



VALE MEDICAL GROUP



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Stoptober, the UK's largest mass quit smoking challenge, returns for its 14th year this October, providing thousands of smokers across the country with the tools, support, and motivation they need to quit for good. Backed by the NHS and Public Health England, the 28-day challenge is designed to help smokers give up cigarettes during the month of October and embrace a healthier, smoke-free future.

Stoptober has proven to be one of the most successful public health campaigns in the UK, with over 2 million people having made quit attempts since its launch. Research shows that smokers who quit for 28 days are five times more likely to stop smoking for good.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the UK, contributing to a range of health issues such as lung cancer, heart disease, and respiratory illnesses. Quitting not only improves physical health but can also lead to improved mental well-being, reduced anxiety, and better financial stability.

Did you know that if you stay smoke-free for just 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good? Why not try it this October? We understand it can be challenging taking the first steps, but having the right support can help you succeed! For more information on how to quit you can visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/find-your-local-stop-smoking-service/>

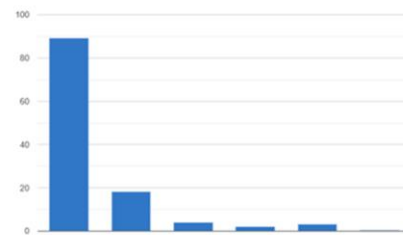
<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit->

Surgery Update:

PLT– The Surgery will be closed from 1pm on Wednesday 8th October 2025 for essential staff training

Friends and Family

www.valemedicalgroup.co.uk/about-us/friends-and-family-test/



Concern was quickly & efficiently dealt with.

Very good service and quick to acknowledge message and sort appointment.

Dr Rice took the time to listen to my queries regarding my recent surgery.

Everyone is very professional and caring.

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 September there were **94 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.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH - CHECK YOUR BREASTS

IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHECK YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST REGULARLY (AROUND ONCE A MONTH) FOR SYMPTOMS OF BREAST CANCER OR OTHER CONDITIONS. CHECKING YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST REGULARLY HELPS YOU LEARN WHAT LOOKS AND FEELS NORMAL FOR YOU. THIS MAKES IT EASIER TO NOTICE ANY CHANGES THAT COULD BE A SIGN OF A CONDITION SUCH AS BREAST CANCER. YOU SHOULD TRY TO CHECK YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST ABOUT ONCE A MONTH. SYMPTOMS TO LOOK AND FEEL FOR WHEN CHECKING YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST INCLUDE: A LUMP OR SWELLING IN YOUR BREAST, CHEST OR ARMPIT, A CHANGE IN THE SKIN OF YOUR BREAST, SUCH AS DIMPLING (IT MAY LOOK LIKE ORANGE PEEL) OR REDNESS, WHICH MAY BE HARDER TO SEE ON BLACK OR BROWN SKIN, A CHANGE IN SIZE OR SHAPE OF 1 OR BOTH BREASTS, OR EITHER SIDE OF YOUR CHEST – IT'S COMMON FOR BREASTS TO BE DIFFERENT SIZES, BUT CHECK FOR ANY CHANGES THAT ARE NOT NORMAL FOR YOU, [NIPPLE DISCHARGE](#) (IF YOU'RE NOT PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING), WHICH MAY HAVE BLOOD IN IT, A CHANGE IN THE SHAPE OR LOOK OF YOUR NIPPLE, SUCH AS IT TURNING INWARDS (INVERTED NIPPLE) OR A RASH ON IT (IT MAY LOOK LIKE ECZEMA), SORES OR ULCERS ON YOUR CHEST.

