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## Te Ngae Winter Newsletter March 2020

We have decided to send out this newsletter by email as we want as many patients as possible to be aware of what we are doing to ensure we meet your health needs but also, at the same time, protecting staff and patients during this time of uncertainty with the Coronavirus outbreak.

### Coronavirus

The coronavirus outbreak is a rapidly changing situation, and we don't know yet what the full impact will be. We are setting up processes in the medical centre to treat any patients we are concerned about, but at the same time, making sure the other patients are safe.

If you are worried for yourself or someone else in the family then please read this:

If you have a

- fever
- a cough or
- difficulty breathing and
- have recently travelled overseas or
- been near someone who may have the virus

1. Then please stay at home and use the Phone
2. FIRST call Healthline on **0800 358 5453** then phone us on **07 345 6627**.
3. It is very important to stay out of the medical centre. If you are infectious you could spread the virus to others.
4. Do not book your appointment online
5. If you must come to the Practice, stay in your car in the carpark and phone us.
6. We will text or phone you and give you instructions about entering when the doctor is ready to see you.

### Influenza

We are receiving more and more enquiries about the flu vaccine.

The flu vaccine will not be available until early April this year. We will be letting you know as soon as it comes into stock. Having the whole family, especially children immunised is the best way to stop influenza spreading in our community. Although the flu vaccine provides NO protection against Covid-19, it does reduce the risk of getting sick and means your family is less likely to need to see a doctor.

And of course the more people who are immunised, the fewer sick people will need to be managed in hospital, freeing resources there to cope with winter illnesses and possible Coronavirus cases

### **We are going to be very busy this winter season**

To help us over this busy season coming please take note of the following:

- **Prescription requests** - Check your medication supply and get in early to request your repeat prescription. Don't leave it to the last minute.

- **Routine consultations** -

We may not be able to offer as many routine consultations during the winter months. If you need procedures like smear tests, driving medicals, replacement of long-term contraception and so on we suggest you come in now for these.

- **Urgent Clinic** - We will still be offering a same day clinic if you need to be seen urgently and if we are unable to offer an appointment that day .We want to stress that this clinic is for **single problem urgent consultations only**. Please be prepared for possible long waits and know that the doctor and nurses are working as hard and as fast as they are able to. If you book into this clinic and your problem does not meet these criteria, you may be asked to come back and see your usual doctor at another time.

Finally, below are important strategies to help protect yourself and others:

- have a flu vaccine
- stay home when sick,
- wash your hands frequently and using proper technique,
- cough into your elbow, not hands.