



Wellness Screening

Winchester GP

Welcome to Winchester GP

Our experienced doctors combine old fashioned care with cutting edge diagnostics to give you the very best in bespoke private healthcare.

- Would you like to be proactive with your health, rather than waiting until things go wrong?
- Are you feeling generally below par, and keen to know if there is an underlying cause?
- Do you find yourself wasting time and emotional energy googling your symptoms, rather than getting on with your life?
- In need of a fresh start with your health, but unsure where to begin?

Wellness Screening could be just the thing for you.

In the coming pages, we will work out your healthcare personality, and explain how Wellness Screening might be a perfect match.

We explain the process of Wellness Screening and finally demystify all the 'medical speak' around blood tests so that you know exactly what is involved and how each test relates to your every day health.

Enjoy the read and if there is anything we can help with, or you have any questions on how this can help you take control of your wellbeing, please do get in touch.



Gemma Willsher

Gemma Willsher
Co-Founder & Practice Manager
Winchester GP

Why Wellness Screening Is An Excellent Investment



What's your health personality?



How you choose to manage your health is influenced by multiple factors; upbringing, life experiences and your medical history will all play a role. Your approach is also likely to change over time - with key life events such as marriage, a new baby, or a bereavement all natural prompts to re-assess. While we are all unique, there are several recurring themes that we notice in our patients, all of which can be an excellent fit for Wellness Screening. Read on to see if you recognise one or maybe several of them.

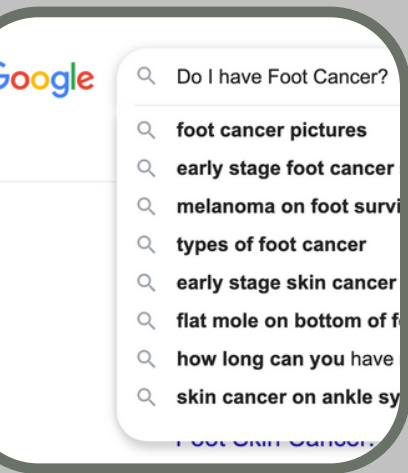
1) Happy go lucky



Do you take your health for granted? Let's face it, so many of us do, and the old adage 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' comes to mind. In some cases, our bodies are pretty good at telling us quickly if there is a problem. But what about those instances where changes occur without any noticeable symptoms, or when the signs are so diffuse that you barely notice?

Laboratory testing can pick up concerning changes before you experience clear symptoms, and that early detection can really make a difference to treatment outcomes. That's why, even if you feel fine, a regular check in through an annual Wellness Screen is a great idea. We suggest starting no later than aged 35, but there is no harm in starting earlier.

2) Head in Google



We've all done it at some time or other. Noticed a symptom, Googled it in our lunch break, only to find that we could have at least a dozen different illnesses, including a rare tropical disease, and two forms of cancer!

If your mind tends to run away with 'what ifs' and 'maybes', our Wellness Screen, with its breadth of laboratory testing, can help you ground your thoughts using quantifiable metrics. Our doctor will talk you through your results line by line, most importantly interpreting them so that you can relate them to your particular worries. And you will also have a great base line set of results to compare and monitor trends going forward. We find the process really helps our patients achieve a comfortable state of vigilance, as opposed to being on permanent 'red alert'.

3) Head in the sand

Even if we do have symptoms, it's not always easy to take that next step and consult a doctor. We might be nervous of the possible outcomes, reluctant to 'make a fuss', or afraid we won't be taken seriously. Some even perceive it as a sign of weakness to ask for help. The opposite is the case, of course, but many people still struggle to side-step this mental block.



Getting in to a routine of Wellness Screening can help you overcome some of the mental barriers to consulting a doctor. If you, or someone you know, is resistant to making that first step, reframing it as 'like getting the boiler serviced, or your car MOT'd' can make the whole prospect less daunting. After all, it's pretty crazy that we pay more attention to the health of our machines than of our own bodies!

4) In need of a reset



Modern lives are busy and full of challenges that can really derail our health goals. By the time we realise things have gone wrong it feels like we have a mountain to climb. Where does one start? And will you just feel 'told off' for having got to this point?

A Wellness Screen is the ideal first step back to health- an opportunity to get everything out on the table, with an expert on your side. Remember doctors are human beings too, and by no means immune to health hiccups, so you can be assured of their empathy as well as expertise. At Winchester GP we also have a great network of hand-picked practitioners to refer to if you need more support in a specific area. From specialist consultants to physios, nutritionists, health coaches, trainers and therapists. Our team becomes your team to get you back on the path to wellness.

