



Marlow Medical Group

Coronavirus Operating Procedures (updated 3rd June 2020)

Please note that the worldwide coronavirus situation is ongoing and developing daily. This page will be updated frequently; and we suggest that for the foreseeable future you keep our Coronavirus Updates page bookmarked for information purposes prior to contacting the surgery.

THE SURGERY BUILDINGS REMAIN LOCKED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

YOU WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO ENTER IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVITED TO DO SO

**ALL PATIENTS SHOULD USE OUR WEBSITE TO CONTACT THE PRACTICE AT
WWW.MARLOWDOCTORS.CO.UK WHERE POSSIBLE**

IF YOU HAVE AN URGENT MEDICAL QUERY PLEASE CALL THE SURGERY

IN AN EMERGENCY - ALWAYS CALL 999

EVERYONE SHOULD STAY AT HOME WHERE POSSIBLE UNLESS:

- For work, where you cannot work from home;
- Going to shops that are permitted to be open - to get things like food and medicine;
- To exercise or spend time outdoors;
- For any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid injury or illness, escape risk of harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus, to protect others, DO NOT go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. STAY AT HOME.

If you cannot manage your symptoms at home yourself, contact us via the website to find out what to do.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- ***High temperature***
- ***New, continuous cough***
- ***Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste***



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If you are asked to attend the practice, you MUST stay 2 meters away from the receptionists at all times. *If you take a seat in the waiting room you MUST stay 2 meters away from all other people, including any patients also in the waiting room.*

FOR ALL OTHER QUERIES:

- VISIT **WWW.MARLOWDOCTORS.CO.UK**; SELECT 'ONLINE REQUESTS' AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE; AND SELECT THE MOST APPROPRIATE OPTION.
- Please ask a family member, friend or carer to help to help you if you cannot do this yourself.
- **If you have no way of using the website**, then you can contact the surgery on **01628 484666**.

Our staff will require as much information as possible about your symptoms.

IF YOUR QUERY IS NON-URGENT, or concerns prescriptions; letters or fit notes; registrations; or online services; you should also submit this via our website at www.marlowdoctors.co.uk. We will endeavour to respond to these within 2 working days, but please be patient with all non-urgent queries and requests. We ask that appointments for non-urgent issues are not requested at this time.

It is important that patients that are able to use our online facilities do so, as this will help us to manage the increased workload and speak with patients who need to contact us via the phone.

If you live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus, you can get an isolation note at 111.nhs.uk/isolation-note. You DO NOT need to get a note from your GP.

If you feel you need to be seen you can also use the AskNHS app, which will analyse your symptoms and, if appropriate, give you the option to book a telephone appointment at the surgery.

IF YOU SUSPECT YOU MAY BE SUFFERING FROM CORONAVIRUS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU SELF-ISOLATE IMMEDIATELY

Support via Text Message for People with Symptoms of COVID-19 (as of 28th March)

People staying at home suffering with suspected coronavirus symptoms will get regular check-ins from a new NHS messaging service to see how they are, and to ensure that those who need help to get them through the isolation period receive it.



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Daily texts will be sent by the NHS to new patients who register their COVID-19 symptoms and contact details with the 111 online service. Patients need to contact NHS 111 online, complete the assessment, and leave basic information such as their age, mobile number and when their symptoms started.

FROM 11TH MAY, CHANGES TO THE LOCKDOWN GUIDELINES MEANS INDIVIDUALS CAN NOW:

- Spend time outdoors – for example sitting and enjoying the fresh air, picnicking, or sunbathing
- Meet one other person from a different household outdoors - following social distancing guidelines
- Exercise outdoors as often as you wish - following social distancing guidelines
- Use outdoor sports courts or facilities, such as a tennis or basketball court, or golf course – with members of your household, or one other person while staying 2 metres apart
- Go to a garden centre

At all times, you should continue to observe social distancing guidelines when you are outside your home, including ensuring you are 2 metres away from anyone outside your household. As with before, you cannot:

- Visit friends and family in their homes
- Exercise in an indoor sports court, gym or leisure centre, or go swimming in a public pool
- Use an outdoor gym or playground
- Visit a private or ticketed attraction
- Gather in a group of more than two (excluding members of your own household), except for a few specific exceptions set out in law (for work, funerals, house moves, supporting the vulnerable, in emergencies and to fulfil legal obligations)

If you are showing coronavirus symptoms, or if you or any of your household are self-isolating, you should stay at home - this is critical to staying safe and saving lives.

Follow government guidance on staying safe outside your home:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/>

And what you can and can't do in relation to the coronavirus lockdown guidelines:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/>



Prescriptions (see FAQs Page 2)

Please note that we are not accepting green slips or paper requests for medication. Prescription requests must be submitted via our website at www.marlowdoctors.co.uk; or via Patient Access. If you are unable to use the website or other online services, we ask that in the first instance you ask a friend or family member to place a request on your behalf. If this is not possible, then you should contact your pharmacy as a last resort to ask them to request your medication on your behalf. Please be mindful of the pressures on community pharmacies at present.

