

## World TB Day 24 March

TB (tuberculosis) is an infectious disease that usually affects the lungs, although it can affect any part of the body.

About 150 years ago, it caused about one in eight of all deaths in the UK, but by the 1980s, with better housing and nutrition and effective treatments, it had become uncommon in the UK with 5745 cases in 1987.

However, TB had not been wiped out completely. Over the last 20 years numbers in the UK have been rising slowly. About 7000 people now get TB each year - just over one person in every 10,000 of the population.

TB is not easily caught - you have to be in close and lengthy contact with someone with TB (for example living in the same household) - but everybody should be aware of the symptoms of the disease so they can seek treatment as soon as possible.

### TB is curable with a course of special antibiotics.

The most common symptoms of TB include:

- A persistent cough that gets progressively worse over several weeks
- A loss of weight for no obvious reason
- Fever and heavy night sweats
- A general and unusual sense of tiredness and being unwell
- Coughing up blood

All these may also be signs of other problems, but if you have them and are worried, talk to your GP.

There is a vaccine (BCG) that has been in use for many years to help protect against TB. BCG works best to prevent the most serious forms of TB in children. However, the vaccine does not prevent TB in all cases so you still need to know the signs and symptoms of TB.

Source: NHS TB alert, [www.tbalert.org](http://www.tbalert.org)

## NATIONAL TINNITUS AWARENESS WEEK 9 - 15 February

Tinnitus is the term used for noises heard 'in the ear or ears' or 'in the head' when no obvious source of sound is apparent. The noises are usually described as ringing, whistling, hissing, buzzing or humming. It is not a disease or an illness and is not always related to hearing impairment.

It is very common and over one third of the UK population will, at some time, in their lives experience symptoms in a mild form. For others the condition can be so severe that it can affect their quality of life causing agitation, forgetfulness, lack of sleep and sickness absence. It is rarely an indication of a serious disorder but sufferers should seek their GPs advice and possible referral to a Specialist where further tests can be carried out.

Tinnitus becomes more noticeable in a quiet environment such as a bedroom and the noise may be more apparent at night. Many Ear, Nose and Throat Departments and Audiology Departments offer treatment based on individual need and may include medication for any medical condition, relaxation techniques and stress management. They will also offer advice on the use of hearing aids if there is hearing impairment. Other methods include using a noise generator which can provide a wide-band 'sshh' noise at a comfortable level which acts as a distraction from the tinnitus itself. Alternatively using environmental sounds such as an electric fan or a ticking clock will take the brains focus away from the tinnitus itself.

Frequent prolonged exposure to loud noise increases the risk of tinnitus and so it is essential that in a noisy working environment the appropriate hearing protection is available and that audiometry screening is carried out on a regular basis.

The British Tinnitus Association is a national charity dedicated to helping tinnitus sufferers and they offer a free confidential advice service. To find out more, visit: [www.tinnitus.org.uk](http://www.tinnitus.org.uk)

### Concern at rise of Measles cases

There has been a lot of press coverage recently detailing outbreaks of Measles across England. The number of cases of measles is rising following a decade of relatively low vaccine uptake.

Measles is caused by a virus and is one of the most infectious diseases known. It is spread through the air - on tiny droplets of moisture that are expelled when someone coughs or sneezes and these droplets are breathed in by someone else. The complications of measles include chest infections, fits, swelling of the brain and brain damage.

### Measles can kill

PTH is able to offer the MMR vaccination. Please call us on 01527 577242

For further info visit:  
[http://www.immunisation.nhs.uk/Vaccines/MMR/Resources/MMR\\_catchup\\_programme](http://www.immunisation.nhs.uk/Vaccines/MMR/Resources/MMR_catchup_programme)

## Health Awareness dates for the diary

## Study finds hot drinks helps colds

Jan

**Granny's advice about taking a hot drink to fight the effects of a cold was correct all along, say experts.**

19-23

Food Allergy & Intolerance Week  
[www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)

Researchers at Cardiff University's Common Cold Centre found a hot mug of fruit cordial could help ease the coughs and splutters of a cold or flu.