5) In need of a plan

You book your hair appointments 3 months in advance, pay your bills by direct debit, and have calendar alerts for your MOTs and your boiler service. Naturally you would like to replicate that sense of organisation and calm when it comes to your health!



Wellness Screening is all about getting in to a healthy rhythm of monitoring for your health. You already know how much time and headspace a good routine can create, so prepare to enjoy exactly that, thanks to your proactive approach to health.

Wellness Screening

The Process



It's as easy as 1,2,3

Step 1

30 minutes with Health Care Practitioner

Height & Weight



Blood Pressure check



Urinalysis



Blood tests

Full blood count



Liver function



Kidney function



Cholesterol/Lipids



Bone profile



Diabetes check (HbA1C)



Thyroid Function



Vitamin D



Active Vitamin B12



Folate/Vitamin B9



Ferritin/iron



HS CRP (Inflammatory marker)



CA125 (women)



Prostate Specific Antigen/PSA (men)



Additional tests

Bowel cancer screen



Resting ECG (heart trace)



Step 2

In depth doctor consultation

Your choice of appointment length

40 minutes

60 minutes

80 minutes

- Full review of blood test results and other investigations
- Further examinations if indicated
- Discussion of any health concerns or matters of importance to you
- Plan agreed for any next steps including prescriptions, referrals and follow-up appointments

Step 3

Time to put your plan in to action

- Full notes & results shared for your records
- We remain on hand to support with your plans - and check that the next steps are proceeding smoothly

Relax knowing that your health concerns are in-hand

Why Winchester GP?



Why Winchester GP?

We think there are many factors that mark our offering out from the generic health screening crowd - allow us to explain...

Doctor-Led

All consultations are with GMC registered GPs or consultants, so you know you are being looked after by skilled professionals who are qualified not just to identify concerns, but also to treat and manage a wide variety of conditions.



Continuity

Wellness screening is just one part of our full GP service, so having spent the time getting to know you, we love to continue the journey. You can continue to use our service throughout the year, with both Pay as You Go and Subscription options to suit your circumstances

Tailored

Because we gather the blood test and investigation results before your doctor appointment, we are able to tailor the consultation specifically to your needs and concerns. This means no tick boxes and no generic advice - we focus solely on the concerns that are relevant and important to you.



Your Winchester GP Team

As a local business, we understand the level of personal service you need. You will know our small but perfectly formed team by name, who will be on hand to support you every step of the way.



FAQS

Can you add extra tests on top of those listed?

The range of tests in our Wellness Screen has been carefully selected by our doctors to give an excellent overview of your health. However if you feel that additional tests would be useful for your particular stage in life, or medical history please do call us to discuss. We have access to thousands of tests through our trusted partner laboratories. It's always best to have medical advice when ordering tests, so sometimes we might suggest that a doctor review your request to make sure it will give you the information you are hoping for.

Can I have a smear test (HPV screen)

Absolutely! For an additional fee your 'smear' or cervical screen can be conducted by one of our female GPs during your wellness screen. Please advise us in advance so that we can book your appointment appropriately, including its timing within your menstrual cycle. Alternatively you can book to have a smear test independently of your Wellness Screen at any time.

Are you testing for cancer in the Wellness Screen?

The tests included in our Wellness Screen include the FIT test for bowel cancer, the PSA for prostate cancer, and the CA125, which can detect, amongst other things, ovarian cancer. The remaining tests are not specific to cancer, but any abnormalities can indicate the presence of malignancy, amongst other things. As always, individual results should never be interpreted in isolation, and always with the expertise of a qualified doctor.

In addition, we can now offer the Trucheck blood test. This is a cutting edge test, designed for annual screening in people without any cancer symptoms, and looks for circulating tumour cells for 70 different cancers. You may wish to consider it as an add on test for your Wellness Screen. If you are interested, the first step is to have a 10 minute no-obligation discussion with one of our doctors so that they can explain the test in detail and answer any questions you have. Please call our office for further details.

FAQS

I have Private Medical Insurance - can I claim for a Wellness Screen through that?

With dozens of providers and hundreds of private medical insurance products on the market, it is impossible to generalise about what might or might not be covered. That said, it's definitely worth asking the question as some policies do give you a budget for annual tests, or annual screening. In this case we are very happy to provide you with any paperwork you might need to claim the fees back from your insurer. Please note that we do not invoice any insurers directly.

I would like to have a Wellness Screen and charge it through my business - is this allowed?

