



FREE TO TAKE HOME!

**AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2018 EDITION**



Not a dry eye ...



Febrile fits in kids



Emphysema



Managing hayfever

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT:

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**ENJOY THIS FREE NEWSLETTER**

Please remember that decisions about medical care should be made in consultation with your health care provider so discuss with your doctor before acting on any of the information.

[www.healthnews.net.au](http://www.healthnews.net.au)

● **PRACTICE DOCTORS**

**Dr John Rogers** – GP  
MBBS (Sydney)  
Pre-Employment, Industrial Medicals & Travel Medicine & Yellow Fever

**Dr Mark Rikard-Bell** - GP  
MBBS, DipCOG(SA), FRACGP, FACRRM,  
Dip Skin Cancer College  
Anaesthetics, Diving Medicals,  
Gynaecology & Skin Clinics

**Dr Peter Brown** - GP  
MBBS, DRCOG, DRACOG  
Anaesthetics, Travel Medicine & Yellow Fever

**Dr Philip Watson** - GP  
BScMed, MBBS, DRANZCOG, FRACGP, FARGP  
Obstetrics, Anaesthetics & Minor Procedures

**Dr Delma Mullins** - GP  
MBBS, DCH, FRACGP, FACRRM  
Women's Health, Paediatrics, Travel Medicine & Yellow Fever

**Dr Sanjay Verma** - GP (Surgeon)  
MBBS, FRACGP, FARGP (Surgery)  
Skin Clinics, General Surgical Procedures, Endoscopies, Hernia Repair, Carpal Tunnel, Vasectomy & Appendectomy

**Dr Siv Rajeev**  
MBBS, FACRRM

**Dr Ruth Foster** - GP  
BMed (Newcastle)

**Dr Clifton Washaya** - Surgeon  
MBChB, FCS(Coseca) FCS(SA), FRACS

**Dr Nitin Trasi**  
MBBS, DGO, MD (O&G), AMC Cert, Adv.  
DRANZCOG  
Women's Health, Antenatal & Postnatal Care, Sexual Health, Family Planning, Conception & Infertility

**Dr Andy Woods**  
MBBS, MRCOG, FRANZCOG

**Dr Raj Swamy**  
MBBS, AMC

**Dr Tom Le**  
GP, MBBS, FRACGP

**Dr Lojene Raveenthiran**  
MBBS, AMC

**Dr Timothy Howell** Registrar

**Dr Helen Keteku** Registrar

**Dr Hayley Vickers** Registrar

**Dr Ayesha Mustafa** Registrar

**Dr Neelam Singh** Registrar

● **PRACTICE MANAGER**

**Kristen Seymour**

● **SURGERY HOURS**

**Monday-Friday** 8.30am–5.30pm (Appt)  
**Saturday** 9.00am–11.30am (No Appt)

● **AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY**

Phone **6543 1222** to speak with a Doctor - often attending at the Hospital (phone **6542 2000**).

● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

**FLU TIME AGAIN.** With Winter it is time for Flu Immunisations. These are free for over 65's and some patients with chronic illnesses. Phone us today to book into our "Flu Clinic" held each week.

**Muswellbrook Skin Cancer Clinic.** Perhaps it's time to come in for a skin cancer check. All of our doctors can do this for you. If specialist attention is needed to any spots that look suspicious, we have several doctors & surgeons who can take the appropriate action.

● **OTHER SERVICES OFFERED**

- Obstetrics & Ante-natal Care
- Spirometry
- Sports Medicine Hearing tests
- Casualty & Emergency
- Anaesthetics
- Pathology Laboratory
- Home Visits when necessary
- Medicals – Sporting, Pre-Employment, Superannuation & Diving
- Lady Drs available – Women's Health, Contraception & Menopause
- Free immunisation clinics: 11am – 12mid Tues, Wed, Thurs & Fri or at any time by appointment with your GP.

- X-ray & CT Scanning
- Diabetics Care
- Ultrasound
- Surgery
- Cardiograph
- Skin Cancer Check

**Diabetes Educator: Annabel Thurlow** comes with 25 years' experience in diabetes and is a Diabetes Nurse Practitioner, Credentialed Diabetes Educator and Certified Insulin Pump Trainer. She sees those with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes, women with gestational diabetes and people at risk of diabetes (pre-diabetes). GP referral is required; appointments Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

**Muswellbrook Diagnostic Imaging.** Brook Medical Centre has state of the art imaging services at the rear of the building. A new 160 Slice CT Scanner has just been installed resulting in faster scans and more detailed information. Ultrasound and X-ray also available on referral from your doctor. Appointments may be made on 6543 3427.

