

# THE ELMS MEDICAL PRACTICE

December 2025 NEWSLETTER

We would like to wish all our patients and colleagues a very merry christmas and a very happy new year!!



## 🎄 Christmas & New Year Opening Hours 2025/26 🎄

Our practice opening times over the festive period will be as follows:

📅 **Christmas Eve (24 Dec)** – Open 8am–6:30pm

👤 **Christmas Day (25 Dec)** – Closed

📅 **Boxing Day (26 Dec)** – Closed

📅 **New Year's Day (1 Jan)** – Closed

Normal hours resume on **Friday 2 January**.

If you require **urgent medical advice** while we are closed, please:

📞 Call **NHS 111** or use the **NHS 111 online** service.

🚑 In an emergency, always call **999**.

Wishing all our patients a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! ✨



## Know Your Numbers: Check Your Blood Pressure

High blood pressure often has **no symptoms**, but it can quietly increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney problems. The good news? **Knowing your numbers** is the first step to protecting your health.

- ✓ **Check your blood pressure regularly** – at your GP, pharmacy, or with a home monitor.
- ✓ **Keep track of your readings** and share them with your GP Practice.
- ✓ **Small lifestyle changes**—like reducing salt, staying active, and managing stress—can make a big difference.

You can't manage what you don't measure. Take a minute today to check your blood pressure—it's a simple step toward a healthier you!

[Check your blood pressure reading - NHS](#)



## ♥ National Grief Awareness Week (December 2–8)

This week, we take time to recognize that grief touches every life—and that no one should have to face it alone. National Grief Awareness Week encourages open conversations about loss, healing, and support. Whether you're grieving yourself or supporting someone who is, remember: there is no "right" way to grieve, and reaching out for help is a sign of strength. Let's come together to listen, share, and remind one another that it's okay to not be okay. [National Grief Awareness Week](#)



**Think you need urgent dental care?**

**Urgent dental appointments are now available.**

**Find out how to get the help you need. Go to [nhs.uk/urgentdentalcare](https://nhs.uk/urgentdentalcare)**

Wishing you and your family a peaceful and joy filled holiday season!



**No wrong answers, just the right start.**

Search **Healthy Choices Quiz**

**Better Health** Let's do this

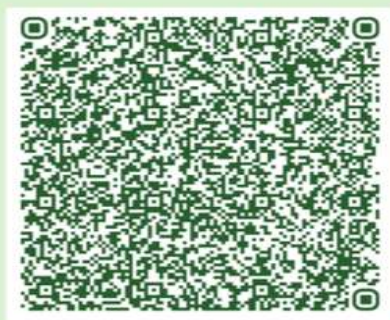


**NHS**

Get your score in just 5 minutes. Take the free NHS Healthy Choices Quiz to find where you could make some changes to live a healthier life and receive support and guidance to get going

<https://www.nhs.uk/hcquiz>

# THE ELMS MEDICAL PRACTICE



MAKE OUR DAY BY LEAVING US A REVIEW ON



## DID YOU KNOW .....

If you live in England and you have cancer, you don't have to pay for NHS prescriptions – but you'll need a medical exemption certificate 🙋

This certificate gives you access to all NHS prescriptions for free.

You're eligible if you're receiving treatment for:

- Cancer
- The effects of cancer
- The effects of cancer treatment

To apply for your NHS medical exemption certificate, ask your cancer team or GP to start the process, or check the NHS website for more details.

Make sure to share this with anyone who might be eligible 🌟



## Free NHS prescriptions

Did you know that the NHS offers free prescriptions to people with cancer in England?

## 🌸 Coil (IUS- Intrauterine System) — A Smart Choice for Managing Menopausal Symptoms 🌸

The **Coil** is not just a reliable form of contraception — it can also play an important role in helping women manage symptoms during the perimenopausal and menopausal years.

