



Berry Lane Medical Centre

NEWSLETTER

March 2026

Important Dates

The surgery will be closed over upcoming bank holidays:

Friday 3rd April
Monday 6th April
Monday 4th May
Monday 25th May

Child Vaccine Clinics

We hold a child vaccination clinic at the surgery every Tuesday & Friday.

When your child is due a vaccine or booster we will contact you via text or letter.

Ask to speak with one of our Practice Nurses if you have any vaccination queries.

Alternatively, you can find further info on vaccines at www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them

Surgery Hours

08:00-18:30
Monday to Friday

08:00-12:00
Saturday
(Pre-booked appts only)

Tel: 01772 376 777

A very warm welcome to the Spring edition of the Berry Lane Medical Centre Newsletter- yes, apparently Spring is on the way! I hope that you had a peaceful festive period and found some joy there, though I imagine many of us are looking forward to the lighter mornings and later sunsets. As we enter into Spring, a time of renewal and growth, it can often be a good time to embrace any positive health changes that might be on your radar (or those new year's resolutions that life might have got in the way of). The longer days can give an opportunity to get outside and move our bodies more and hopefully see the positive physical and mental health benefits that this can bring. In fact, there has been some interesting research (reasonably) recently on the positive impact of exercise on mental health (<https://bit.ly/BMJ-exedep>). If you're looking for somewhere to start with this, we are lucky to have several run clubs locally, including the Monday Night Running Club who are starting a new Couch to 5K group on Monday 9th March which will run for 9 weeks, will all abilities very welcome to come along- just meet at the Civic Hall car park at 6pm. There are also local Parkrun events every Saturday morning, which offer a lovely supportive environment where you can jog, walk or even volunteer to marshal the 5K course (see www.parkrun.org.uk).

As Spring arrives, we also see the return of Hay fever season. Treatments can involve barrier balms, antihistamines, nasal sprays and eye drops- there is a lot of information on the NHS website, in pharmacies or come to see us if things are still difficult despite these measures. It's also important to remember to be applying sunscreen as the weather warms up.

Finally, I would just like to add a personal note if I may. As many of you will know, I have had a period of time away from GP work following the bereavement of my wonderful husband by suicide last year. I would like to send a very heartfelt thank you to everyone for their patience and well wishes, in all of their forms, over the past 12 months; it has meant a lot. More than ever, the importance of destigmatizing and reducing any shame around mental health has been brought to the fore and we would like to reinforce that there is support out there, including of course from us here at Berry Lane if you are struggling. One of the charities that provides support and a listening ear 24/7, 365 is Samaritans, which can be accessed on 116 123. Somewhere along the line, I found myself signing up to run the London Marathon in April, to raise money for Samaritans. A huge thank you again to all of those who have so kindly sponsored my fundraising efforts so far- please give me a wave if you see me putting in the miles over the next few weeks. I am now looking forward to returning to work at the start of March and seeing both new and familiar faces.

Let's look forward to brighter days and look after each other.

Warmest wishes,

Dr Joanna Metcalf



berrylanemedicalcentre.co.uk



berrylanemedicalcentre@nhs.net



facebook.com/BerryLaneMedicalCentre

Staff Spotlight



Lucy Barnes

Advanced Nurse Practitioner

I joined Berry Lane in 2014 as a Specialist Nurse supporting care home residents. Prior to this, I worked in a variety of nursing roles across both hospital and community settings since 1989.

I became part of the Berry Lane team after completing a Master's degree in Advanced Practice and obtaining my prescribing qualification, which enables me to carry out comprehensive clinical assessments and prescribe independently.

My role involves overseeing the care of Berry Lane patients living in local care homes. I undertake regular health reviews and develop tailored care plans to meet each resident's individual medical needs. I work closely with care home staff and the G.P to ensure residents receive high-quality, person-centred care, and I liaise with external healthcare professionals whenever specialist input is required.

I provide ongoing monitoring and management of long-term conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. I also offer an urgent response service, acting promptly when there are sudden changes in a resident's health, delivering immediate care and helping to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions.

