



Oak Tree Health Centre
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GP Access FAQ – Updated 26th April 2019

How does Oak Tree's Appointment System work? When you call the Health Centre to request an appointment the Patient Advisor will ask you a few questions about your medical problem and its urgency. All of this information is treated in the strictest confidence; you do not have to tell the Patient Advisor anything you do not want to, but it does help us to direct you towards the best person to deal with your problem. If you need a Paramedic, Nurse or Health Care Assistant appointment it will be booked for you by the Patient Advisor at a date and time convenient to you. If, however, you need to talk to a GP, the Patient Advisor will take a few details so that the GP can then call you back. When the GP calls you, you will talk through your problem together and the GP will advise you of the best course of action.

When did this Appointment System start? The system started on Monday 25th June 2012.

Why is it used? Under its previous, traditional, booking system Oak Tree was very conscious that we could not always ensure that patients who called us requesting a GP appointment could actually talk to a GP on the day that they called. We did not consider this to be a good service to you. We believe that in the interests of patient safety one of our GPs needs to assess every request we receive each and every day and to either talk to you or see you on the day that you call.

What do I need to do? You call us on 01235 810 099; our lines are open from 08:30 to 18:30. After the Patient Advisor has established that you need a GP call they will ask you for a telephone number on which the GP can call you back.

What happens when the GP calls me? The GP will call you and discuss the problem with you and decide what is needed next. You may need advice that the GP can provide there and then, you may need a prescription which the GP can prepare for your collection later, or you may need to come in and see the GP. The GP will make the appointment for you if you do need to be seen; usually this is the same day, but you can ask for a later day if it is more convenient for you. You may alternatively be advised to contact other services such as the Minor Injuries Unit in Abingdon or a local pharmacy, for example.

How soon will the GP call? How quickly you can expect a call from your GP will depend upon how busy they are on the day. It is important that you are ready to answer the phone number you supply to your Patient Advisor. If you are at work, or otherwise engaged, and need to talk to the GP at a specific time, please let us know and the GP will try to accommodate your request.

Do I need to call early? No, the service will be exactly the same whatever time you call. There will inevitably be a rush at the start of the day at 08:30, so you may find a quicker response later in the morning or in the afternoon. We would request that patients do not call on Mondays for routine enquiries.

How does this all help patients?

- It reduces the waiting time for you to talk to or see a GP
- It reduces your frustration at not being able to talk to the GP on the day you want to
- It avoids wasting your time in coming to the Health Centre when you may not need to
- It increases your safety by ensuring that you can talk to a GP on the same day as you call us

Mark Dalling - Business Manager
Oak Tree Health Centre