### Why consider the Coil during menopause?

- **✅ Long-lasting support:** Provides gentle, local hormone release (levonorgestrel) for up to **5 years**.
- **🔑 Part of hormone replacement therapy (HRT):** Can be used as the **progestogen component** of HRT, removing the need for separate tablets.
- **🩸 Helps with heavy periods:** Effectively reduces **heavy menstrual bleeding**, a common symptom during perimenopause.
- **🌙 Flexible symptom relief:** Works alongside oestrogen (patches, gels, or sprays) to ease **hot flashes, night sweats, and brain fog**.
- **💖 Fewer side effects:** Because it works locally in the womb, it delivers hormones where they're needed most — helping to **minimise side effects**.

### Additional benefits

- Provides **contraception until age 55** if fitted after age 45.
- **Protects the womb lining** when used with oestrogen therapy.
- Suitable for women who **can't tolerate oral progestogen tablets**.
- Simplifies your HRT routine — no daily tablets to remember!

If you're experiencing **menopausal symptoms** or thinking about **HRT**, speak to one of our clinicians. The Coil could be a simple, effective option to support your hormone health and overall wellbeing.

📞 **To learn more or book a consultation, please contact our reception team on 01244351000.**

## Minor Surgery Available at Our Practice

We're pleased to announce that our practice offers **minor surgery procedures** right here on site. Our trained GPs and nursing team can safely perform a range of small surgical procedures— saving you a hospital visit and helping you get care more quickly and conveniently.


Examples of procedures we can offer include:

- Removal of small skin lesions, cysts, or moles (where appropriate)
- Other minor procedures as advised by your GP


If you think you may benefit from a minor surgery procedure, please **book a routine appointment** with one of our clinicians to discuss your options.


All procedures are carried out under **local anaesthetic**, and we'll make sure you're comfortable and informed throughout.




Many people supporting someone with dementia don't consider themselves to be carers. 

However, registering as a carer with your GP will enable them to support you in your caring role. The support offered by your GP practice will vary, but here are some of the things it may include:

 Flexibility when booking doctor's appointments, like booking back-to-back appointments if both you and the person you care for need to see the GP

 Support with your physical and mental health to enable you to carry out your caring responsibilities

 Free annual health checks

 Having prescriptions delivered to your home

[https://www.dementiauk.org/..//the-importance-of.../...](https://www.dementiauk.org/..//the-importance-of.../)

## Why should you register as a carer with your GP?



## Winter Pressures

General practice, like the rest of the NHS, faces increased pressure during the winter months. These are some of the factors that contribute to this.

- **Seasonal illnesses surge:** Viral infections such as flu, covid, RSV and norovirus peak during winter, driving higher demand for GP consultations. These infections can also trigger complications in more vulnerable members of society such as the very young and the frail elderly as well as people living with long term medical conditions.
- **Exacerbation of chronic conditions:** Cold weather and respiratory infections can exacerbate asthma, COPD, heart failure, and other long-term conditions necessitating increased support from the GP.
- **Higher appointment demand:** Winter illness generates demand for more same-day and urgent consultations for acute illnesses and exacerbations of chronic medical conditions. This can result in longer waits for routine appointments.
- **Staff shortages:** The practice team themselves may fall ill during winter, impacting available appointments.
- **Wider Healthcare system constraints:** Winter pressures on hospital services can result in patients waiting longer for investigations, outpatient appointments, and procedures. This can result in patients needing to re-consult with their GP if their symptoms or medical conditions deteriorate.

Patients can play an important role in helping ease winter pressures in general practice.

Here are practical ways you can help:

- ✔ **Get vaccinated:** Annual flu and COVID-19 vaccines reduce the risk of seasonal infections and complications.
- ✔ **Practice good hygiene:** Regular handwashing, covering coughs/sneezes, and staying home when unwell help prevent the spread of infections.
- ✔ **Manage chronic medical conditions proactively:** Keep medications up to date, attend regular check-ups during the year and follow care plans, to avoid flare-ups.
- ✔ **Consider using a Pharmacy, NHS 111, or online resources for self-care** before booking a GP appointment.
- ✔ **Cancel appointments if they are no longer required.**
- ✔ **Plan ahead:** Order repeat prescriptions early and schedule routine check-ups in advance to reduce last-minute demand. Stock up on homely remedies such as paracetamol.