A key part of my role is supporting patients with advance care planning, ensuring that a person's values, goals and preferences guide decision-making if they are unable to speak for themselves. In palliative care, the focus shifts from curing disease to maximising comfort, dignity and quality of life, often alongside ongoing treatment. It is always a privilege to support individuals and their families at the end of life.

Healthy Choices Quiz

Are you ready to improve your overall health and wellbeing, but not sure where to start? The free NHS Healthy Choices Quiz is here to help – and it only takes 5 minutes. Answer questions about your lifestyle to receive an overall score as well as personalised guidance to help you live a healthier life.

Take the quiz now:

<https://www.nhs.uk/hcquiz>

For more information on the Healthy Choices Quiz, please visit

[Healthy Choices Quiz score explained - NHS](#)

CHANGE
NHS

Help build a health service fit for the future

Changing the NHS is going to involve everyone. The government wants to hear people's views, experiences and ideas as part of this engagement to help shape the 10 Year Health Plan for England.

Have your say at change.nhs.uk

Better Health
Let's do this

NHS

No wrong answers, just the right start.

The Healthy Choices Quiz is free, quick, and designed to help you take small steps towards lasting changes. It can help you eat well, move more, sleep better, and feel more in control of your health.

Search
Healthy
Choices Quiz



Have you noticed...

Get it checked **right away.**

Unexplained pain?

Losing weight without trying?

A new lump?

Blood in your poo or pee?

TALK CHECK
ACT ON CANCER.
Early action saves lives.

NHS
Lancashire and South Cumbria
Cancer Alliance

Your doctor will want to see you.
Book an appointment.

CHECK IT ✓
Don't chance it.

Listen to your body.
ActOnCancer.co.uk
/Checkit

Drink Less alcohol

Stopping or drinking less alcohol can make a big difference to your health. It can boost your energy, help you lose weight, and save you money.

If you are drinking more than you would like, you are not alone. Lots of people find it hard to cut back.

But every small step you take brings you closer to your goals, and even small changes can make a difference.

Find out how to reduce your alcohol drinking and take control of your health with our simple tips and tools. Let's get started!

For more information visit: [Drink less alcohol - Better Health - NHS](#)



Alcohol units and guidelines

Alcohol is measured in units to help you understand how much you're drinking. Different drinks and servings contain different numbers of units.

There's no completely safe level of drinking. If you do drink alcohol, then it's recommended to drink no more than 14 units a week, spread across 3 days or more.

14 units of alcohol is around:

- 6 medium (175ml) average strength glasses of wine, or
- 6 pints of average strength beer

Alcohol unit calculator

To help you work out how many units and calories are in your drinks, you can use the [Alcohol Change UK's unit calculator](#).

Once you know your units, it's easier to gauge how much alcohol you're drinking and plan how you might cut back.

Tips to help you cut down on alcohol

1. Have a game plan

Use the NHS Drink Free Days app to set yourself a weekly unit target and stick to it. But if one week you do go over your limit, don't stop trying – next week is a fresh start.

2. Switch from stronger stuff

Choose drinks that are lower in alcohol. Try lighter beers – under 4% ABV. As a rule of thumb, white and rosé wines are lower in strength than reds. Or try swapping some or all of your drinks for no or low-alcohol alternatives.

3. Stick with it!

It might take a bit of time to get used to the change from your usual choices, so if you notice a difference in taste with lower-strength drinks, do not give up! There are so many options, it's likely there's one out there for you – and switching means you can enjoy the health benefits of drinking less without losing your social life.

4. Shake up your social plans

Going for drinks is not the only way to see friends. You could watch a film, meet up for breakfast, grab a coffee and go for a walk, go bowling, head to the gym or sign up for a class to do together, for instance.

5. Set a booze budget

Sticking to a budgeted amount for alcohol can be a good way to drink less. If you are going out, try taking only the exact cash, or set up a spending alert on your card.

6. Write off the rounds

Being involved in rounds makes it easy to end up drinking more than you meant. Try to avoid them if you can, and do not feel like you have to say yes to a drink just because someone else is buying. There's always next time.

7. Only wine and dine

Waiting for your evening meal before you have a drink – and having your first only once you've started eating – is another simple way to help you cut down.

