

Townsend House Medical Centre Appointment System

This information leaflet has been introduced in order to clarify the reasoning behind our appointment system, it is by no means exhaustive but hopefully it will go some way to explaining why we have put certain policies in place. The practice has in excess of 6200 patients and it can sometimes be tricky in calculating the demand for urgent and/or routine appointments. There are a number of different appointments available on a daily basis:

For everyday routine matters

These can be pre-bookable up to **12 weeks** in advance to accommodate booking time off work, etc, or by the same token, could be for in just a few days' time. The telephone number for these appointments is **01297 20616**. Opening hours are 8am to 6pm Monday - Friday. Outside of these hours patients are asked to telephone **111** – you will be asked for information such as date of birth, address, who your doctor is and the nature of the illness.

For urgent on the day

Patients requesting an urgent appointment will be booked with our duty doctor, please note these appointments will be offered to you in the afternoon. These will be 'see and treat' appointments where the doctor will only have time to discuss the acute emergency complaint. For any other medical issues you will be asked to book a routine appointment with a GP.

Follow up appointments

Patients will either receive a text/email or telephone call asking them to make a routine appointment, or the Doctor will ask the patient to book an appointment as they leave the practice – these appointments are not urgent and patients will be offered appointments up to **12 weeks** in advance. If the Doctor feels the need is more urgent this will be communicated either by text/email or by telephoning.

Home visit appointments

These are for patients who genuinely cannot leave their house to attend an appointment at the surgery. Patients will be asked to describe the nature of the illness and provide a contact telephone number to the receptionists so that the Doctors can prioritise the requests. Please phone **01297 20616** before 11.30am. Visits will be made according to the severity of the condition and workload of the Doctor; therefore a set time cannot be given.

Telephone appointments

These can be requested when patients require advice or wish to discuss a matter without needing to attend the surgery. The Doctors will normally return calls at any point during the day depending on workload. The receptionist will ask you for your telephone number so the doctor can call you back.

Review of medical conditions

We regularly contact patients who are due either their six month or annual check-up. Patients will be contacted by text/email or telephone according to their surname. Patients with surnames A-C will be contacted in April, D-F in May and so on.

General information

When a receptionist asks the nature of the appointment this is to ascertain whether a surgery appointment would be the most appropriate course of action and whether it is classed as urgent or routine. They are not being obstructive, but it is sometimes necessary to extract information so as to ensure the best service is given to our patients. All members of the practice adhere to strict confidentiality guidelines.

Patients will be offered appointments at either Townsend House in Seaton or at Walrond in Beer. The practice is continually assessing options regarding the limited parking in Seaton. Walrond in Beer is only a couple of miles away and is situated within a locally owned council car park, and although normal car parking charges do apply, the flat terrain may be preferable for ease of access.

Each week a high number of appointments are booked which a patient does not attend. This can mean that in any given week anything up to 4 hours of Doctor/Nurse appointment time is wasted. If for any reason you cannot attend your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so that the slot may be given to another patient.

Obtaining test results and ordering repeat prescriptions

Test results

When telephoning please press option 2. Test results are received at the practice at various times during the course of the morning and the Doctors need time to read and record any action required so please leave enough time before phoning.

Repeat prescriptions

These can be made in person at the surgery or via SystmOnline Services. If you do not have your repeat slip, we can provide you with one or alternatively please write your name, address and required medication and deposit in either the post box in the lobby or the box contained with our reception area. If the surgery is closed the request may be posted through the red door to the side. Please allow 2 full working days before collecting (3 full working days if collecting directly from the chemist) The practice can receive hundreds of requests in any one day and this allows time for processing, printing and signing.

The surgery does not take any requests over the telephone due to the margin of error

Useful contact numbers

Townsend House surgery	01297 20616
Out of hours	111
Emergency services	999
Website	www.townsendhousesurgery.co.uk
Facebook	www.facebook.com/townsendhousesurgery