

## This month...

- [Sunshine and vitamin D](#)
- [Preventing cervical cancer](#)
- [New ovarian cancer test](#)
- [Did you know?](#)
- [Tip of the month](#)
- [Watch our movie](#)

### Did you know?

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE) kill more people each year in the UK than breast cancer, AIDS, and traffic accidents combined.

Clots are continually being formed in the bloodstream but are usually quickly broken down and harmless. However, sometimes a larger clot forms that blocks a vein, a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). DVTs commonly occur in the veins of the lower leg or pelvis with associated symptoms of pain, tenderness and swelling, typically in the calf.

A PE can occur if a piece of the DVT clot breaks loose and moves through the bloodstream to the

## "Welcome to the June issue of Preventicum E-news

*We should all take advantage of the longer, hopefully warmer days and enjoy spending some time outside in the sunshine to boost not only our mood but our [vitamin D levels](#) as well!*



*Although many of you will be watching the World Cup and Wimbledon this month, I hope you can spare a few minutes to read our articles! Women, in particular, may find our information on [cervical cancer](#) and [ovarian cancer screening](#) of interest.*

*If you have any questions about our E-news articles or suggestions for future news items, please [contact us](#) and don't forget to [forward](#) E-news to your friends, family and colleagues!"*

**Dr Garry Savin, Medical Director**

## The rise in vitamin D deficiency

Do you spend most of your day indoors? Do you always use high factor sun protection when you go out in the sun?



If you answered yes, then you could be suffering from vitamin D deficiency.

Recent research suggests that around 5 in 10 UK adults, and 9 in 10 adults of South Asian origin, may be vitamin D deficient, particularly in winter and spring.

Vitamin D is made in the skin with the help of sunlight.

lungs. Large clots can cause dangerously low levels of oxygen with symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain or sudden collapse. Without correct diagnosis and prompt treatment they can be fatal; 10% of patients die within the first hour of onset.

Both DVT and pulmonary embolism are serious conditions that require urgent investigation and treatment. If you exhibit any of the symptoms mentioned above, including pain or swelling in one calf, you should consult a doctor immediately.

### Tip of the month

Check your pulse!

The '[Know Your Pulse](#)' campaign, part of Arrhythmia Awareness Week run by [Arrhythmia Alliance](#) this month, shows how pulse checks can be used as an effective method of detecting heart rhythm problems, improving the chances of early diagnosis and treatment.

Arrhythmias are heart rhythm problems that occur when the electrical impulses to the heart that co-ordinate heartbeats are not working properly, causing the heart to beat too fast or too slow or inconsistently.

Some arrhythmias are

This is our main source of vitamin D and requires bare skin and direct sunlight to work. For six months of the year (October to April) 90% of the UK lies above the latitude that permits exposure to enough ultraviolet B light necessary for vitamin D synthesis. A small number of foods such as liver, oily fish and eggs are also good sources of vitamin D, but you would need to eat an enormous amount to keep your levels in the desired range. The farmed fish typically consumed in the UK may contain less vitamin D content than wild fish, which adds to the problem.

Vitamin D plays a key role in bone health and is particularly important in children, pregnant and breastfeeding women. In recent years, studies have linked vitamin D deficiency to a growing number of health concerns including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, osteoporosis, prostate disease, some autoimmune conditions, and depression. Most people with vitamin D deficiency have no symptoms or only vague symptoms such as tiredness, muscle aches or spasms, or lower body bone pains.

A simple blood test can be used to diagnose vitamin D deficiency and it can be treated with supplements. However, the best and easiest way to increase your vitamin D level is to go out in the sun! Experts recommend we aim for 15 to 20 minutes of sun exposure a day, after which we should cover up or apply sunscreen. People with lighter skin may need less exposure than those with darker skin but everyone should still be careful not to burn.

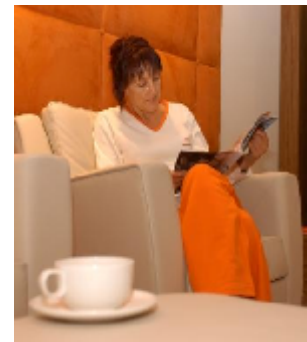
Do you know what your level is?

For further information or advice on testing for vitamin D deficiency, please [contact us](#).

### Preventing cervical cancer

When was the last time you had a cervical screening test?

This is the question being posed to women this month during Cervical Screening Awareness Week. The campaign aims to raise the profile of this important screening test and to encourage more women to undergo regular testing.



Cervical screening is not a test for cancer but a method of preventing cancer by detecting and treating early "pre-cancerous" cell abnormalities which, if left untreated, could lead to cancer in a woman's cervix (the neck of the womb).

barely detectable and most, such as occasional irregular heartbeats or “fluttering”, are harmless. However, others can be far more serious and even cause sudden cardiac failure.

Pulse checks are included in all Preventicum Check-Ups along with other specific tests for heart disease. For further information, please [contact us](#).

## Watch our movie



## Client Testimonial

*"Preventicum makes sure that your results are available within a few hours, so by the time I finished all my tests and had eaten a nutritious lunch, the doctor was already waiting for me to have a debrief and results consultation. Thankfully he told me I am in full working order inside and out – it was invaluable to be given this peace of mind.*

*I would highly recommend Preventicum if you want to take an active interest in your long-term health. They offer a thorough health check that gave me the ultimate peace of mind."*

**Matt Dawson MBE,  
Ex-England rugby player  
and Patron of Beating  
Bowel Cancer**

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in women under the age of 35. However, this is one of the few cancers that is preventable. Cervical screening provides a high degree of protection against developing cervical cancer and not undertaking regular cervical screening is one of the biggest risk factors for developing cervical cancer. It is, therefore, important that women attend their cervical screening test when invited and continue to be screened regularly.

Here at Preventicum we offer annual cervical smear tests to our female clients as part of their Check-Up. For more information on our cervical cancer prevention and detection tests, please [contact us](#).

## New ovarian screening test

Around 7,000 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the UK each year, but a new screening test is now available that could greatly aid early detection of the disease. This new blood test measures a protein called HE4. Normal ovaries produce very little HE4, but larger amounts are seen when ovarian cancer is present. Therefore, high levels of HE4 could indicate an increased risk of ovarian cancer.

The current CA125 blood test is less specific, since a raised level may indicate conditions other than cancer and CA125 levels are only raised in about half of early ovarian cancers. This is why we do not include this test routinely. However, it has been shown that combining the HE4 and CA125 tests can provide a more accurate indicator or risk score for ovarian cancer in the early stages.

Here at [Preventicum](#), we can now offer an Ovarian Screen blood test, which includes both the HE4 and CA125 tests, in combination with a pelvic ultrasound scan, to female clients where clinically relevant. For further information please [contact us](#).



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