine

In this Newsletter, we've already mentioned the MMR vaccine, the shingles vaccine, the pneumococcal vaccine and the Covid booster vaccine. However, there's another vaccine you should know about: the HPV vaccine.

HPV vaccine

The HPV vaccine helps protect against human papillomavirus (HPV). It's recommended for children aged 12 to 13 years old and people at higher risk from HPV.

What the HPV vaccine is for

The HPV vaccine reduces your chances of getting human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that's spread through skin contact (usually during sex).

Most types of HPV are harmless. But some types are linked to an increased risk of certain types of cancer, including:

- ❖ cervical cancer
- ❖ mouth cancer
- ❖ anal cancer
- ❖ penile cancer
- ❖ vulval cancer
- ❖ vaginal cancer

HPV can also cause genital warts.

Who should have the HPV vaccine

The HPV vaccine is recommended for children aged 12 to 13 years old and people at higher risk from HPV.

- ❖ Children aged 12 to 13
- ❖ Men under 45 who have sex with men
- ❖ Other people at higher risk from HPV

Who cannot have the HPV vaccine

Most people who are eligible for the HPV vaccine can have it.

You only cannot have the vaccine if you've had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine, or an ingredient in the vaccine.

There's no evidence the vaccine is harmful if you're pregnant, but sometimes you may be advised to wait until you're no longer pregnant before having the vaccine.

You can have the HPV vaccine while breastfeeding.

Getting vaccinated if you're unwell

If you have a high temperature or feel too unwell to do your normal activities, wait until you're feeling better before having the vaccine.

HPV vaccine ingredients

There is only one type of HPV vaccine given in the UK. You can check the ingredients in the patient leaflet, or visit:

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/7330/pil>

The HPV vaccine used in the UK contains a killed (destroyed) version of the HPV virus, so there's no risk of getting HPV from the vaccine.

Where to get the HPV vaccine

- ❖ Children aged 12 to 13 (school year 8): at Secondary school (or via community clinics for those not in school)
- ❖ Girls under 25 and boys born after 1 September 2006 who missed having the vaccine at school: check with school nurse, school vaccination team or GP surgery
- ❖ Men under 45 who have sex with men, and other people at higher risk of HPV: via Sexual health clinics or HIV clinics

How the HPV vaccine is given

The HPV vaccine is given as an injection into your arm.

The number of doses you need depends on your age and how well your immune system works:

- ❖ people under 25 usually only need 1 dose
- ❖ people aged 25 to 45 usually need 2 doses (given between 6 months and 2 years apart)
- ❖ people with a weakened immune system need 3 doses (ideally given within a 12 month period)

Side effects of the HPV vaccine

The most common side effects of the HPV vaccine are mild and do not last long.

They can include:

- ❖ swelling or pain where the injection was given
- ❖ a headache
- ❖ an aching body
- ❖ dizziness
- ❖ feeling sick
- ❖ tiredness

More serious side effects such as a severe allergic reaction are very rare. The person who vaccinates you will be trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately.

No HPV risk from having the vaccine

As previously mentioned, the HPV vaccine used in the UK contains a killed (destroyed) version of the HPV virus, so there's no risk of getting HPV from the vaccine.

How well does the HPV vaccine work?

The HPV vaccine works very well in reducing your risk of getting HPV.

Over the years since the vaccine has been brought into use, there has been a big drop in the number of young people getting conditions linked to HPV, such as cervical cancer and genital warts.

Research suggests that, over time, the HPV vaccine will help save thousands of lives in the UK.

Important to know

If you've been vaccinated against HPV, it's still important to attend cervical screening appointments as there's still a small chance you could get cervical cancer

More about vaccine safety

Find out more about why vaccines are important and how they are the safest way to protect yourself:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/why-vaccination-is-important-and-the-safest-way-to-protect-yourself/>

NHS app

Scan to get the NHS app.



Download the NHS App



Your NHS, your way









Introducing the NHS App

You can use the NHS App **wherever you are, at any time of the day or night**. You can use it to access a range of NHS services.

The NHS App will not replace existing services. You can still contact your GP surgery in the usual ways if you prefer. For example, by visiting or telephoning your practice.

Use the app to:

-  **book and cancel appointments**
book, view and cancel appointments at your GP surgery
-  **view your record**
access your GP medical record securely
-  **order repeat prescriptions**
see your available medicines and place an order
-  **check your symptoms**
find trusted NHS information on hundreds of conditions and treatments and get instant advice
-  **register your organ donation decision**
choose to donate some or all of your organs and check your registered decision
-  **find out how the NHS uses your data**
choose if data from your health records can be shared for research and planning