22-26

Cancertalk Week  
[www.cancertalk.org.uk](http://www.cancertalk.org.uk)

They believe the research, published in the latest edition of clinical journal Rhinology, is the first of its kind.

26-30

Be Loud – Beating Bowel Cancer  
[www.beatingbowelcancer.org.uk](http://www.beatingbowelcancer.org.uk)

- Scientists used a popular brand of diluted apple and blackcurrant, at temperatures of 70C and 20C
- The study involved 21 women and nine men, aged 18 to 36
- It found immediate effects on cough, sore throat, chilliness and tiredness, and relief after 15 minutes from running nose and sneezing
- Runny nose, cough and sneezing was still helped by the fruit drink at room temperature
- The taste, smell and temperature of the drink may also have a psychological effect
- The drink involved was low sugar and low calorie but sweeter, more traditional cold remedies may have a greater effect
- *From study by A Sanu and R Eccles, Cardiff University*

Feb

National Heart Month  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

1-28

Raynaud's Awareness Month  
[www.raynauds.org.uk](http://www.raynauds.org.uk)

1-28

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Stress Down Day – The Samaritans  
[www.stressdownday.org](http://www.stressdownday.org)

2-8

Salt Awareness Week  
[www.actionsalt.org.uk](http://www.actionsalt.org.uk)

Source: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south\\_east/7771893.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south_east/7771893.stm)

9-15

National Tinnitus Week  
[www.tinnitus.org.uk](http://www.tinnitus.org.uk)

22-28

Eating Disorders Awareness Week  
[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org)

Mar

Self Injury Awareness Day  
[www.lifesigns.org.uk](http://www.lifesigns.org.uk)

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Great Daffodil Appeal  
[www.greatdaffodilappeal.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.greatdaffodilappeal.mariecurie.org.uk)

1-31

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month  
[www.prostate-cancer.org.uk](http://www.prostate-cancer.org.uk)

1-31

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month  
[www.ovarian.org.uk/ovariancancer](http://www.ovarian.org.uk/ovariancancer)

1-31

Endometriosis Awareness Week  
[www.endometriosis-uk.org](http://www.endometriosis-uk.org)

2-8

No Smoking Day  
[www.nosmokingday.org.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk)

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World Kidney Day  
[www.worldkidneyday.org/](http://www.worldkidneyday.org/)

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World Glaucoma Day  
[www.wgday.net/](http://www.wgday.net/)

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World TB Day  
[www.tbalert.rg](http://www.tbalert.rg)

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### What's in a cigarette?

**There are over 4,000 chemicals in cigarette smoke, these are just some of them:**

- **Carbon Monoxide** takes up room in your lungs which should be filled with oxygen. Because your body needs oxygen the heart has to work harder. This can cause coronary heart disease and circulation problems.
- **Tar** about 70% of the tar in cigarette smoke is left in the lungs where it causes many serious lung diseases.
- **Acetone** used as a solvent (i.e. in nail polish remover).
- **Nicotine** keeps you addicted.
- **Arsenic** a deadly poison used in insecticides.
- **Formaldehyde** is used to preserve dead bodies.
- **Shellac** becomes a varnish for wood when mixed with a form of alcohol.
- **Benzene** is used as a solvent in fuel and chemical manufacturing.
- **Cyanide** is a deadly poison.

Source: [www.nosmokingday.org.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk)

## PTH News

We are sad to announce that Gill Allardice, Resource Manager has now left PTH to spend more time with her family.



However, we are delighted to introduce Karen Mace as Gill's replacement. Karen has been with PTH for 5 years as our HR Manager and is now looking forward to the challenge of the combined role of HR and Resource Manager.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Karen the very best of luck in her new role.