



## VALE MEDICAL GROUP



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### **Blood Pressure – Know Your Numbers Week 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Know Your Numbers! Week reaches those who have high blood pressure and don't know it, so they can get the treatment and support they need to bring it under control.



High blood pressure can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and other illnesses. Once you Know Your Numbers! you can get support to bring your blood pressure under control and prevent these diseases.

In the UK, an estimated 1 in 3 people suffer from high blood pressure, a health problem that increases your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Often referred to as a “silent killer,” developing high blood pressure can happen to anyone but is a lot more common in people with a poor diet and lifestyle or those with a pre-existing medical condition.

If you think you might have high blood pressure or want to check that your blood pressure is as it should be, then there are several services that you can utilise:

- An NHS GP
- Some UK pharmacies
- Some UK workplaces
- At an NHS health check

For more information and advice regarding blood pressures you can visit:

[What is the normal blood pressure? - NHS GP](#)

[Blood Pressure UK](#)

### **Surgery Update:**

**Jo Thistlethwaite has now left the practice, and we know she will be missed by staff and patients. We are currently recruiting a new Advanced Nurse Practitioner.**

**PLT Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**PPG Meeting at Stackyard Surgery 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 @ 7pm**

### **Friends and Family**

[www.valemedicalgroup.co.uk/about-us/friends-and-family-test/](http://www.valemedicalgroup.co.uk/about-us/friends-and-family-test/)



Dr Shah fully understood the issues with my knee and clearly highlighted the way forward.

Efficient, helpful and professional as always.

All the staff are friendly and helpful and always respond to your problems or questions in a positive way.

Excellent - seen same day by Dr Rathbone after using online system.

### **DNAs (Did not attend)**

DNA is someone who did not attend their doctor/nurse appointment and did not tell us beforehand.

The clinic was ready, the doctor and nurses were waiting, but the patient did not attend. Last month in May there were **76 DNAs** at the Long Clawson Medical Practice and at the Stackyard Surgery, which patients did not attend.

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please let us now as Soon as you can so we can arrange for someone else to take your appointment.

## CHIARI MALFORMATION AWARENESS MONTH

A CHIARI MALFORMATION, PREVIOUSLY CALLED AN ARNOLD-CHIARI MALFORMATION, IS WHERE THE LOWER PART OF THE BRAIN PUSHES DOWN INTO THE SPINAL CANAL. THERE ARE 4 MAIN TYPES, BUT TYPE 1, CALLED CHIARI I, IS THE MOST COMMON. IN SOMEONE WITH CHIARI I, THE LOWEST PART OF THE BACK OF THE BRAIN EXTENDS INTO THE SPINAL CANAL. THIS CAN PUT PRESSURE ON THE BRAINSTEM AND SPINAL CORD AND OBSTRUCT THE FLOW OF FLUID. MANY PEOPLE WITH A CHIARI I MALFORMATION WILL NOT HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS. SOMETIMES THEY'RE ONLY FOUND AFTER AN MRI SCAN OF THE BRAIN IS CARRIED OUT FOR ANOTHER REASON. IF SYMPTOMS DO DEVELOP, THEY CAN INCLUDE: HEADACHES – THESE ARE USUALLY FELT AT THE BACK OF THE HEAD AND MAY BE BROUGHT ON OR MADE WORSE BY COUGHING, STRAINING, SNEEZING OR BENDING OVER, NECK PAIN, DIZZINESS AND BALANCE PROBLEMS, MUSCLE WEAKNESS, NUMBNESS OR TINGLING IN THE ARMS OR LEGS, BLURRED VISION, DOUBLE VISION AND SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT, SWALLOWING PROBLEMS, HEARING LOSS AND TINNITUS, FEELING AND BEING SICK, DIFFICULTY SLEEPING (INSOMNIA) AND CLINICAL DEPRESSION. THE MAIN OPERATION FOR CHIARI MALFORMATION IS CALLED DECOMPRESSION SURGERY. UNDER GENERAL ANAESTHETIC A CUT IS MADE AT THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD AND THE SURGEON REMOVES A SMALL PIECE OF BONE FROM THE BASE OF YOUR SKULL. THEY MAY ALSO REMOVE A SMALL PIECE OF BONE FROM THE TOP OF YOUR SPINE. THE AIM OF SURGERY IS TO STOP EXISTING SYMPTOMS GETTING ANY WORSE. SOME PEOPLE ALSO EXPERIENCE AN IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR SYMPTOMS, PARTICULARLY THEIR HEADACHES. FOR MORE INFORMATION YOU CAN VISIT: [CHIARI MALFORMATION - NHS](#) [CHIARI MALFORMATION | BOOKLET | HEALTH INFORMATION | BRAIN & SPINE FOUNDATION](#)

### WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY – 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025

World Suicide Prevention Day is hosted on 10<sup>TH</sup> September each year. If you're feeling like you want to end your life, it's important to tell someone. Help and support is available right now if you need it. You do not have to struggle with difficult feelings alone. Let family or friends know what's going on for you. They may be able to offer support and help keep you safe. There's no right or wrong way to talk about suicidal feelings – starting the conversation is what's important. There are lots of resources online and by phone with lots of supportive teams on hand who can help. Some of these support numbers include Samaritans – 116 123 Papyrus – 0800 068 41 41 SOS Silence of Suicide - 0808 115 1505

### Urology Awareness Month

There are many urology diseases. From the urology cancers, including – bladder, kidney, prostate, penile and testicular cancers to the benign conditions including incontinence, urinary tract infections (UTIs), erectile dysfunction and kidney stones. The theme of Urology Awareness Month 2025 is 'Bladder Leakage: Time to Act'. 1 in 5 people in the UK are impacted by bladder problems. 1 in 3 women are living with bladder leakage. With an ageing population, we expect this figure to continue to rise in the coming decade. From overactive bladder and urge incontinence, to stress incontinence, mixed incontinence, overflow incontinence and many more; there are lots of people who experience bladder leakage. It can be for many reasons. Some females may experience bladder leakage during menopause or after childbirth. Some people who have been treated for urology cancers including bladder cancer or prostate cancer may experience bladder leakage. For some people experiencing urinary tract infections, bladder leakage may occur. Lots of people in the UK need to use continence products including catheters and urostomy bags and may deal with leakage issues.



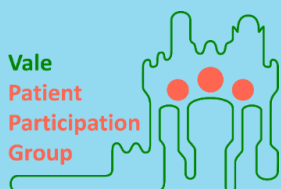
[Urology Awareness Month 2025 - The Urology Foundation](#) [Urology Awareness](#)

### Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month

Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) is a condition in which the lungs become scarred, and breathing becomes increasingly difficult.

It's not clear what causes it, but it usually affects people who are around 70 to 75 years old and is rare in people under 50. Several treatments can help reduce the rate at which IPF gets worse, but there's currently no treatment that can stop or reverse the scarring of the lungs. The symptoms of IPF tend to develop gradually and get slowly worse over time.

Symptoms can include shortness of breath, a persistent dry cough, tiredness, loss of appetite and weight loss rounded and swollen fingertips (clubbed fingers). Many people ignore their breathlessness at first and blame it on getting old or being out of shape. See a GP if you have struggled with your breathing for a while or have had a cough for more than 3 weeks. For more information for this awareness month, you can visit: [Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis - NHS](#) [PF Awareness Month | Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation | Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation](#)



Patient participation groups are generally made up of a group of volunteer patients, the practice manager and one or more of the GPs from the practice. PPG meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss the services on offer, and how improvements can be made from the benefits of patients and the practice. The VMG PPG currently has over 15 members and have meetings every three months, and our chair is Martin Fagan.

If you wish to make contact, please email [info@valeppg.uk](mailto:info@valeppg.uk)