

Spring 2024

ISLAND CITY NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Island City Practice – Derby Road Surgery



Keep updated on social media



@islandcitynetwork

green impact

Island City Practice is proud to enter Green Impact Scheme Green Impact is a sustainability and awards scheme supporting teams who want to improve their sustainability and social responsibility. The model has been developed based on behaviour change and engagement models and its flexible approach means it can be tailored to meet each organisation's unique needs and priorities.

This will enable us to work as a more sustainable practice, for a more sustainable planet.



New Pain Management Group



A confidential drop-in pain support group is available every fortnight alternating between Spark Community Cafe, Pompey Centre, Fratton PO4 8SL and Cosham Community Kettle, PO6 3DB. For more information including dates and times please contact 02392 294573 or recovery.hub@ssjames.cjsm.net

Menopause Evening

In March we welcomed over 30 women to our menopause education evening. Sophie Cartledge from Hormones on the Blink ran the session with support from Dr Vanner, GP, and Sarah Croft one of our Social Prescribers. The evening received some great feedback from the ladies who attended and most of them left having learnt something new and would make changes to things they are doing to manage their menopause symptoms. If you are looking for support for your menopause symptoms the following may help:



Balance App by Newson Health

Looking for knowledge and guidance so you can be certain about what's right for your body during the perimenopause and menopause? Brought to you by renowned menopause specialist, Dr Louise Newson and the thousands of people who've shared their perimenopause and menopause insights with us, the free *balance* app allows you to track your symptoms, access personalised expert content, download a Health Report®, share stories in the community and lots more. You can also get lots of information on their website www.balance-menopause.com

The Menopause Charity

The Menopause Charity, www.themenopausecharity.org/menopause, help with evidence-based information and advice on the menopause, from HRT to vaginal dryness – and you can download the PDFs.

Menopause Matters

Menopausematters.co.uk is an award winning, independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options. Here you will find information on what happens leading up to, during and after the menopause, what the consequences can be, what you can do to help and what treatments are available.

Davina McCall: Sex, Myths and the Menopause

Davina was 44 and felt like she was losing it - hot flushes, depression, mental fog. Now she tells her menopause story, busting midlife taboos from sex to hormone treatment. www.channel4.com/programmes/davina-mccall-sex-myths-and-the-menopause

Further reading and Information:

- Peri Menopause Power by Maisie Hill
- Oestrogen Matters by Dr Avrum Bluming and Carol Tavis
- Hormone Repair Manual by Laura Briden

Follow on Instagram:



Dr_naomipotter

Dr_naomipotter

Menopause_doctor

Island City Practice Introduce Anima

Island City Practice have introduced Anima to improve the services we offer to our patients and enable us to run more effectively and efficiently. Anima is an online communication platform which enables patients to submit a request wherever they are, without waiting on hold on the phone to speak with someone. Anima enables your GP to get to your consultation or request much faster than traditional methods. By using Anima, patients are helping their GP save time by providing all information for their request in one place. Most requests only take between 2 and 5 minutes for a patient to complete. Requests are then reviewed by a healthcare professional and patients receive regular communications by email or text letting them know when and how the practice is dealing with their query. We anticipate that in time, this more efficient way of working will enable us to free-up more GPs and offer more patient consultations.

Ethnicity – why it's important to ask!

Prostate Cancer affects 1 in 8 men, unless they belong to the African or Afro Caribbean ethnicity, in which case it affects 1 in 4.

The British Heart Foundation have been conducting studies which have found that the risk of developing type 3 diabetes before the age of 80 was roughly double for people with a South Asian and African Caribbean background, compared with white Europeans.

Women of African or Afro Caribbean origin go through the menopause, on average, 6 years before Caucasian women.



Derby Road's Dr Burrows gave birth to a gorgeous baby girl. Harper Rose arrived 4.05pm 20 February weighing 7lb. Mother and baby are both doing well.

Monthly Cancer Support Group

Island City Network will be holding the first of our monthly Cancer Support Groups, 25th May, 10am – 11.30am. All patients from Island City and Derby Road are welcome.

No matter where you are on your cancer journey, we are here to listen and share.

Please come along for an informal get together, cup of tea or coffee and a chat with other people who will have some understanding of what you are going through.