If you have your own business, then great news! You can indeed charge an annual health check against your company accounts, reducing your corporation tax bill and the personal cost to you. What is more, an annual health check is exempt from any National Insurance or benefit in kind charges. At Winchester GP we think it's one of the most overlooked employee benefits out there. (Naturally its worth talking to your accountant to make sure it is suitable for your circumstances)

I am an employer and would like to offer Wellness Screening to my employees as a tax deductible benefit - can you help?

Employee wellness screening is a great employee benefit to offer. Our research suggests that it is widely well received by employees. It is a meaningful investment that might be out of reach for some without employer support. Unlike private medical insurance, everyone can feel the benefits, whether they are feeling unwell or not. Meanwhile as an employer you can enjoy the reduced staff absence, greater productivity and stronger staff loyalty that come with making staff wellbeing your top priority. We have a B2B offering for employee Wellness Screens for 4 or more people. To learn more, simply give us a call and we will be happy to discuss your requirements.

FAQS

Are the Wellness Screen appointments Face to Face or video?

Step 1), the appointment with our HCA, is always a face to face appointment at one of our locations. Alternatively, for an additional fee, we can arrange for a home visit - subject to location and practitioner availability.

For step 2), the doctor consultation, you can choose your preference of face to face or video consultation. Face to face has the obvious advantage of enabling in-person examinations, which are particularly relevant for musculoskeletal issues, skin concerns, or certain gynae issues. On the other hand, for busy people, or those who travel frequently, a video consultation can be very convenient, time efficient and effective. Your doctor will have a good deal of clinical information already in the form of your blood test results and ECG, which can be discussed by video link. Over the past few years our doctors have become very adept at remote assessment and can still issue prescriptions, refer to specialists or order imaging (MRI, Ultrasound, CT or X-ray) from a video consultation, so it is certainly an option that can work well for many people. If you would like advice on the best option for you, please don't hesitate to call our friendly reception team.

What do all of
these Wellness
Investigations
mean?



Investigations explained

Medical investigations and blood test results can feel a bit baffling, rather like a foreign language. But there's no need to be blinded by the science! Our doctor will always take the time to review your results line by line, explain how they relate to your day to day health, and of course recommend the steps you need to take to optimise your health.

Nevertheless, it helps to have an idea in advance of what the tests are looking for. Read on, because we have put together a handy potted guide to the tests included in our wellness screen.

If it is not diagnosed and treated, high blood pressure (hypertension) increases your risk of serious problems, such as heart attacks and strokes. We measure blood pressure with a cuff that is inflated around your arm. Your reading will consist of two numbers:

- the higher number is your systolic pressure- the pressure when your heart pushes blood out
- the lower number is your diastolic pressure – the pressure when your heart rests between beats.

'Text book' ideal blood pressure is 120/80 but your doctor will interpret your reading for you, depending on various factors.

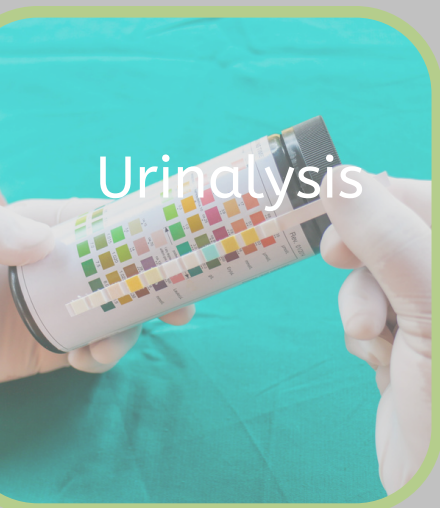
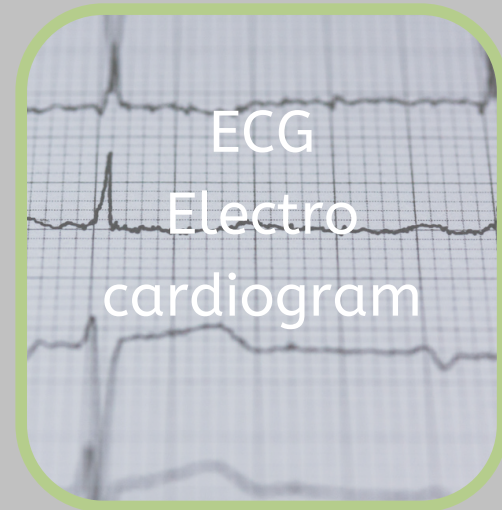
Some patients find their blood pressure is always raised at the doctors - so called 'white coat' syndrome. For these patients, several home readings, or a 24 hour blood pressure monitor can be preferable. For a 24 hour bp you would wear a monitor for a full day to get the most accurate picture of how your blood pressure evolves throughout the day at rest and when active.