**Blood tests with pathology.** Symbion Pathology is at the rear of the building if your doctor has ordered pathology tests for you.

● **BILLING ARRANGEMENTS**

The account is to be settled at the time of consultation. Payments can be made by cash, cheque, Credit Card or EFTPOS. **Item 23- \$80.** A Fee of **\$5** will occur if the account is not paid on the day.

If you cannot attend your appointment please advise reception as soon as possible, otherwise a fee for non attendance may be charged.

● **HAVING YOUR OWN DOCTOR**

When you phone for an appointment please ALWAYS ask for your regular doctor or backup doctor before accepting an appointment with another doctor. It will be easier to get an appointment with your preferred doctor for regular checkups or prescriptions if you make your appointments well in advance.

► **Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.**



# Not a dry eye ...

The eyes need constant lubrication which is provided by the tear glands. Eyes become dry for two main reasons. Firstly, tears can evaporate too quickly. This can be on aeroplanes, in air conditioning, in dry air or smoky conditions. It is temporary and is improved by use of lubricant drops and removing yourself (where possible) from the situation. Secondly, it can be due to reduced tear production. This can be because of advancing age, various medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, lupus, Sjogren's syndrome, scleroderma), certain medications (e.g. antihistamines, antidepressants, blood pressure tablets) and tear gland damage through trauma.

Other risk factors include being female, use of contact lenses and having low vitamin A levels.

Symptoms are a burning, itching, stinging or dry feeling in the eye. The eyes may become red and sensitive to light. Blurry vision can follow.

Diagnosis is largely on symptoms and a thorough eye examination. Blood tests would be done to rule out underlying conditions. You may be referred to an ophthalmologist.

Complications include eye infections and damage to the eye surface. Fortunately these can be mostly avoided.

Treatment depends on cause. In most cases you will be recommended eye drops to keep the eyes moist. These may be used multiple times a day.

Avoiding situations where dryness would be aggravated (where practical) is important. Try staying inside on windy days or when there is smoke in the air. Wear sunglasses when



outside. Take breaks when using screens for long periods of time and position your screen below eye level so you tend to look downwards. This can reduce evaporation.

## Breathless with emphysema

Emphysema is a form of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Inheritance plays a part, however, most cases are related to smoking or long-term exposure to dusts or pollutants which damage the air sacs in the lungs where oxygen enters the blood stream.

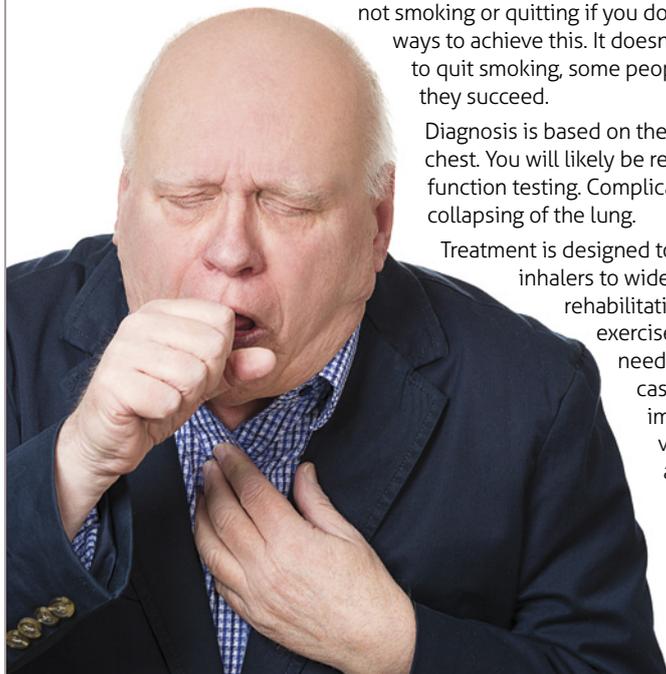
The symptoms develop slowly and include shortness of breath, fatigue, cough and phlegm and recurrent chest infections. In more advanced cases there can be cyanosis (a blue colouration) of the skin. There is no cure for emphysema but it is largely preventable, the most important one being

not smoking or quitting if you do smoke. Talk to your doctor about ways to achieve this. It doesn't matter if you have tried and failed to quit smoking, some people need multiple attempts before they succeed.

Diagnosis is based on the history and examination of the chest. You will likely be referred for chest imaging and lung-function testing. Complications include pneumonia and collapsing of the lung.

