

Nurses

Our nurses are available for blood tests, dressings, vaccinations, smears and diabetic advice, Please make an appointment for these.

After hours Care

Please phone 8671263 and the answer phone will tell you who to contact.

After-hours charges are generally higher than routine charges, even for children under aged 6.

For very severe injury, or life threatening emergencies such as chest pain, it may be better to phone 111 for the ambulance. If you are not sure, then phone the medical centre and speak to the doctor on call.

Notification of results

We will notify you of test results ordered by ourselves, by phone or letter.

Warfarin tests

The INR test is the blood test done to check that your dose of warfarin is correct. We will tell you how often you need to have a blood test.

Have your tests done in the morning. We will phone you with the dosage after 4 pm. The dosage might be different for each day. Take the tablets at night, so you can change to the correct dose after the phone call.

Website-www.behealthy.co.nz.

Complaints

Complaints also help us to improve our practice and are important to us. Please approach us either personally or in writing. Our policy is that when we receive a complaint, this is discussed with relevant people and investigated. We will then reply, usually in writing.

MANGAPAPA MEDICAL CENTRE NEWSLETTER Winter 2009

Welcome to Mangapapa Medical Centre.

We are a busy general practice—we are small but we aim for the highest quality!

We also have a special interest in youth, and run health clinics at the High Schools in Gisborne.

Hours

The medical centre is open from 8.30-5.00 pm on weekdays.

On days when we are on call, the centre is open from 9.00am to 11.30am and from 3.30pm to 5.00pm.

Appointments Please phone 8671263

For urgent problems such as accidents or chest pain, you will be seen as soon as possible, although it is still wise to ring first if you can.

Charges

We understand that there may be times when you are unable to pay at the time of the consultation. Accounts not paid by the end of the calendar month will incur a booking fee.

Long Appointments

Because we are trying to reduce waiting times, we would prefer it if you could bring only one or two problems to the consultation. If you have more than 2 problems, or feel the issues will take a long time to discuss, then please ask for a double appointment when booking. This may cost you a little more, but gives us both time to discuss the issues properly.

Minor surgery and IUCD insertions always need a long appointment. Please let the receptionist know that this is the reason for the visit.

H1N1 influenza or Swine flu

As you will know, winter is the time of year for coughs and colds, and also for influenza. This kind of influenza is called seasonal influenza. Influenza kills many people every year—almost as many as car accidents. Most of the people who die from it are either very young, very elderly or pregnant, or have chest or heart conditions. Influenza viruses mutate and change frequently, and influenza vaccine is changed every year so that it fights the viruses that scientists think will occur. This is why we need vaccination against influenza every year.

Every so often, very different influenza viruses occur. Some of these happen when viruses from animals such as birds or pigs change to be able to infect humans. The 1918 flu epidemic was one of those occasions.

This year, this happened again. The world became aware that a flu-like virus was in Mexico, and it seemed that the death rate from this virus was high. Studies showed that this virus may have had its origin in pigs and so it became known as swine flu.

Because it seemed to have a high death rate, many countries, including New Zealand, tried very hard to keep the virus from spreading to their country. This involved checking people at the borders and quarantining those who were sick until test results were back to see if the person had the H1N1 virus.

This worked for a while, but as more people in more countries became infected with the virus it became obvious that this battle was at an end.

World Health Organization has declared that the virus has reached pandemic status—this means that the virus was in several countries and was spreading within those countries.

The NZ Health Department then switched the emphasis to “containing” the H1N1 virus—trying to limit and delay its spread within New Zealand. The reason for this was very

simple—in most years the usual seasonal influenza really stretches health resources with bursting emergency departments and people sleeping in corridors. It was very worrying that H1N1 influenza would add to this problem and the health services would be overwhelmed.

As the virus became more widespread in countries outside of Mexico, more was learned about it, and it seems that it does not cause much severe illness, and causes less deaths than seasonal influenza. However, more people will catch it because most people don't have much preexisting immunity to this virus.

Symptoms of influenza are cough, sore throat, runny nose, headache, fever of more than 38 degrees, aching all over. Some have all of these symptoms and many people have most of them.

The best thing to do to prevent the virus spreading is to be careful with sneezing and coughing, wash your hands frequently, and stay away from work or school if unwell.

Sneeze or cough into a tissue and then dispose of it into a covered rubbish tin. Then wash your hands. Or, if you have no tissue, cough or sneeze into your bent elbow. Wash hands frequently or use hand sanitiser.

Most people are managing H1N1 flu themselves at home with paracetamol, rest and plenty of fluids. Ring the doctor if you are getting a lot worse, have been ill for a long time, or if you have pre-existing conditions that will make you more likely to have problems with influenza. These people sometimes need tamiflu.

The Government has now made influenza vaccine free to anyone---this is to try to reduce the amount of seasonal influenza in our community. The current flu vaccine does **not** protect you from H1N1 virus.

Please phone and make an appointment with the nurse—this vaccine may save your life.