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BE PRO-ACTIVE!

How to best prepare for the winter onslaught of respiratory viral illnesses and COVID-19 infection.

Arm yourself for this winter with COVID-19 booster (2023) and FLU shot

Prevention is better than cure so wait no more and ensure you are up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccinations and your FLU shot (available late March/early April).

If you are **18+ years old** and your **last COVID-19 booster or COVID-19 infection was 6 months or more ago**, you are eligible for a COVID-19 booster for 2023. Book online now for your [Moderna bivalent booster](#).

We will advise once FLU shots become available. Keep an eye out for our much-anticipated annual kids fancy dress FLU shot session!

Do you have infectious symptoms and need to see our doctors?

We will no longer be sending out individual COVID-19 screening SMS as of next week. However, we want to reassure you that if you have infectious symptoms, we can still see you in person in our Precaution room at the back of the clinic. We advise you to wait in your car or outside the clinic weather permitting, to keep other patients safe. Alternatively, we can convert your appointment to a phone or video consult. You just need to let us know ahead of your appointment by ringing reception at 03 90883258.

COVID-19 symptoms and a negative RAT?

If you have infectious symptoms and test negative on a RAT, please **get a PCR test**. PCR test can now only be done via an appointment with your GP. Occasionally, RAT may not detect a COVID-19 infection straight away, so it's important to get a PCR **if you're at higher risk of severe illness**. COVID-19 oral antiviral treatments need to be started early after testing positive.

COVID-19 anti-viral treatment

Check your eligibility for COVID-19 treatment [here](#). Oral Paxlovid (Nirmatrelvir/Ritonavir) is the preferred oral COVID-19 anti-viral treatment due to its better efficacy but it is contra-indicated in people with severe kidney and liver impairment, and interacts with many medications which can be life-threatening. **If you are eligible for anti-viral treatment, please book a consult with your regular GP as soon as possible to prepare before you get COVID-19 infection:**

- you will need to have a recent blood test in the last 3 months to check your kidney and liver function to ensure the COVID-19 oral antiviral treatment is safe for you (note: it will be very difficult to organise a blood test once you have COVID-19 and are required to isolate – unfortunately, we do not have the resources to facilitate this at the clinic).
- your GP will need to review your current medications with you to check for any potential interactions with the COVID-19 oral antiviral treatment and decide if it is safe for you (note: it can

take time to review your medications, including checking with a hospital pharmacist, so best to do this now before the cases peak and access to pharmacist becomes limited).

- your GP will provide you with written information about Paxlovid and its side effects, which you can read now while you are well.

Sometimes more than one appointment may be needed if you have a long list of medications.

Once you are infected with COVID-19, you will need to start oral anti-viral treatment **within 5 days of symptom onset**. You will need to book a phone/video appointment with your GP to obtain this script. We allocate a few appointments for this each day and encourage you to call the clinic promptly. **We will prioritise patients who have already consulted their GP as recommended above.**

Do I still need to wear face mask at the clinic?

It is still mandatory to wear face masks at our clinic to keep our patients (especially those who are immunocompromised) and team members safe. Please bring your own and if you forget, masks are available at \$2 each.

Exciting news - Little Chicks winter clinic set to start in May!

Stressed about your sick child overnight and not sure if you can get in to see a GP in the morning to plan for child care, school or work? Keep your eyes and ears open for updates on our early morning Little Chicks clinic set to start in May! Follow us on social media @thecranegp for the latest updates.