At present, prescription requests can be submitted up to 14 days before they are due, but no earlier. Due to the current increased demand on community pharmacies we ask that you wait 10 working days if possible before attempting to collect your medication. Please note that urgent prescriptions from a GP will still be dispensed the same day.

For **Marlow** patients that have requested medication after 12th March and usually collect a paper prescription from the surgery, your prescription will have been sent electronically to your nearest pharmacy. We will no longer be issuing green paper prescriptions, so please let us know which pharmacy to send your prescription to if you have not done so already.

For **Lane End** and **Hambleden** patients that **do not** collect their prescriptions from the on-site dispensaries; or that usually collect paper prescriptions; your prescriptions will have been sent electronically to your nearest pharmacy.

Please follow national guidance and do not request your prescriptions early or stockpile medications. Our clinicians will not issue medication requests that are not submitted in accordance with our usual repeat prescription procedure.

Appointments (see FAQs Page 5)

Clinicians are conducting triage phone calls before inviting patients to attend the surgery if appropriate. **If you are booked a triage call, it is important that you keep your phone nearby as a clinician may call at any time.** If an appointment is scheduled for you, it is likely that this will be conducted via telephone or video call rather than face to face, unless otherwise specified.

If a video consultation is necessary, this will be agreed beforehand. A link will then be sent to your smart phone; and clicking on this link will then connect you with one of our clinicians remotely.

If you have pre-booked an appointment with a GP or the Pharmacist, please do not attend unless you have been contacted since you made your booking within confirmation that you still should/need to attend.

Appointments for blood tests and other procedures will be made as necessary; and you will be sent a text message prior to any appointment with a series of questions to answer. Please



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answer all questions so we are able to screen all patients for symptoms and keep everyone on our site safe. Please provide your mobile number via the website if you have not done so already or do not receive this message.

New Patient Registrations and Registrations for Access to Online Services

Patients should complete their registration forms via our website. Our usual practice would be for patients to attend with photographic ID and proof of address for verification purposes for both new patient registrations; and for registering for access to online services. For the foreseeable future this information should be sent via email and can be sent as either a scanned copy or a photograph. Please send these to marlowmedical.group1@nhs.net with either 'Registrations' or 'Online Access' in the subject line.

Fit Notes and Letters (see FAQs Page 5)

Letters that would previously have been collected from the surgery will now either be emailed or posted to you for the foreseeable future.

Fit Notes will be sent via text message. The message will contain a link that can be used to view your document online and print if necessary. This link can also be opened on a computer.

Any requests for these should be submitted via our website at www.marlowdoctors.co.uk. If you are unable to use the website then you can still contact the surgery by phone.

In accordance with national guidance, Fit/Sick Notes will not be issued for isolation. Nationally, employers have been asked to use their discretion about self-isolation so as not to increase the bureaucratic burden on our services at this difficult time. If you have symptoms you **MUST** isolate for 7 days and all members of your household **MUST** isolate for 14 days.

REQUEST ISOLATION NOTES DIRECTLY FROM NHS 111 AT: 111.nhs.uk/isolation-note.

To ensure the current extra workload is managed appropriately and to ensure our teams can concentrate on the delivery of front-line clinical services, Marlow Medical Group will currently not be issuing statements of fitness to fly/travel, or any other certificates requested in relation to travelling or otherwise related to current coronavirus situation.

Accordingly, all travel is undertaken at the risk and discretion of individual patients. We encourage any prospective travellers to closely monitor and follow national guidance that is published daily by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus) and NHS England (www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19).

Complaints

As you are all aware the current COVID-19 poses one of the greatest challenges that society has faced in recent times, and we have all had to make changes to our daily lives to ensure that we work together to protect the most vulnerable members of society. At Marlow Medical Group, we have had to make a number of responsive changes following recent developments to ensure the maximum safety of our patients, and to protect our staff as much as possible to ensure that the NHS can keep working in an effective manner and can continue to provide the best level of care possible.

As such, during the current period of emergency measures many routine services will be subject to short notice change and many administrative tasks will be streamlined to ensure that we focus more of our time and resources on the delivery of care to those that need it the most.

As part of this streamlining of administration tasks, the Practice will be changing its complaints procedures, during this challenging period. With immediate effect, we will now be reviewing complaints on a weekly basis, to ensure that any high priority complaints that fall within the following categories can be swiftly discussed and any resulting changes to our Practice can be immediately implemented:

- Immediate risks to patients or staff
- Actual harm to patient or “near miss” incident of high severity.
- Urgent safeguarding concerns
- Criminal actions

Should your complaint not fall into these categories, then it will be dealt with when we have capacity to do so, and unfortunately at this time, the timeframe for this is uncertain, however we will endeavour to acknowledge your complaint as soon as possible. We appreciate your understanding whilst we are dealing with unprecedented demand.

**WE ASK ALL OUR PATIENTS AND CARERS TO BE PATIENT AND WORK WITH US
DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME SO THAT WE CAN SAFELY DELIVER THE RIGHT CARE
TO ALL THOSE WHO NEED IT.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING.