

The Lighthouse Practice For Teens

Ian Gow 01323 766358 & College Road 01323 735044

It's important you keep well inside and out, we want to help you do this.

Confidentiality

It is important you can let the doctor or nurse know what is going on without the worry of whether it will be kept private or not, especially if you feel embarrassed by the problem. All staff at the surgery will keep the discussion confidential, including receptionists; this means we will not discuss it with anyone outside the surgery. It is always best you try and discuss difficult things with those who love and know you best. This can be embarrassing or difficult and sometimes talking to your doctor or nurse may be a lot easier; we can also give you good health advice. We will not tell anyone else about your visit to us. An exception to this is if we are worried about the safety of you or somebody else, but we would always tell you if we had to do this. [Read our confidentiality policy.](#)

Appointments

As our website says we are open 8-6pm and have appointments throughout the day. This means you can make an appointment after school or college too. Every Monday evening we have a clinic that runs until 8pm. We also have Saturday appointments available. You can make an appointment in person, on the telephone. You need to register at reception to set up online access to your medical records and allow you to make appointments online.

You can choose to see whichever doctor you would like to; you don't have to see your named GP if you would prefer not to. Sometimes people prefer to see a doctor of a particular gender, so please ask

when booking an appointment if this is the case. Depending upon what the problem you want to see us about is, you may be better seeing a nurse or healthcare assistant rather than a doctor.

Receptionists may ask what the reason for the appointment is, and this is to help you see the right staff member in a timely fashion. For example, if you require emergency contraception, by letting the receptionist know when you book the appointment, this means we can ensure you get an appointment the same day with a doctor. If you do not understand anything that is said during your appointment, don't be afraid or embarrassed to ask for it to be explained again. If you're worried you may forget something during your appointment, you can write things down beforehand or during the appointment. You can also bring somebody you trust along to the appointment, either a friend or family member. It's also okay to come and see us by yourself.

Sexually transmitted Infections (STI) and sexual health

Condoms are the best way to help protect yourself from STIs. STIs can cause long term health problems if they are not treated, but often people do not know they have an STI. Condoms are available free for 13-24 year olds at the GP surgery when you show us your C-card. Make an appointment for a free C-card at: The Sexual Health Clinic Avenue House , The Avenue, Eastbourne, BN21 3XY 01323 416100 Get your free C- Card and then we can supply you with free condoms. If you are worried you may have an STI it is best to see a doctor or nurse to discuss this and get tested. Some people with an STI get abnormal or smelly discharge from intimate areas, there may be itching, burning or stinging when going for a wee. Even if are none of these symptoms, we would encourage young people to have regular sexual health checks either with us or via the sexual health clinic at Avenue House (<http://www.eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk/>) when they start having sex and whenever you have sex with anybody new. This is to keep you healthy now and in the future. The tests for STIs don't need an intimate examination if you do not want. We can

give you can do a swab to do yourself or a urine test which can be sent for testing. Avenue House in Eastbourne also provide testing for STIs and follow up if you are concerned you may have passed an infection onto others.

Online resources for further info on STI testing:

<http://www.chlamydia-screening.nhs.uk/index.htm>

www.tht.org.uk - Information about all things sexual! Different STIs, how to protect yourself, pregnancy, termination, ask anonymous questions online

It is difficult to know who to talk to if you feel trapped in a relationship, or feel you are being controlled or abused. You should always feel able to say no to sex or other forms of intimate/personal contact, and if you feel pressured in to something you don't feel comfortable with, please speak with us or somebody you trust. Sometimes it is easier to talk to someone impartial outside of the situation, to feel listened to or for some advice. We are here to help - please call us and we can help you.

Useful website:

<http://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-children-and-young-people>

ChildLine: Call 0800 1111 for help if you feel you are not being treated properly

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople/Pages/Sex-and-young-people-hub.aspx>

Contraception

If you are thinking of having sex or have already started having sex, come and have a chat about contraception options to ensure you are not at risk of having a baby. Condoms aren't always reliable and can tear or fall off. They are still important to help stop you getting an STI. There are other more reliable forms of contraception that can

protect against pregnancy alongside using condoms. There are several different options, which may seem confusing but this means we can find something that works for you. And the good news is that contraception is free. Make an appointment to discuss contraception or ask about your options. It is important to remember that you should never feel forced in to having sex, and if you do not want to have sex you should be able to say no. If you don't feel you can say no, and you feel you have to have sex with somebody, then come in and speak to us about this in private so we can help.

Useful websites:

<http://www.fpa.org.uk/contraception-help/my-contraception-tool>
www.talkchoice.co.uk

Pregnancy

Finding out you are pregnant or worried you may be can be a shock at any age. Come and talk to us if you think you are pregnant. We can help you talk about your options and try and discover the best way forward for you.

Useful websites:

www.bpas.org
www.tht.org.uk has a pregnancy section

Mental Health

Many young people can struggle with feeling low, worrying about things more than they used to, and suffer other mental health problems. If you are feeling overwhelmed and that you're struggling to cope, it's important to know where to turn to for help. You can come in to speak with one of the doctors, and we can make sure you're getting the right help and support you need.

www.e-motion.org.uk – online counselling service for young people aged 12-18 across East Sussex, putting you in contact with an online counsellor via email for online counselling, chat and emotional support

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/youth-mental-health/Pages/Youth-mental-health-help.aspx>

Get Moving!

It seems everyone is talking about keeping active, and with good reason. Keeping fit helps us feel good about ourselves, as well as reducing the risk of loads of medical problems (which could happen when you get older) such as raised blood pressure, cancers, dementia and diabetes. Exercise can help with aches and pains, make bones stronger, and lifts your mood if you're feeling low. Small changes count: 60 minutes of activity every day is best, but this includes free activities like going for a walk or a jog.

Useful Websites:

<https://www.facebook.com/EastbourneYouthEvents>

<http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx>

Smoking

The younger you start smoking, the more damage your body will suffer when you get older. Here are some health benefits of quitting smoking:

- You'll be healthier and less out of breath because smoking decreases your lung capacity
- You will look better. Chemicals in cigarettes restrict blood flow to your skin. Smokers have more wrinkled and saggy faces by the time they're in the mid-20s
- Not smoking will make you instantly more attractive. Most people prefer kissing non-smokers

If you start smoking when you're in your teens, get ready for stained teeth, wrinkly skin and 1 in 2 chance of dying earlier than if you didn't smoke. Nobody smokes their first cigarette thinking they'll be a smoker, but if you're experimenting it's easy to become hooked. Most adult smokers start in their teens, and half of them will be killed by their habit (on average, they'll pay nearly £2,000 a year for cigarettes). Right now, smoking means that you're becoming unfit, you're getting tiny wrinkles all around your mouth, and you're spending lots of money you could use for something else. If your partner smokes too, sex probably doesn't feel as good as it could: cigarettes affect a man's erections and a woman's sexual pleasure. As a smoker you look older than your years as your skin, which has been starved of oxygen, becomes grey and lined. Your teeth become stained and your hair dull and smelly. If that's not enough, all the smoke toxins in your body give you cellulite. When you want to have kids, things will be trickier for you than for non-smokers: female smokers reduce their fertility and increase their chances of miscarriage, cervical cancer and complications during pregnancy and delivery. Smokers' babies are also more at risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). If you would like to speak to someone about giving up smoking and what we can do to help and support you with this, please contact the surgery and ask to book in with one of our qualified smoking cessation advisors for a confidential one to one appointment.

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