

## Make the Most of It

We, along with other local practices, have seen a massive increase in workload and demand for appointments over the past few years. We regularly monitor our appointment availability and we have recently made some changes to our appointments system to try to reduce waiting times. We hope this will also help improve telephone access.

We have now developed our website, [www.horndeansurgery.co.uk](http://www.horndeansurgery.co.uk), to enable you to help yourself online. You can:

- Request repeat medication.
- Book an appointment
- Access some of your medical records
- Follow links through to NHS sites offering arrange of information about various health conditions, and NHS services in the locality

Doctors spend an average of eight to ten minutes with each patient. Once you have an appointment, make sure you make best use of the time. Plan ahead to ensure you cover everything you want to discuss.

- Before you see the doctor, list your symptoms so that you don't forget them. Write down when they started and what makes them better or worse during a 24-hour period.
- When you see the doctor, bring a friend or relative if you're worried. Research shows that we forget half of what we're told by the doctor when we're stressed, so having a friend with you can help.
- Be honest about what you think may be causing the problem, and don't be embarrassed. Your doctor will have seen and heard it all before.
- Be clear about what you want the doctor to do, such as prescribe a different medication.
- Ask the doctor to repeat and explain anything you don't understand. If there are words you don't understand, ask what they mean or get the doctor to write them down so you can look them up later.
- If you and your GP decide you need to be referred for specialist tests or treatment, you usually have a right to choose which hospital you go to. You can read more from "NHS choices" via our website.

### **Checklist of questions to ask your doctor at your appointment:**

<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Tests, such as blood tests or scans</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there other ways to treat my condition?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the tests for?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you recommend?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How and when will I get the results?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there any side effects or risks?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who do I contact if I don't get the results?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How long will I need treatment for?</li></ul>	<b>What happens next?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How will I know if the treatment is working?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do I need to come back and see you?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How effective is this treatment?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who do I contact if things get worse?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What will happen if I don't have any treatment?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you have any written information?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there anything I should stop or avoid doing?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where can I go for more information?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there anything I can do to help myself?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there a support group or any other help?</li></ul>