

# Woodlands Surgery

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**\*\*\* NEW \*\*\***

**web-site [www.woodlandssurgery.co.uk](http://www.woodlandssurgery.co.uk)**

## **Appointment System - Facts and Myths**

### **You can only book appointments a couple of days in advance**

NOT TRUE – We have about 25 appointments that are bookable on the day & about 5 that are bookable a day in advance. The rest of our appointments are available for patients to book in advance from 2 days up to 4 weeks. The number of doctors does vary according to the day of the week; but we have between 60 & 80 appointments available each day.

### **I can never seem to get an appointment with the doctor of my choice at a convenient time**

This could be true because the doctors don't work every day. We hope to be able to offer you an appointment with a doctor with 48 hours but this may not be with your first choice of doctor. Please be assured that whoever you see does have access to all your notes.

### **I have been told to ring back in the morning; why does the appointment system work like this?**

Unfortunately whatever appointment system we operate it is a compromise. We have some appointments 'embargoed' and these are only bookable a few days ahead. This is to help those patients who don't necessarily need to see a doctor that day but don't want to wait more than a few days. Once these appointments are taken we do sometimes only have appointments about a week ahead. If you are anxious to see a doctor sooner than this then it is necessary to telephone in the morning. We also have a few appointments that become available later in the day for the afternoon. However if you want to see a specific doctor their appointments can be 2-3 weeks ahead. The receptionists do try and help patients get an appointment to suit them and if there isn't a suitable appointment you will always be offered to be added to the telephone calls for the duty doctor.

### **I just want to speak to a doctor; how can I arrange this?**

We have a duty doctor who is available to take telephone calls from 8:30am until 10:30am. If you telephone and the doctor is busy then they receptionist will leave them a message to call you back. As far as possible it would be helpful if you made sure that you were able to take their call; if you aren't going to be available then please inform the receptionist.

**I find it difficult to get through on the telephone especially at 8:30am.**

The first half hour is our busiest time on the telephones; we hope that by allowing patients to book on-line this will reduce our morning rush.

**I want to speak to a specific doctor; how do I know when they are available?**

Mostly our doctors and nurses work on set days but this does vary from time to time. If you would like to speak to a specific doctor please ask the receptionists when they are next available and able to take telephone calls.

**I want to find out more about my blood tests; who should I speak to?**

You should ask the receptionist for your results. Once the doctor views the results of blood tests they write a comment for the receptionist to read out to you. If there is anything you don't understand they can get a doctor or nurse to give you a ring. The receptionists are able to give you straight forward results.

**What time does the appointment line open?**

The appointment line opens at 8:30am.

**Can I book appointments on-line?**

YES. We have just started offering on-line appointment booking. Before you can use this service you must register and you need to ask at reception for a registration letter. Both doctor and nurse appointments are able to be booked on-line but you aren't able to book blood tests at the moment. We do remind patients that each appointment is 10 minutes so if you think you will need to discuss several things then please book 2 appointments together.

**I'm not sure whether I should see a doctor or nurse?**

Please ask the receptionists as she will be able to give you the most appropriate appointment. Our practice leaflet gives details of the clinics and problems our practice nurses deal with.

**Why don't you leave me a message?**

We have to consider patient confidentiality and as we don't know who else might listen to answer phone messages we tend not to leave them. You can always tell the receptionist that you are happy to be left a message.

**It would be nice if there were early morning/late evening/Saturday morning appointments.**

I am sure that you are aware there has been a lot of press about this and that things are likely to change in the next few months. We are considering what we need to do to address this issue; and will take into account your comments together with working out what is feasible for the doctors, nurses and staff.