Every **fourth Saturday** of the month between 10am and 11.30am.

Sunnyside Medical Centre
8F The Pompey Centre
Southsea
PO4 8TA
Parking is available on site.



Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

Bowel Cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK.

The earlier bowel cancer is spotted, the more treatable it's likely to be. In fact, more than 9 in 10 people survive bowel cancer when it is diagnosed at the earliest stage. That's why we're calling on you to help us spread the word and get our message out there, so that more people can spot the signs early and know what to do if they do.

Know the symptoms of bowel cancer



- Bleeding from your bottom
- Blood in your poo
- A change in how often you poo, or regularly having diarrhoea or constipation
- Losing weight but you're not sure why
- Feeling very tired all the time but you're not sure why
- A pain or lump in your tummy

If you have any of these symptoms, it's important to ask your GP for an at-home test as soon as you can.

Testicular Cancer Awareness month

Like all other cancers, the earlier you are diagnosed the better the expected outcome. Typical symptoms are a painless swelling or lump in one of the testicles, or any change in shape or texture of the testicles. The swelling or lump can be about the size of a pea but may be larger. Most lumps or swellings in the scrotum are not in the testicle and are not a sign of cancer, but they should never be ignored. See a GP if you notice a swelling, lump or any other change in one of your testicles. Lumps within the scrotum can have many different causes, and testicular cancer is rare.



Your GP will examine you and if they think the lump is in your testicle, they may consider cancer as a possible cause. Only a very small minority of scrotal lumps or swellings are cancerous. For example, swollen blood vessels (varicoceles) and cysts in the tubes around the testicle (epididymal cysts) are common causes of testicular lumps. If you do have testicular cancer, the sooner treatment begins, the greater the likelihood that you'll be completely cured.

Covid Spring Booster Programme

We are now preparing for the Spring Covid vaccines. The programme starts 15th April in Care Homes and 22nd April in other groups with the programme finishing 30th June.

Eligible cohorts in spring 2024:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in care homes for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

Those who are eligible will be contacted shortly.



Cold water dipping and the menopause

Cold-water swimming eases menopause and menstrual symptoms, a study published in *The Guardian* found.

Cold water confers physical and mental health benefits, UCL study says, as half women surveyed say it reduces anxiety.

Swimming in cold water can significantly reduce symptoms of the menopause such as mood swings and hot flushes, a study has found.

Spending time immersed in cold water appears to confer a range of physical and mental health benefits for menopausal women, with some likening it to “healing”, the researchers said.

The study, led by academics at University College London, examined responses from 1,114 women aged between 16 and 80, with an average age of 49, who regularly swim in cold water. Among the study group, 785 women were going through the menopause at the time.

Half of that group said cold-water swimming significantly reduced their anxiety, while large minorities said it also helped tackle mood swings (35%), low mood (31%) and hot flushes (30%). And more than six in 10 (63%) said they swam specifically to address menopausal symptoms.

One 54-year-old woman who took part in the study said: “Cold-water swimming has had a profound effect on my menopausal symptoms. Exercising in nature, alone or with a group of other women, is healing. The camaraderie, shared stories and laughter are part of the magic.”

The findings have been published in the journal *Post Reproductive Health*. Cold water has already been found to reduce stress among people who swim outdoors, while ice baths boost muscle repair in athletes, said the study’s senior author Prof Joyce Harper, of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson institute for women’s health at UCL.

Although anecdotal, the evidence in the study suggests that “the activity can be used by women to alleviate physical symptoms, such as hot flushes, aches and pains,” the researchers said.

The effects of cold-water swimming were so marked that it “may provide an alternative solution for women struggling with the menopause and encourage more women to take part in sports.”

Another participant, 57, said: “Cold water is phenomenal. It has saved my life. In the water I can do anything. All symptoms (physical and mental) disappear and I feel like me at my best.”

The longer women swam for, and the colder the water, the greater the benefits they received.

Of the 1,114 participants, 711 women also had menstrual symptoms. Among them, 38% cited better control of their mood swings.