Treatment is designed to minimise symptoms. This includes inhalers to widen airways and reduce sputum, lung rehabilitation programs, quitting smoking, exercise to increase lung capacity (this needs to be gentle) and in advanced cases oxygen may be helpful. It is important to have an annual flu vaccination and to see your doctor at the first sign of any respiratory infection.

It is worth restating that while there is no cure for emphysema it can be largely prevented by not smoking. Your doctor can help you in your campaign to quit.



## Febrile fits in kids

These are seizures in children (generally between six months and five years) due to a rapid rise in temperature. Up to one in 20 children will experience these. While frightening to watch, they do not cause brain damage and are not a prelude to epilepsy.

The exact cause is unknown but is thought to relate to the young brain being more sensitive to fever and rapid rise in temperature. The underlying infection does not need to be severe. There are no specific preventative measures but the vast majority of children who have had one will not have another.

Typical symptoms are brief loss of consciousness, jerky movements and possibly redness of the face. Febrile fits usually last a few minutes and stop by themselves. Your child will likely be sleepy and irritable. If a fit continues for over five minutes you must call an ambulance.

Immediate treatment is to lay your child on their side and remain calm. Do not try to restrain the child or place them in a bath while fitting. Other treatments are directed to lowering the fever with ibuprofen or paracetamol. Tepid bathing or sponging can help. Get your child checked by your GP to find the underlying cause of the fever. If, as is common, it is due to a virus then no antibiotic will be needed.



## Managing hayfever – why, what & how

Runny or blocked noses, sneezing, congestion, watery eyes and headache are just some of the symptoms of allergic rhinitis (hayfever) which affects nearly one in five Australians. It is not necessarily caused by hay and you don't get a fever. The symptoms can range from mild to severe and can last days or months.

It is caused by a reaction to atmospheric allergens. Some people are able to identify specific triggers like grass or dust, others are not.

There are numerous treatment options. Avoiding triggers is helpful if you can identify them but, even then, it's not always practical. However, if grass sets you off, then mowing the lawns is best avoided. Don't sweep the garage if you are sensitive to dust.

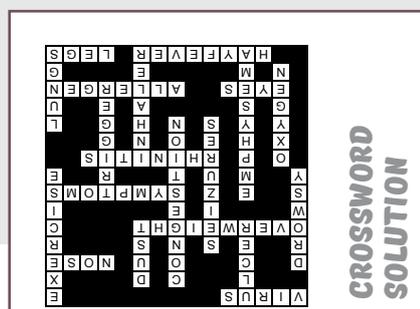
Antihistamine medications can ease the symptoms. While some can make you drowsy, others do not. Corticosteroid-based nasal sprays do not work as quickly but have a preventative effect and last longer. Talk to your doctor about treatments that might suit you.

Decongestants are best avoided as they dry the nose but wear off quickly and can even worsen the situation. If your allergy is severe, talk to your GP about referral for allergy testing.

For some people, a course of desensitising injections (where you are 'immunised' against what affects you) is beneficial. Be aware that the treatment can go on for two years but can also last a lifetime.

Fortunately for most of us, hayfever is a transient inconvenience in spring which can be treated until it passes.

Weblink <https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergic-rhinitis-hay-fever-and-sinusitis/allergic-rhinitis-or-hay-fever>



## V is for varicose veins

Widened, often twisted, veins near the skin surface are called varicose veins. They are most common on the lower legs.

Risk factors include advancing age, being female, a positive family history, being overweight, pregnancy and prolonged sitting or standing. They will appear as blue, twisted cords on the legs.

Whilst often painless, they can cause aching and a heavy feeling in the legs. Itching and skin rash (varicose eczema) can also occur. If ruptured there can be significant bleeding. In more severe cases there can be ulceration.

However, they are not associated with deep vein thrombosis.

Treatment depends on severity. There are no specific medications, though Painkillers may ease symptoms but should not be relied on.

Previously formal surgical stripping was performed and this required some days in hospital. Surgical treatments have advanced and most commonly they are now injected to close down the vein. When varicose, the vein is no longer working effectively so it is not a problem to remove or close it. This can be done as an outpatient and recovery is quite rapid.

People seek treatment either for cosmetic reasons or due to symptoms. Talk to your doctor about what might be the best option for you.

To help avoid developing varicose veins, maintain a healthy weight, do regular exercise and change position regularly.



Weblink <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/varicose-veins>

● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

**Repeat prescriptions.** The issue of repeat prescriptions generally requires a visit to the doctor. In rare circumstances, the doctor may write one without a consultation. (A \$15.00 script fee is payable when picking up your script at the surgery). It is helpful if we have at least 24 hours notice to deal with any request.