Your pharmacist can provide treatment or some prescription medicine, if needed, for seven common conditions - without you seeing a GP.

Think pharmacy first and get seen by your local community pharmacy team.



**NHS**

## Pharmacy First

Treatment for common conditions without a GP appointment

- Earache  
1-17 years
- Impetigo  
1 year and over
- Infected insect bite  
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 years

## Feeling under the weather?

Treat coughs, colds, flu and COVID-19 symptoms at home this winter with medicines from a pharmacy or supermarket.



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## You don't need a prescription to stock your medicine cabinet

**Shopping List**

- Painkillers
- Antacids
- Cough medicine
- Antihistamines
- Lozenges
- Diarrhoea and constipation relief
- Plasters and bandages
- Head lice treatment

Midwives play a key role in making sure patients in their care receive support they could be eligible for.

The Digital maternity exemption service helps pregnant mothers access free NHS prescriptions instantly:

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/.../digital-maternity-exemption...>



**NHS**

## Digital Maternity Exemption Service

delivered by the **NHSBSA**



**my mhealth | myCOPD**  
In partnership with **NHS**  
Cheshire and Merseyside  
myhealth.com

Improve your knowledge ✓  
Monitor your COPD symptoms daily ✓  
Perfect your inhaler technique ✓  
Track activities like walking and exercise ✓  
Mind Toolkit: Mindfulness ✓

*much more!*

**Scan here**  
To get access for **FREE**  
Ask your clinical team about the my mhealth app today!

Download on the **App Store** | Available on the **Google Play**

🔍 Worried you could be at risk of type 2 diabetes? A few changes in your family history, lifestyle or symptoms might mean a lot.

Here's what to keep in mind:

- 👨👩👧 Family history matters – If a parent, sibling or relative has diabetes, your own risk goes up.
- 🍌 Lifestyle factors count – Being overweight, inactive or having higher waist size can all raise risk.
- 🚩 Symptoms might be subtle – Increased thirst, tiredness or needing to wee more may be signs.
  - 🇬🇧 Want to know your risk? Try this tool: <https://riskscore.diabetes.org.uk/start>
- 📖 More reading on what to expect and why this matters: <https://patient.info/diabetes/diabetes-mellitus-leaflet>

It doesn't mean diabetes is inevitable - taking action now could make a real difference. 🇬🇧

[#KnowYourRisk](#) [#DiabetesPrevention](#) [#FamilyHistory](#)

## TYPE 2 DIABETES KNOW YOUR RISK



**DIABETES UK**  
KNOW DIABETES FIGHT DIABETES

## Have you got any signs of type 2 diabetes?

It's important to know the risk factors and find out your risk but remember to look out for these signs:

- Needing to wee a lot.
- Feeling very thirsty.
- Losing weight without trying.
- Feeling tired.
- Blurred eyesight.
- Itchy genitals and thrush.
- Cuts that don't heal.

Ask your GP if you can be tested for diabetes. You and your healthcare team can then plan your next steps.



**THE FLU VACCINE**  
YOUR BEST SHOT AT  
STOPPING THE FLU

 Please be kind when speaking with our staff on the phone.

We understand you may feel stressed or upset. But nobody deserves to be shouted at when doing their job.

We care for you, please care for us 

**“Swearing on the phone.  
Aggressive and  
demanding.”**



Quote taken from 'Creating a safer workplace' survey (Winter 2024-25)

**We care for you**  
*please care for us* 

Want to safely manage your health at home?

Worried about an app giving you risky advice, or misusing your data?

This regional Health App Library only contains **#HealthApps** which have been independently assessed by @Orchahealth – learn how they can help you before you download.

Whether you want to get fitter, quit smoking or manage a specific condition - we've got an app for that! Click here to start today:

<https://cheshireandmerseyside.orchhealth.com/en-GB>



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## Download safe health apps

Our health and care apps library contains hundreds of reviewed health apps to choose from.

Service provided by 