Regular cold-water swimmers who had either menopausal or menstrual symptoms experienced “a positive overall effect” from it, the study found. They identified five key benefits: the water proved calm and mood-boosting; they gained companionship and community; it improved their experience of periods; reduced the impact of their hot flushes; and gave “an overall health improvement”

How to start winter swimming safely

1

It’s important to build cold water exposure (and therefore cold adaptation) regularly and systematically, so maybe plan to start in the summer going into autumn, and then beyond – don’t start dipping over winter although you can start with cold showers at any time of year

2

Decide whether you’re going to be a bare skin plunger or a neoprene swimmer – both are cold, but the former means much quicker, shaper immersions and the latter means you can stay in longer and therefore swim further

3

Choose a simple easy place which you can easily commit to and feel safe in. We are lucky to have lots of spots in the city to enter the water

4

Make sure up have a short, simple challenge to complete such as simply getting in, ducking under, and out. Start with a simple, easy challenge

5

Find someone to cold dip with you, both for safety and for peer comradery / moral support

6

Whether you wear a full wetsuit or not, booties, gloves and hats can make a big difference and stop pain in the extremities

7

It’s easier to go in if you are warm before, and you will last longer with a good store of body temperature. Ending a run with a swim is ideal, but otherwise make sure you arrive feeling warm

8

Don’t stay in too long, shivering is the first stage of hypothermia and hypothermia is NOT good for the immune system. Regular short dips are great, but hypothermia-inducing long swims are not

9

Warm up quickly afterwards with clothes and hot drinks, but be aware of ‘afterdrop’ – body temperature will continue dropping for up to 10 minutes after getting out as cold blood from the extremities returns to the core

10

If you are starting out, be cautious of cold water shock, which can create a serious cardio-vascular shock in some people. Don’t just jump in, ease your body in slowly and see how it reacts



TAKE TO YOUR FEET

MAY IS LIVING STREETS' NATIONAL WALKING MONTH!

Walking is one of the easiest ways to improve our health and stay connected to our community, helping us feel less lonely and isolated.

This year, they're inviting you to discover the #MagicOfWalking and celebrate the many health and happiness benefits of walking and wheeling.

They've put together 20 tips to help you fit 20 minutes of walking into your day.

From inviting friends for a walk to taking a post-work stroll, how many Try20 tips

can you do during National Walking Month and

beyond? [www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/national-walking-month/try20-](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/national-walking-month/try20-tips)

tips

If you want to walk with others, check out Portsmouth Healthy Walks

www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/getting-started-walking. These walks

happen every day across the city and are free to join.



Volunteers' Week celebrates the amazing contributions volunteers make to communities across the UK. The celebration starts on the first Monday in June every year. It's a chance to recognise, celebrate and thank the UK's incredible volunteers for all they contribute to our local communities, the voluntary sector, and society as a whole.

Volunteering is a wonderful way to give back to society and help others, which in turn makes you feel great. It can really help those who struggle with mental health and those who are unable to work.

The Hive in Portsmouth have lots of varied volunteering opportunities. Have a look at <https://volunteer.hiveportsmouth.com>. Some of the benefits of volunteering:

- **Get involved with your local community**

If you've just moved to the area or find you don't know many people locally, becoming a volunteer is a fantastic way to get involved in what's going on.

- **Keep your mind active and avoid boredom**

If you're not working – whether because you're job hunting, you've experienced redundancy or are retired, volunteering gives you a reason to get out and do something. It keeps your little grey cells from sleeping and ensures that you've got something that keeps you busy and engaged. They say 'to be interesting, be interested' – volunteering will ensure you always have something to talk about!

- **Increase your confidence and self-esteem**

You have an immediate conversation opener with other volunteers, charity staff and the people the charity helps so it's much easier than having to face people you don't know and have nothing in common with. You'll quickly find that your efforts are appreciated and that will give your confidence a boost.

- **Learn new skills**

Volunteering provides opportunities to develop your skills and knowledge and learn new things. Volunteers are often invited to participate in training by their charity organisation and learn things as diverse as first aid to presentation skills.

- **Impress potential employers**

If you're still in the working community – or aim to be – having a volunteer role is something more and more employers look for. It tells them about your commitment, your attitude to giving to the community and can also demonstrate skills not obvious from other positions you've held.

- **Improve your health**

Volunteering can help improve your physical health and fitness and improve mental health.

- **Have fun!**

If you're choosing to do something it should be fun! Enjoy your volunteer experience and make it something to look forward to, not a chore.