TO CHECK YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST: LOOK AT YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST IN A MIRROR TO LOOK FOR ANY CHANGES. START WITH YOUR ARMS BY YOUR SIDES AND THEN RAISE THEM. FEEL AROUND EACH BREAST OR SIDE OF YOUR CHEST IN A CIRCULAR MOTION ALL THE WAY UP TO YOUR COLLARBONE AND UNDER EACH ARMPIT. USE A MIX OF LIGHT AND FIRMER PRESSURE. DO NOT PRESS SO HARD IT HURTS. FEEL AROUND AND OVER EACH NIPPLE. FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING CHECKING YOUR BREAST YOU CAN VISIT: [HOW TO CHECK YOUR BREASTS OR CHEST - NHS TOUCH LOOK CHECK | BREAST CANCER NOW](#)

WORLD MENOPAUSE DAY – 18TH OCTOBER 2025

Menopause is when your periods stop due to lower hormone levels. It usually affects women between the ages of 45 and 55, but it can happen earlier. Menopause can happen naturally, or for reasons such as surgery to remove the ovaries (oophorectomy) or the uterus (hysterectomy), cancer treatments like chemotherapy, or a genetic reason. Sometimes the reason is unknown. There are things you can do to help with symptoms. There are also medicines that can replace the missing hormones and help relieve your symptoms. Symptoms can last for months or years and can change with time. For example, hot flushes and night sweats may improve, and then you may develop low mood and anxiety. Some symptoms, such as joint pain and vaginal dryness, can carry on after your periods stop. For more information regarding menopause and how to get support you can visit: [Menopause - Symptoms - NHS](#)

BABY LOSS AWARENESS WEEK 9th – 15th OCTOBER 2025

Baby Loss Awareness Week is an annual, national awareness week. Baby Loss Awareness Week 2025 is from 9 - 15 October. It's an opportunity to raise awareness of baby loss and campaign for better bereavement care and support. The week aims to share how the pregnancy and baby loss community is there for people every step of the way, during and after loss. We want everyone to know that you don't have to navigate pregnancy loss alone. You may be introduced to a bereavement support officer or a bereavement midwife. They usually work in hospitals or for the local council. They can help with any paperwork that needs to be completed and explain choices you can make about your baby's funeral. They'll also act as a point of contact for other healthcare professionals.

Many people experience feelings of guilt or anxiety following the loss of their baby. Some parents experience depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

You may find it helpful to discuss your feelings with your GP, community midwife or health visitor, or other parents who have lost a baby. Read more about dealing with loss.

There are lots of support group out there which will be able to support you and your family these include:

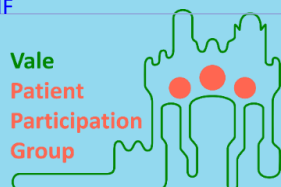
[Sands | Saving babies' lives. Supporting bereaved families.](#)

[Saving babies' lives | Tommy's | The pregnancy and baby charity](#)

[Baby Loss Awareness Week – Break the silence around baby loss](#)

NATIONAL CHOLESTEROL MONTH

High cholesterol is when you have too much of a fatty substance called cholesterol in your blood. You're more likely to get high cholesterol if you're over 50, a man, you've been through the menopause, or you're of South Asian or sub-Saharan African origin. It can also run in families. It can also be caused by eating fatty food, not exercising enough, being overweight, smoking and drinking alcohol. Some people also need to take medicine. Too much cholesterol can block your blood vessels. It makes you more likely to have heart problems or a stroke. High cholesterol does not usually cause symptoms. You can only find out if you have it from a blood test. To reduce your cholesterol, try to cut down on fatty food, especially food that contains a type of fat called saturated fat. You can still have foods that contain a healthier type of fat called unsaturated fat. Aim to do at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of exercise a week. Smoking can raise your cholesterol and make you more likely to have serious problems like heart attacks, strokes and cancer. Try to avoid drinking more than 14 units of alcohol a week, have several drink-free days each week, avoid drinking lots of alcohol in a short time (binge drinking). [Statins](#) are the most common medicine for high cholesterol. They reduce the amount of cholesterol your body makes. You take a tablet once a day. You usually need to take them for life. Other tablets – such as [ezetimibe](#), fibrates, bile acid sequestrants (also called resins) and bempedoic acid injections – such as alirocumab, evolocumab and inclisiran for those who are unable to take statins. For more information regarding how to lower your Cholesterol you can visit - [High cholesterol - Medicines for high cholesterol - NHS Understanding your cholesterol levels - BHF](#)



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