Investigations explained

An electrocardiogram (ECG) is a simple test that can be used to check your heart's rhythm and electrical activity. Sensors attached to the skin are used to detect the electrical signals produced by your heart each time it beats. It can detect abnormalities in the heart rate or rhythm, signs of coronary heart disease, any changes to the heart structure. It can even detect a heart attack as it happens.

N.B. Despite having a similar name, an ECG isn't the same as an echocardiogram, which is a scan of the heart.



A urine dip can be conducted in minutes in the clinic room, by dipping a small sample. The test looks at a range of factors that provide clues to your overall health.

- Acidity (pH) - The pH level indicates the amount of acid in urine. The pH level might indicate a kidney or urinary tract disorder
- Protein - if higher than expected this might indicate a kidney problem
- Sugar - any detection of sugar usually calls for follow-up testing for diabetes
- Ketones - ketones detected in your urine may indicate the need for follow up investigations
- Bilirubin - bilirubin in your urine might indicate liver damage or disease
- nitrites or leukocyte esterase might indicate evidence of infection
- Blood - this may indicate various kidney or bladder issues, and requires further investigation

Blood tests explained

A microscopic view of blood cells, showing numerous red blood cells (erythrocytes) and a few white blood cells (leukocytes) and platelets. The red blood cells are large and biconcave, while the white blood cells are smaller and more irregular in shape. The platelets are tiny and disc-shaped.

Full Blood Count

A full blood count looks very specifically at the key components of blood itself - red blood cells, white blood cells, haemoglobin and platelets. Some people assume from the name that a full blood count tests for everything. Sadly this is not true, but when interpreted by a qualified doctor it can give clues to a wide variety of conditions - from a minor passing cold to something more sinister. This is why it is so commonly requested.

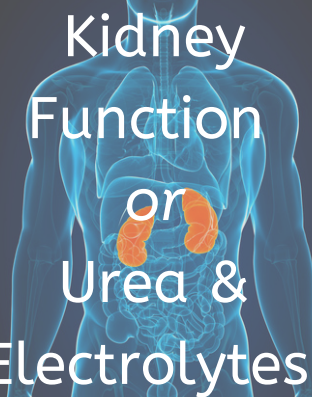
- Red blood cells (RBC) carry oxygen around the body
- The white cells (White cell count/WCC) form part of the immune system and can fight against bacteria, viruses and parasites
- Haemoglobin is found in red blood cells and is essential in allowing the transportation of oxygen
- Platelets help the blood to clot by binding together in a sticky mass if you cut yourself

The liver is your largest internal organ, and a key player in a huge variety of bodily processes, including filtering your blood for toxins, supporting digestion, storing vitamins and minerals and breaking down protein in to useable building blocks for your body.

- Alkaline Phosphate (ALP), Alanine Transferase (ALT), Aspartate Transaminase (AST), and Gamma GT are all enzymes created by the liver
- Bilirubin is a waste product made by the liver
- Albumin is a protein made by the liver

A 3D anatomical illustration of a human torso, showing the internal organs. The liver is highlighted in a reddish-brown color, and the text 'Liver Function Test' is overlaid on it.

Liver Function Test



Kidney Function or Urea & Electrolytes

Along with the liver, your kidneys play a key role in removing waste from your body. Conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure can impact kidney health, as can an infection.

- Urea & creatinine are both waste products that the kidneys work to filter out of the body. eGFR is a calculation based on the level of waste products to determine how well your kidneys are filtering.
- Your kidneys are also responsible for fine tuning the levels of electrolytes such as sodium, potassium, calcium, chloride, phosphate and bicarbonate. This balance is essential to enable myriad bodily functions from nerve and muscle activity to normal hydration and fluid levels.

A lipid panel tells us your overall cholesterol level, and then breaks this number down in to components being: Triglycerides, HDL (High Density Lipoprotein), and LDL (Low density Lipoprotein).

- While the overall cholesterol level is significant, your doctor will be equally interested in the ratio of each element to the others.
- For our purposes, the 'goody' is HDL, which helps to keep levels of 'baddies', LDL and triglycerides, in check. LDL and triglycerides are bad for our heart health and cause 'furring up' of the arteries.



The Thyroid gland is important in regulating the body's metabolism. This includes regulating weight, temperature, strength, energy and even mood.

- TSH – (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone) is the hormone that tells the thyroid whether it should be ramping up its activity or slowing things down
- T4 – (Thyroxine) is produced directly by the thyroid in response to levels of thyroid stimulating hormone.
- Your doctor will look at the levels of TSH and T4 in relation to each other. If your TSH is very high, but little T4 is being produced this would indicate an underactive thyroid. The opposite - low TSH and high T4 - would indicate an overactive thyroid.



