

Primary School Health Nurse Team

Newsletter – Winter term 2016

Welcome to the Term 2 newsletter from the School Health Nurse (SHN). This newsletter aims to provide families and young people with some useful tips for keeping healthy. Childhood is an important time to instill healthy habits and learn crucial life skills. Establishing these habits early on will help to improve your child's quality of life in the future and enable them to reach their full potential educationally.

Further information about SHN can be found on our website:

<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/oxon/school-health-nursing/>



Reduce the spread of infection this winter

Children are particularly at risk of picking up infections and spreading them to other people at this time of year. It's really important to make sure that hands are washed and dried well to help prevent the spread of infection.

One of the important things you and your child can do to prevent the spread of the flu (influenza) virus and Noro Virus (winter vomiting bug) is wash your hands with soap and water. Good hand hygiene is important and effective in preventing the spread of the flu virus



Experts have determined that washing your hands with hot water and soap for the time it takes to sing a verse of "Happy Birthday" should ensure any germs on your hands are destroyed.

Do not rely on alcohol gels, as they will not kill flu virus or viruses that cause vomiting and diarrhea

Norovirus

Norovirus, which causes diarrhoea and vomiting, is one of the most common stomach bugs in the UK. It's also called the "winter vomiting bug" because it's more common in winter, although you can catch it at any time of the year.

Try to avoid going to your GP, as norovirus can spread to others very easily. Call your GP or NHS 111 if you're concerned or need any advice.

Children with diarrhoea and / or vomiting should be kept off school until at least 48 hours after their symptoms have gone.

See NHS Choices for further information:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Norovirus/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



Keep children safe from Button Batteries

Button batteries and lithium coin batteries are small, round batteries you find in lots of toys and everyday objects.

Most button batteries pass through the body without a problem if they are swallowed, however if a button battery, particularly a lithium coin battery, gets stuck in a child's throat, energy from the battery is discharged resulting in a buildup of Sodium Hydroxide (commonly referred to as caustic soda).

The battery may burn a hole through the throat, lead to serious internal bleeding. Life changing injuries have been documented and in some instances death. Seek urgent medical advice if you believe your child may have swallowed one.

Buttons pushed up noses or ears can also cause serious injury and medical advice should be sought.

- Keep products with batteries out of reach if the battery compartment isn't secured with a screw.
- Keep spare batteries out of children's reach and sight
- Avoid toys from markets or temporary shops as they may not conform to safety regulations.
- Teach children not to play button batteries or give them to younger brothers and sisters.
- Used batteries can be dangerous, so recycle them safely.



Asthma

How to help your child's asthma:

- Identify and avoid asthma triggers if possible/use preventative methods (smoke, house dust mites, animal fur, pollens, cold air wrap up when going outdoors)
- One of the best ways to look after your child's asthma and cut their risk of an asthma attack is to make sure they're using an up-to-date written asthma action plan. Your child's GP or asthma/practice nurse will fill it out with you so it is personal to your child. <https://www.asthma.org.uk/globalassets/health-advice/child-asthma-action-plan.pdf>
- Reliever inhalers – Usually a blue inhaler, used when needed to quickly relieve asthma symptoms for a short time. Make sure your child has a reliever inhaler and spacer device in school as well as at home (see link below for inhaler technique).
- Preventer inhalers – **To be used regularly every day to reduce the inflammation in the breathing tubes. Preventers help your child prevent asthma symptoms by reducing sensitivity, swelling and inflammation in the airways.** See <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/child/medicines/help/> for information on inhaler technique and useful tips on encouraging children to take their inhaler.
- Help your child to spot symptoms. Download or order a fun pack from <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/resources/>

Children with asthma should be seen 6 monthly for a review of their medication. Reviews are carried out usually by the practice nurse who has specialist asthma training; contact your GP practice to book.

Flu vaccine is recommended for all people with asthma, as flu can trigger asthma symptoms and is a very unpleasant illness. Children will be invited each year by their GP to have this important vaccine to prevent Flu. If your child is in Years 1, 2 or 3 you can choose to have your child vaccinated as part of the school based Flu programme OR with your GP.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/child/> or <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/asthma/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Where to turn to for advice In Oxfordshire?

Download Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group 'Health and Care Oxfordshire' app to your smart phone to find health services closest to where you are in Oxfordshire.

Visit the app store to download the app for Android or iOS operating systems.



Or see the attached booklet to help you choose the right NHS service in Oxfordshire and get the best advice quickly.

<http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/wp->

Catch up - Flu Immunisation Programme

If your child is in Year 1, 2 or 3 and was unable to have their flu immunisation at school recently and you would like them to still have it, please contact your local School Health Nurse Office and book an appointment.

**STAY WELL
THIS WINTER**



If you would like to speak with the School Health Nurse, please speak to your school or contact us on: Tel: 01869 604095
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School Health Nurses for your school:
Sarah Gibbons, School Health Nurse
Laura Rennison, Community Staff Nurse