8. Beat boredom

It might take a bit of time to get used to the change from your usual choices, so if you notice a difference in taste with lower-strength drinks, do not give up! There are so many options, it's likely there's one out there for you – and switching means you can enjoy the health benefits of drinking less without losing your social life.

Ready to Quit Smoking?

Quitting smoking is easier when you have a plan and the right support. Many people try to quit with willpower alone, but going cold turkey can be tough.

By preparing ahead and using stop-smoking products or getting expert help, you can really boost your chances of quitting for good.

What happens when you quit?

After 20 minutes

Check your pulse rate, it will already be starting to return to normal.

After 8 hours

Your oxygen levels are recovering, and the harmful carbon monoxide level in your blood will have reduced by half.

After 48 hours

Your carbon monoxide levels have dropped to that of a non-smoker. Your lungs are clearing out mucus and your senses of taste and smell are improving.

After 72 hours

If you notice that breathing feels easier, it's because your bronchial tubes have started to relax. Also your energy will be increasing.

After 2 to 12 weeks

Blood will be pumping through to your heart and muscles much better because your circulation will have improved.

After 3 to 9 months

Any coughs, wheezing or breathing problems will be improving as your lung function increases by up to 10%.

After 1 year

Great news! Your risk of heart attack will have halved compared

After 10 years

More great news! Your risk of death from lung cancer will have halved compared with a smoker's.

Visit [Quit smoking - Better Health - NHS](#) for more help and support to quit smoking

Pharmacy First

'Help Us, Help You'



In May 2023, NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care announced a Delivery plan for recovering access to primary care. Part of the plan includes enabling patients to get certain prescription medications directly from a pharmacy, without a GP appointment.

A referral from your GP practice to the pharmacy is required for you to be able to access this service.

Accessing Pharmacy First services

The following table shows the 7 conditions pharmacists can manage across various age ranges.

Impetigo Aged 1 year and over Think Pharmacy first	Infected insect bites Aged 1 year and over Think Pharmacy first
Earache Aged 1 to 17 years Think Pharmacy first	Sore throat Aged 5 years and over Think Pharmacy first
Sinusitis Aged 12 years and over Think Pharmacy first	Urinary tract infections (UTIs) Women aged 16 to 64 years Think Pharmacy first
Shingles Aged 18 years and over Think Pharmacy first	

Other services

- **Help with new medicine**

When you start a new medicine for a long term condition you can have up to 3 appointments with a pharmacist to: answer any questions you have, help you use the medicine safely, make sure that the medicine's right for you.

- **Getting the contraceptive pill without a prescription**

Some pharmacies may offer the contraceptive pill for free without a prescription. If you are aged 18 years or older, you can also buy the progesterone-only pill from most pharmacies.

- **Emergency contraception**

Some pharmacies offer the emergency contraceptive pill for free. If you're aged 16 or over, you can also buy it from most pharmacies

- **Get a free blood pressure check**

Some pharmacies offer a free blood pressure check.

More services

- advice from a pharmacist after contacting NHS 111 or a GP
- chlamydia screening and treatment
- advice and help on how to stop smoking
- cholesterol and blood sugar testing
- the substance misuse service, including needle and syringe exchange schemes
- advice and help on how to manage your weight

Core messaging

- Going to your local pharmacy offers an easy and convenient way to get clinical advice on minor health concerns - you don't need an appointment and you can be seen in a private consultation room.
- Your local pharmacist can now offer treatment and provide some prescription medicine for seven conditions, if appropriate, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription (See above table).
- Pharmacists have the right clinical training to make sure you get the help you need and can also signpost you to your general practice team, A&E or other relevant local service, where necessary.

Wider messaging

- Community pharmacies are staffed by highly-skilled and qualified health professionals who are trusted parts of local communities: All pharmacists train for five years in the use of medicines before they qualify and are also trained in clinically assessing and treating minor illnesses and giving health and wellbeing advice to help people stay well. Pharmacy technicians are part of the pharmacy team and are also registered health professionals.
- The new expanded community pharmacy services which also include initiating oral contraception without needing to see a GP first, and providing more blood pressure check services, are part of the NHS' plans to recover and improve access to primary care services. It aims to free up to 10 million GP appointments a year once fully implemented, making it quicker and easier for the public to access healthcare in their local community, and giving them more choice in where and how they access care.
- Over 10,200 pharmacies (95%+) have opted to deliver the service and 80% of people live within 20 minutes of a community pharmacy, making it a convenient and quicker way of accessing care.

