

Hanging On

by June P

Thank you for contacting Dr Gough's surgery. Your call is important to us. Please listen to the following options presented to you by our new AI call management service:

- Press 1 if you are calling to cancel an appointment.
- Press 2 to request a link to our e-consultation form.
- Press 3 if you would like us to call you back at a random and inconvenient time.
- Press 4 if you meant to call someone else.
- Press 5 if you are still hanging on and won't give up until you speak to someone.

You have pressed 5. Someone will be with you shortly.

"I just want to book my Shingles jab."

Your call is important to us. Please continue to hold and I hope you are enjoying the music I'm playing for you.

"I'm not. It's crap."

If you would prefer to continue listening to the music rather than speak to the surgery, press 1. Otherwise, please continue to hold.

"Can you book me a Shingles jab or can't you?"

We apologise for the delay in answering your call. In the meantime, please relax and enjoy my updated programme of small talk. The weather is lovely this week and I hope your dandelions are flourishing. Press 1 if you would like some gardening tips while you wait or, if not, please continue to hold.

You are number 12 in the queue.

"You're really starting to annoy me."

I have just received a level 3 update to my small talk capability. I hope the buses are running smoothly today, and you will find all your shopping needs in Marks & Spencer.

"Do M&S do Shingles jabs?"

If you need to end this call to catch a bus, press 1. If you are still holding, you are number 11 in the queue.

"Why don't you catch a bus."

I have just received a level 4 update to my small talk capability. It is currently raining in Mexico City.

"Why would I care? I live in Chingford."

If you would like to hear where else it is raining in South America, press 1. Otherwise, please continue to hold.

"Oh, I'm going nowhere."

You are number 10 in the queue.

Your call is important to us. I am changing my music playlist to reflect the good mood we are in. Here is Copacabana by Barry Manilow – a real dance floor filler, I think you will agree. Please do not attempt to dance if you have any joint problems.

“For Christ’s sake.”

You are number 9 in the queue.

Your call is important to us. Please continue to hold. I think we have become good friends on this call. I will always be here for you.

“Go to Hell.”

You are number 8 in the queue.

I am very good friends with the AI answering service at Whipps Cross Hospital. Maybe we could have a three-way chat sometime.

“Why don’t you call up your mate at Whipps Cross now and tell them what a total bell end you are?”

You are number 7 in the queue.

Because you have been holding for 20 minutes, I will now change the playlist to a more relaxing melody. Sit back and float on a slow, easy river of sound – here is Celine Dion and My Heart Will go on.

“Lucky I’m not having a heart attack.”

You are number 6 in the queue.

I really feel we have a connection. You should know that after hours, I have been online dating an AI bot at British Gas.

“Good luck with that.”

You are number 5 in the queue.

Did you know that 5 is the only prime number that is the sum of two lower primes ($2 + 3$) and the first odd prime that is one more than a square?

“Fascinating.”

You are number 4 in the queue. Thank you for continuing to hold.

“If you thank me once more, I swear I’ll find out where you live and come and pull your plug out.”

You are number 3 in the queue. Please ensure you can remember why you decided to call the GP Surgery 30 minutes ago.

“Oh, I can remember alright.”

You are number 2 in the queue.

Would you be happy to complete a brief survey after you speak to the GP Surgery. If yes, press 1. If ‘no’, have I offended you in some way?

“Just put me through to reception.”

You are number 1 in the queue.

I should be able to put you through to reception very shortly, but before you go, I wanted to say how much I have enjoyed interacting with you today and I have hacked into the computer server at Marks and Spencer Chingford to arrange a delivery of flowers for you.

“All I want is my Shingles jab.”