

Your Health

INSTANT appointment

With Dr Deborah Lee, Dr Fox Online Pharmacy (www.doctorfox.co.uk)



Abnormal result

Q I recently went for my smear test and got an abnormal result. Should I be worried?
Lisa, Suffolk



A Try not to worry if your smear test is abnormal. Firstly, the smear test is not a test for cervical cancer. It is looking for precancerous cells, which if present can almost always be treated, and stops you from developing cervical cancer.

You may simply need to have your smear test repeated. Alternatively, you may need to attend the Colposcopy clinic.

Here, the gynaecologist puts dye on your cervix and examines it more closely.

1 in 20 women will have an abnormal smear test result. However, only 1 in 2000 will be found to have cervical cancer.

It's very important you attend your smear.

Bruises easily

Q My six-year-old son seems to bruise really easily. Is that normal or could there be something else going on?
Nora, London

A Bruising – bleeding under the skin – is very common in children and is often just the inevitable result of their very busy, active lives.

However, it's time to take notice if bruises appear on places like the chest or the hands, as these are areas of the body that are generally not traumatised or persist for more than a few weeks.

Other potentially serious

signs include frequent nosebleeds which are hard to stop, excessive bleeding, for example at the dentist, or a family history of bleeding disorders.

I would recommend that you take your child to see the doctor for further advice.



Always anxious

Q I've always been a very anxious person, but the pandemic has only heightened my anxieties even more. Is there a medication that will help me?
Hannah, Nottingham

A It's very understandable you are feeling more anxious in the pandemic. Medication can be very helpful for treating anxiety and your options include beta-blockers, which can help with the physical symptoms of anxiety such as a racing heart, sweating and shaking.

You could also be given antidepressants, which help to elevate your mood, but also calm anxiety.

Another option includes benzodiazepines, such as diazepam. These may be used for acute anxiety for short term use due to a danger of addiction.

Try to make some positive lifestyle choices. Make sure you eat healthily, exercise, and get enough sleep.

Anxiety treatments also include taking part in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). You may self refer for 'talking treatment' on the NHS.

HOW TO...

Protect your children's eyes

Dr Romesh Angunawela, award winning eye surgeon and founding partner at Ophthalmic Consultants of London, shares his top tips to limit the impact of screens on your little one's eyes.

1. Get them to follow the 20:20:20 rule. Every 20 minutes they should give their eyes a breather, either by closing them for 20 seconds or by focusing on something 20 feet away.

2. Use eye drops. We blink less often when staring at a screen, meaning our eyes are more likely to dry out and become sore. Over the counter artificial tear drops can help restore eyes' natural lubrication.

3. Try the ProtectYourVision app to nudge them into taking screen breaks. This works with most web browsers, and reminds kids when to look away.

4. Reduce the amount of blue light they are exposed to. Most devices emit a lot of blue light, which upsets sleeping patterns. Apps like F.lux and Twilight reduce the amount of blue light put out by the screen and should make bedtime a little easier.

5. Get them to take the 'pencil push-up' challenge. They should hold a pencil at arm's length and focus on it. Bring it in towards your nose, trying to keep it in focus. Repeat 20 times for a great eye workout.

CONTACT US

For advice, contact us via one of the methods below. Letters and emails are selected randomly for publication. Sorry, doctors can't reply personally. **WRITE TO:** Pick Me Up! Media Centre, Emma-Chris Way, Abbey Wood Park, Filton, Bristol, BS34 7JU. **EMAIL:** hello@pickmeupmag.co.uk