

March 2026

UPPER TOOTING SURGERY



Dear Reader

As we move into brighter days and spring arrives, our surgery is as busy as ever.

We encourage all patients to consider self-help options first.

Pharmacy First

The Pharmacy First scheme, offered by local pharmacists, should be your first choice for minor illnesses such as coughs, colds, and sore throats.

You do not require a GP appointment to access this scheme.

Our local colleagues are skilled professionals, and they have both the capacity and funding to help.

Under the Pharmacy First scheme, they are funded to offer help with:

- Impetigo (aged 1 year and over)
- Infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over)
- Earache (aged 1 to 17 years)
- Sore throat (aged 5 years and over)
- Sinusitis (aged 12 years and over)
- Urinary tract infections (women aged 16 to 64 years)
- Shingles (aged 18 years and over)

If you do not normally pay for your prescriptions, you will not pay for any medication issued through this scheme.

NHS App

There is currently a government-backed campaign to encourage all patients to use the NHS App. Currently, 65% of our Wandsworth patients are using it, but we would like all of our patients sign up for the app.

To use the app, you will need to create an account and link it to your patient record at the surgery.

A short guide on how to do this can be found on our website:

The NHS App allows you to view test results, letters, and consultations. It can save significant time for both you and us should you need quick access to letters or reports for third-party requests.

We also encourage you to request all repeat medications via the app. Your request will be sent directly to a clinician for signing off – making the process safer and faster.

Vaccinations

There is currently a significant Measles outbreak in North London, reflecting a wider drop in vaccination rates across the UK. Sadly, this has measles to reappear, and it can very serious, especially for younger children.

The childhood vaccine has now been updated – the MMR vaccine (Measles, Mumps & Rubella) has been replaced with MMRV, which also protects against Varicella (chickenpox). This vaccine is both highly effective and safe.

We strongly encourage all patients to ensure their children are fully vaccinated. Please do not ignore vaccination invites. If any vaccines have been missed, we will try to accommodate them as quickly as possible, so they catch up.

Safer Sleep Week

Sadly, around four babies a week die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and if all parents were aware of safer sleep advice, many lives could be saved.

Every year, the Lullaby Trust promotes safe sleeping through their “Safer Sleep Week”, running from 9–15 March 2026. The theme for 2026 is: “Baby Necessities”.

The theme urges parents and carers to “keep it simple to keep it safe” when thinking about or purchasing baby sleep products.

The Lullaby Trust provides information on:

- What products to buy and what to avoid
- What to look for in a product, and whether it is safe for sleep
- What to dress your baby in for sleep in different temperatures.

Visit their website for more information: www.lullabytrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/safer-sleep-week/.

Smears

We are aware that some women do not feel comfortable coming forward for a cervical smear.

We can now offer access to a pilot programme of **“self-sampling”**, allowing you to take a sample simply and safely at home.

We are initially offering this to those who have missed at least two smears, but if you feel you would like to try this option, please speak to one of our Practice Nurses, who can advise you.

Menopause Webinar

Our recent webinar on 3rd February discussing menopause was very popular and well-attended.

Last November, we also hosted a webinar on prostate/PSA testing, highlighting the importance and ease of testing for those in higher-risk groups.

Both webinar recordings are available on our website, and we would encourage you to watch them:

www.uppertoolsurgery.nhs.uk/wellbeing/webinars/.



Stop Smoking Services

Smoking cessation services are available at many local pharmacies. Please see the Wandsworth Stop Smoking Service website for further details:

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/your-health/healthy-lifestyle/help-to-stop-smoking/wandsworth-stop-smoking-service/.

Many people find themselves in a repeated stop-start smoking cycle. Tailored advice from a Stop Smoking Advisor, along with stop smoking aids (e.g., a vape), could help you successfully quit for good, reducing your risk of cancer, heart attacks, and strokes.

Freephone: 0800 389 7921

Email: stopsmokingteam@wandsworth.gov.uk

Barrons Pharmacy, located on the ground floor next to the surgery, also offers local and easily accessible advice and help for smoking cessation.

Travel

At this time of year, many of us start thinking about holidays and overseas travel. We have limited travel clinic slots at the surgery, so we advise you to book early if you wish to receive your vaccinations from us.

Please see our website for details of vaccine charges, as only some, but not all, vaccines are free:

Local pharmacies also offer a travel vaccine service.

NaTHNac is a useful website to provide advice on which vaccines you need and additional precautions to take when travelling: www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/.

We wish all of our patients a Happy Easter!



With all best wishes

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