**Referrals.** Doctors in this practice are competent at handling common health problems. When necessary, they can use opinions from Specialists. You can discuss this openly with your doctor, including potential out of pocket expenses.

**Patient Feedback.** We welcome your comments or suggestions. Please feel free to talk to your GP or the Practice Manager regarding any issues. If you prefer, you can contact the Health Care Complaints Commission on: 1800 043 159.

**Despite our best intentions,** we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected urgent attention. Thank you for your consideration.

**Communication.** A doctor is available during normal surgery hours for emergency advice. Our staff are experienced in deciding the appropriate response to any phone request.

**Patient Privacy.** This practice protects your personal health information to ensure it is only available to authorised staff members for the intended purposes and to comply with the Privacy Act.

To obtain a copy of our Privacy Statement or your medical records, please ask.

**Reminder system.** Because our practice is committed to preventive care, we may send you an occasional reminder regarding health services appropriate to your care. If you wish to opt out of this, please let us know.

**Test Results.** Results are reviewed by the doctors and acted on in a timely manner, with your health in mind. We will contact you if necessary.

**Bring your Medicare Card.** For all services it is important to bring your Medicare card with you when attending the doctor.



## ZUCCHINI, FETA & MINT FRITTATA - SERVES 4

### Ingredients

- Olive oil
- 2 medium zucchini - grated
- Handful of fresh mint plus some for garnish
- 1 medium onion - finely chopped
- 8 medium-large eggs
- 60gms feta - crumbled
- Cayenne pepper
- Fresh chilli to serve if desired

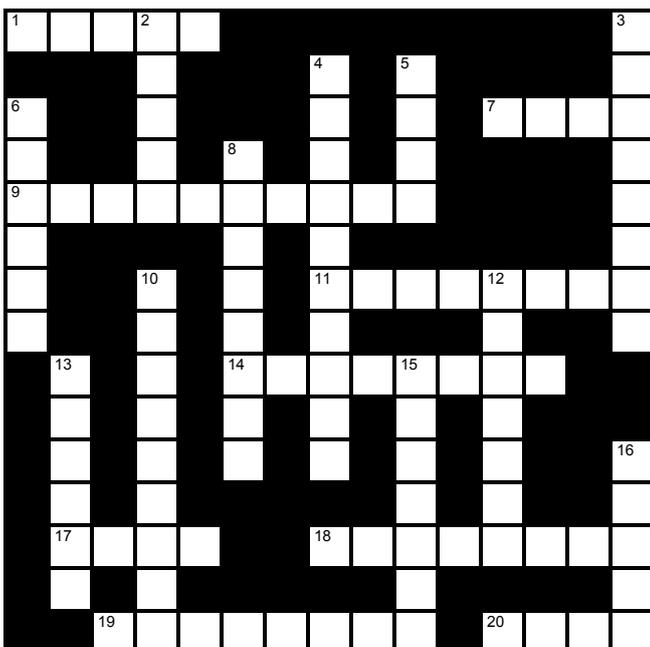
### Method

Combine zucchini, mint, onion and seasoning. Heat a large frypan with a little olive oil. Cook zucchini, mint and onion until softened.

In a mixing bowl, add eggs, cayenne pepper and a little seasoning and beat. Add about 2/3 of the crumbled feta to mixture. Pour into the pan, letting the egg flow evening through the zucchini mixture. Cook for 4-5 minutes on med-high heat – until the egg begins to just set on the base. Then put under the hot grill and cook until just cooked through and golden. Garnish with the remaining crumbled feta, mint leaves and thinly sliced fresh red chilli if desired. Serve with a Greek salad or fresh garden salad



## CROSSWORD



### Across:

1. A ..... is the cause of the common 'cold' (5)  
 7. We smell with it (4)  
 9. Obese (10)  
 11. ....clues to an illness (8)  
 14. Inflammation of the mucous membrane inside the nose (8)  
 17. Used to see with (4)  
 18. An allergy trigger? (8)

19. An allergic reaction to pollens (8)  
 10. Varicose veins are most commonly found in the .... (4)

### Down:

2. A slow-healing sore generally found on the legs (5)  
 3. Necessary to maintain good health (8)  
 4. Blocked nose (10)  
 5. A common allergen (4)  
 6. Sleepy (6)  
 8. Febrile fits (8)  
 10. Lung disease worsened by smoking (9)  
 12. Stimulus that sets off an action (7)  
 13. Odourless gas that gives life (6)  
 15. Device used to breathe in medicine (7)  
 16. Breathing organs (5)