Call to Action

- Don't wait for minor health concerns to get worse – think pharmacy first and get seen by your local community pharmacy team.
- For more information, visit nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst

Local support groups

Happy & Healthy Men

Connection, conversation and creation – that's what joining a Men's Shed is all about.

Men's Sheds encourage people to come together to make, repair and repurpose, supporting projects in their local communities.

Improving wellbeing, reducing loneliness and combatting social isolation.

"When men come together to connect, converse and create, they stay healthier for longer, both mentally and physically."



Brew, Chat & Build
Every Tuesday Evening 5pm-8pm
Warwick Street, Longridge

For more information
email: longridgemensshed@gmail.com
or visit us on Facebook: [longridge.mens.shed](https://www.facebook.com/longridge.mens.shed)

www.menssheds.org.uk

Shed Support

Fun, helpful, social – Men's Sheds have been called a lot of things and our community of Shedders are to thank for all their success. But what exactly is a Shd? How do they start? Where can you find them?

To learn these answers and more take a look at all things Shed [here](https://menssheds.org.uk/sheds/).
<https://menssheds.org.uk/sheds/>



Parkinson's Walking Football

A slower paced version of the beautiful game for those with a diagnosis of Parkinson's

Walking Football is designed to help participants maintain a healthy and active lifestyle and to support those who have had to stop playing football get back into the game.

It doesn't matter what your ability or whether you're male or female, all are welcome to join in!

Our Parkinson's Walking Football sessions are aimed at individuals living with Parkinson's, providing a supportive and friendly environment to enjoy football at your own pace.

When

Wednesdays, from 11am to 1pm

Where

PlayFootball, Tag Lane,
Preston, PR2 3TX

Cost

Free

For further information please contact Grace Birtwell
Healthandwellbeing@pne.com

Inspiring change, improving health, enhancing lives.

[@pnecommunity](https://www.facebook.com/pnecommunity) [@PNECET](https://www.instagram.com/pnecommunity)



Creating Connections

Supporting people living with dementia and their carers in Preston

Free weekly sessions at Deepdale
2pm to 3.30pm | Sir Tom Finney Lounge

Engaging group sessions including quizzes, arts and crafts, gentle exercise, and reminiscence.

Dedicated support groups for carers, providing advice, peer support, and practical tools.



Join us every third Thursday of each month for Blue Flamingo's sing-along session!
Sing, dance or just listen along. Refreshments included.



LONGRIDGE LIBRARY Chaps Who Chat

MEN'S SOCIAL GROUP WITH BOARD GAMES, PUZZLES, OR JUST A BREW AND A CHINWAG.



First Wednesday of the month
Drop in 10am to 11.30am

Citizens Advice—New Ribble Valley OUTREACH SESSION

[Citizens Advice East Lancashire-Rossendale & Hyndburn](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) ▶ Longridge
Citizens Advice East Lancashire-Rossendale & Hyndburn · 5 January at 22:38 · 📍

NEW Ribble Valley OUTREACH SESSION 📍

We're pleased to launch our new General Advice Outreach Session at the Longridge Town Council office 📍

📅 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month

🕒 1:30pm – 3:30pm

📍 Longridge Town Council Office
Longridge Station, Berry Lane,
Longridge, Preston PR3 3JP

👉 We're there tomorrow! As it's the 1st Tuesday of the month, people are welcome to come along and see us.

Please share to help spread the word! 🗣️👍

#Longridge #CommunitySupport #FreeAdvice #OutreachSession— in Longridge.

FRIENDLY FRIDAYS



LONGRIDGE LIBRARY
THE SECOND FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10AM TO 11.30AM
FREE – DROP IN

COME FOR A CUPPA, A LISTENING EAR, OR A HELPING HAND. OUR CHEERFUL VOLUNTEER IS HAPPY TO CHAT ABOUT ANYTHING YOU LIKE, EVEN IF IT'S JUST THE WEATHER. HE'S ALSO GREAT WITH MOBILE PHONES!