HbA1C



HbA1C is a test to screen, diagnose and manage diabetes.

- The test effectively gives you a report of how well your body has been regulating blood sugar levels over the previous 120 days.
- While Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented, the onset of Type 2 diabetes is strongly linked to lifestyle factors. The good news is that the blood test will detect adverse developments at a point where you can still make changes to reverse the trend.
- This is why we strongly recommend you monitor it regularly - knowledge is power, after all.

Vitamin D

Many people associate Vitamin D with its role in helping the body to absorb calcium, but it plays an important role in multiple other functions in the body including muscle strength, the immune system, mood and energy levels.

- We generate Vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, but in the UK it is difficult for this alone to make adequate supplies, particularly in the winter months. We find that many patients are low in Vitamin D, often to the point of having symptoms, and then feel genuine benefits when they take a supplement.

Vitamin B12 is important in making new cells in the body. A lack of B12 can cause a wide variety of symptoms including anaemia, tiredness, mood changes, nerve problems, memory problems, and vision changes.

- Clinically low levels of B12 might be addressed through oral supplements. However, if the deficiency stems from the body not absorbing B12 through the gut, vitamin B12 injections may be prescribed.

Vitamin B12

Ferritin

Ferritin is a protein in your blood that stores iron in the liver.

- Iron is required in the body for blood production. It is part of haemoglobin which carries oxygen around the body and is vital to the function of haemoglobin.
- Iron deficiency could be the result of blood loss (menstruation or bleeding elsewhere in the body)
- If ferritin levels are higher than expected, this could indicate problems with your liver

Folic acid is important for the production of red blood cells. A lack of this can cause anaemia and tiredness.

- Supplementation is recommended in pregnancy to reduce the chances of spina bifida and neural tube defects.
- Folic acid works in conjunction with Vitamin B12 so looking at the levels in combination is important



C Reactive Protein is manufactured in the liver, in response to any inflammation in the body.

- It can rise due to a range of causes, from one-off infections and injuries, through to chronic diseases
- It is therefore essential that a raised CRP is interpreted in the context of other health markers, and always by a medical professional.

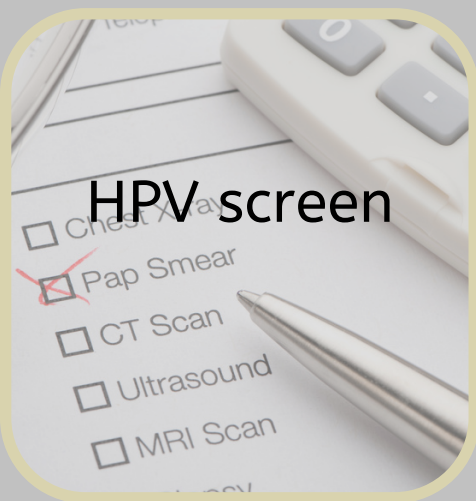
PSA is produced in men by the prostate gland.

- PSA increases naturally with age
- A raised PSA level can indicate urine infections, prostatitis or an enlarged prostate.
- A raised PSA can also indicate prostate cancer, but 2 out of 3 men that have a raised PSA will not have prostate cancer
- PSA can be a useful test if monitored over time for any sudden changes



Ca125 is a protein in the body which is raised in various conditions including:

- Endometriosis, pelvic inflammatory disease, pregnancy and menstruation, fibroids
- It is also raised in ovarian cancer, endometrial cancer, other intra-abdominal cancers
- It is worth noting that Ca125 on its own is not considered a 'screen' for ovarian cancer because it is not specific enough. However, a raised level can indicate that further investigation is required.



An HPV screen is the modern version of what used to be called the cervical smear, to screen for cervical cancer.

The sampling process for the HPV screen is the same as for the smear - the doctor uses a gentle brush to gather cells from the cervix. It takes less than 30 seconds and is not painful.

Once at the laboratory, the sample is analysed for the HPV virus, which we know is the cause of cervical cancer. Only if HPV is detected would the sample be sent for further testing for abnormal cervical cells.

What Next?

If you would like to book a Wellness Screen there is a very simple process.



Call our fabulous and friendly team, for a no obligation discussion of your needs on 01962 776010



We'll be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.



When you are ready to book we will work with you to arrange appointments, send reminders and generally making sure that it is a stress free and wholly rewarding experience.

Wishing you well
Winchester GP

winchestergp.com

01962 776010