NEWS FROM ALFORD MEDICAL PRACTICE

Total Triage (eConsult), Telephone Service Upgrade, Repeat Prescription Ordering Service, Results Line

Total Triage (eConsult)

We are now triaging all appointments through eConsult, an easy to use online consultation tool which can be accessed through our website, www.alfordmedicalpractice.co.uk

Please only phone if you do not have access to the internet or you need to urgently speak to one of our patient advisors.

To reduce transmission of coronavirus the vast majority of contact will be over the phone, by email or video rather than face to face for the foreseeable future.

All contacts and queries submitted via eConsult are triaged by the clinical team and the most appropriate course of action decided. This is a system known as total triage.

The clinical team will review your submission and get back to you, usually within 2 hours if your eConsult is submitted before 12 noon. Any online consultations submitted after 12 noon will be responded to as quickly as possible with a guaranteed response of 10am the following working day.

While some of the lockdown restrictions are likely to ease in the near future, it is important that the practice only deals with patients face to face when it is absolutely essential or urgent for staff and patient safety. We remain open and available for your health concerns but due to obvious restrictions will try to manage patients by telephone and video consultations (using NearMe) whenever possible.

The system has worked very well ensuring patients are dealt with promptly and by the appropriate member of the team. This means that to continue to protect public safety total triage will remain in place long term as the practice deals with Covid and works towards finding a new normal.

The preferred route into the surgery would be by completing an eConsult but details can be taken over the phone for patients who cannot do this.

We will shortly be providing details about how to book nurse appointments for such things as chronic disease reviews and smears, etc.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any worrying or urgent concerns you may have.

What is eConsult?

eConsult has several functions:- It can help you with self diagnosis using its symptom checker and gives detailed self-help information; it can help you determine the most appropriate place to go seek help, which may be your local pharmacy or the national 111 help line; and it provides a mechanism to submit a secure eConsult direct to the GP 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This means you don't have to wait for the practice to open to submit an eConsult, it can be done anytime including evenings and weekends to beat the morning rush.

If you wish to submit an eConsult to the practice, click on the "Get Started" banner on the practice website - www.alfordmedicalpractice.co.uk

Click on "I want help for my condition" and then select your condition from the list. If you can't find a good fit, select "I want general advice"

Work through the questions and then submit to the practice. We will respond within 2 hours if you submit your eConsult before 12 noon. Any online consultations submitted after 12 noon will be responded to as quickly as possible with a guaranteed response of 10am the following working day.

You can also add photos to your eConsult (important if you have rash to diagnose you more easily) if you complete any of the following templates:

Telephone Service Upgrade

Our telephone system was upgraded last week and we now have a 24 hour repeat prescription messaging service. The number remains the same (019755 62262), however, you can order your prescriptions any time of day or night - even at the weekend.

You can also order prescriptions online - see our website for an application form.

Results Line

You can now request test result via eConsult at any time day or night - even at the weekend – or you can telephone between 2pm and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Unfortunately the NHS system continues to be under tremendous pressure and we appreciate your patience and understanding during this time.