Awareness campaigns: Dates and events

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month—March 2026

Ovarian cancer is a disease that can disrupt the normal function of the ovaries. If it's left unchecked, it can affect other parts of the body too.

[Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in the UK | Ovarian Cancer Action | Awareness Months | Ovarian Cancer Action](#)



National No Smoking Day—11th March 2026



Help encourage as many smokers as possible to quit on No Smoking Day by organising your own event.

[Smoking - BHF](#)

Nutrition and Hydration Week—16-22 March 2026

A shared objective to highlight, promote and celebrate improvements in the provision of nutrition and hydration locally, nationally and globally.

[N&H Week | Nutrition and Hydration Week](#)



Stress Awareness Month—April 2026



Find out about common symptoms of stress and possible causes. Plus get advice on stress relief, and a personalised plan of self-care tips.

[Stress - Every Mind Matters - NHS](#)

National Walking Month—May 2026

Encourages people to walk more throughout May.

[National Walking Month](#)



February 2026 Monthly Statistics

- 485 telephone consultations with a GP or Nurse Practitioner
- 2221 face to face appointments with a GP or Emergency Surgery Clinician
- 722 Nurse Appointments
- 61 home/Community Hospital Visits
- 4,452 requests for medication
- 139 nursing Home Visits/Telephone calls
- 179 patients came to see our First Contact Physiotherapist
- 15 patients saw our Mental Health Practitioners
- 129 new patients were registered
- Our secretaries actioned 395 referrals
- Our reception team answered 10,813 phone calls

141 People did not attend their booked appointments

Total Clinical time lost: 47 hours

If you do not need an appointment that you have booked please cancel it.

Appointments

Appointments can be booked at the reception desk, over the telephone or by using the online Patient Access system or the NHS app.

If we have your mobile telephone number you will receive a text confirming the appointment date and time. You will receive a text reminder 48 hours prior to the appointment.

The emergency surgery is a service provided by the Practice for patients who feel their condition is urgent and wish to be seen that day

If you cannot attend an appointment for any reason please inform us as soon as possible in order for us to give the slot to someone else.

Saturday Clinics

The surgery is open on Saturdays from 08:00-12:00 offering limited pre-booked appointments. There are limited staff on duty and we kindly ask that you do not attend or call the surgery with any routine enquiries.

There are a limited number of appointments available with the GP and Nurse on Saturdays. You may be able to book annual health checks, NHS health checks, smears and injections with the nurses (Please note availability may change depending on the nurse on duty).

Please contact the surgery Monday-Friday to book routine appointments and annual reviews, collect blood forms and paperwork and order prescriptions.

Missed appointments

! MISSED 3 APPOINTMENTS IN 3 MONTHS?

Our reception team check all missed appointments daily. If you don't attend and no reason is given, it is recorded as Did Not Attend-in your medical record.

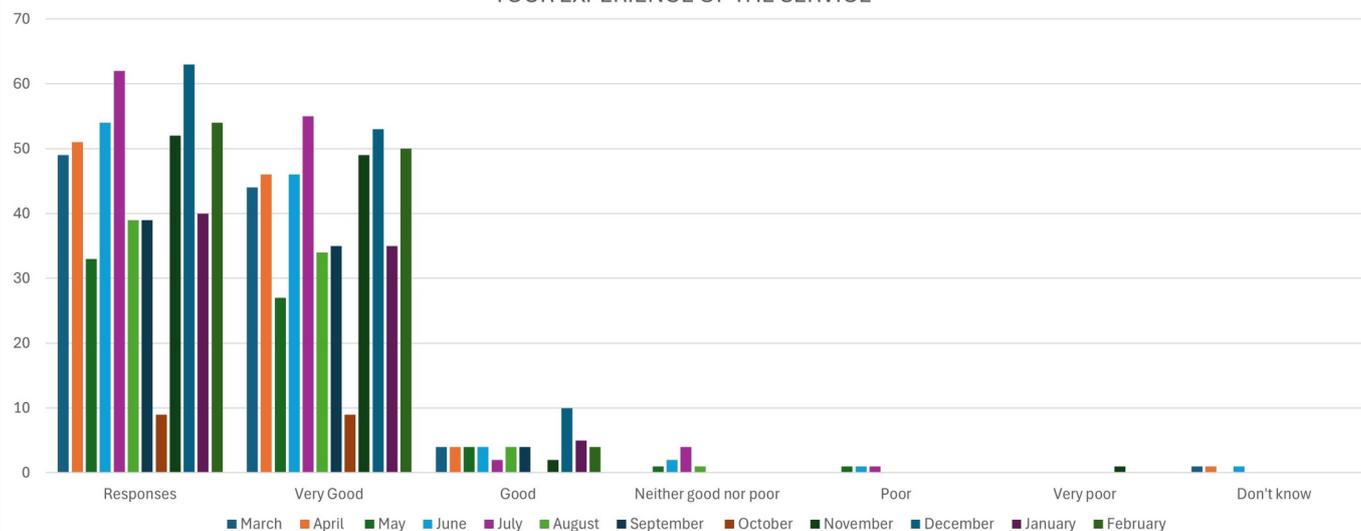
Here's what happens after repeated missed appointments:

- **Letter 1** - First warning: 3 missed appointments in 12 months.
- **Letter 2** -Final warning: If you miss another appointment within 3 months
- **Letter 3** - If you miss another after your final warning, you WILL be asked to register elsewhere.

This policy is in place to be fair to all patients.

Family and friends Survey

THINKING ABOUT YOUR RECENT CONTACT/VISIT TO BERRY LANE MEDICAL CENTRE OVERALL HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE SERVICE



Each month we run a survey to allow patients, family and friends to have their say on the service provided by the practice. To participate you can visit our Berry Lane Medical Centre Website and complete the NHS Friends and Family questionnaire.

Thinking about your recent
contact/visit to Berry Lane Medical
Centre



Online Services

Did you know that you can order prescriptions, book/cancel appointments, view results and look at aspects of your medical records online? It's simple to register, all you need are login details provided by us and a computer, tablet or smartphone to access the website or app.

To sign up, please visit the surgery in person with a copy of your photographic ID, for example a passport or driving licence, and we will print your unique linkage key & password along with a list of GP online services you can access.

Access to GP Online Services

As from 18th October 2023 NHS England have changed what patients can view in their own medical record online/in an app. You will now have full access to all your medical records after 18th October 2023.

WHAT IS IN YOUR RECORD

- Illnesses or diagnosis
- Operations
- Examinations and screening
- Medicines
- Allergies
- Vaccinations and immunisations
- Test results such as blood and urine tests
- X-rays and scans
- Notes about your appointments with doctors and nurses at the surgery
- Letters from hospitals and other medical staff that look after you
- Lifestyle information, for example whether you smoke and drink alcohol or not, or how much you exercise
- Height and weight
- Contact details

If you are a new patient registering with us after this date, you will only get full access from the day you registered with us NOT any historic date from your last practice.

If you are already registered with us prior to this date, you will be able to view all medical records from 18th October 2023, not anything prior to this date.

For more information go to - <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/using-online-services>

We are now using a new online service for non clinical requests

It is a great way for you to contact our practice for non-urgent admin requests such as sick notes, repeat prescriptions, referral enquiries, test results or anything else admin related. It is very simple to fill out so please do give it a go if you need to contact us. We really think it is easier for most people than waiting on hold to speak to a receptionist we would love to hear your feedback. If you do not have access to the internet or find it difficult to use a computer or smartphone you can call reception instead or you can use the online form by accessing the link on our website.

Local Pharmacies

Cohens Pharmacy Berry Lane - 01772 782643
Well Pharmacy - 01772 784700
Goosnargh Pharmacy - 01772 865238
Grimsthorpe Pharmacy - 01772 797351

Useful Numbers

Referral Management Centre - 01772 660011
Longridge Hospital - 01772 777400
Royal Preston Hospital - 01772 716565
Chorley Hospital - 01772 522972
District Nurses - 01772 777323
Health Visitors - 0300 247 0040
MindsMatter - 01772 773437
Urgent Mental Health Line - 0800 953 0110

Useful Links

nhs.111.uk

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services

www.whenshouldiworry.com

www.nhs.uk/conditions/

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/



[berrylanemedicalcentre.co.uk](https://www.berrylanemedicalcentre.co.uk)



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Health**

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