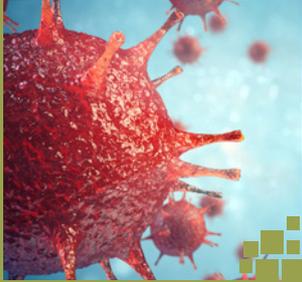




FREE TO TAKE HOME!

SEE BACK PAGE FOR CORONAVIRUS IMPORTANT NOTICE



Corona



Diabetes



Angina



Lupus (SLE)

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT:

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

● **PRACTICE DOCTORS**

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 Raj Swamy
 MBBS, AMC

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 Tom Le
 GP, MBBS, FRACGP

Dr Timothy Howell Registrar

Dr Lojene Raveenthiran Registrar

Dr Tasha Sandhu

Dr Mehedi Biplab

Dr Omar Akram

Dr Sione Akauala

● **PRACTICE MANAGER**

Kristen Seymour

● **SURGERY HOURS**

Monday-Friday (Appt) 8.30am–5.30pm

Saturday(No Appt) 9.00am–11.30am

● **AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY**

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

In case of a medical emergency, dial **000** and ask for an ambulance.

● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

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 – 12md 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
- Flu Clinic Seasonal

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. Ultrasound and X-ray also available on referral from your doctor. Appointments may be made on 6543 3427.

Blood tests with pathology. Laverety 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- \$82.** 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.

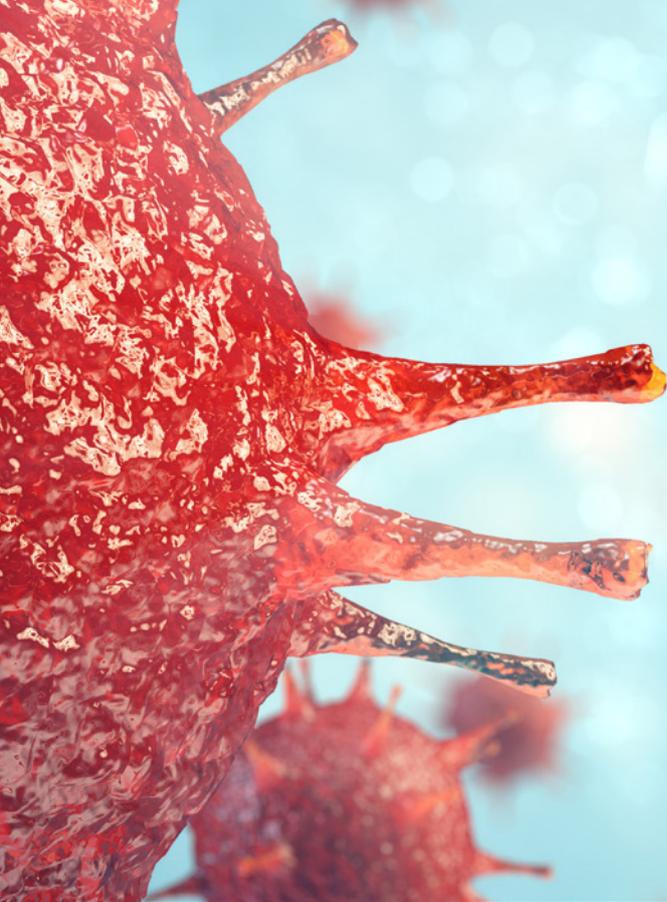
● **HAVING YOUR OWN DOCTOR**

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.



Corona

We share this planet with a host of other living things including viruses. Some are well known to us and do not cause much concern.

Surprisingly, the Corona family of viruses as a group fit into this category. They cause a cold type illness which whilst not pleasant is not serious either. The new Corona Virus (covid-19) has generated a lot of publicity and it is correct to say that we are still learning about it. However, it remains a member of a family of viruses which typically have not caused major problems to most who contract them.

It is not 100% possible to avoid viruses but there are a number of sensible precautions we can take. Basic hygiene makes a big difference. Always cough or sneeze into a tissue or hanky or at least your elbow. Regular hand washing makes a big difference. Try to avoid touching your nose eyes and mouth. If you have symptoms of a virus stay home from work

and if your child is affected keep them home from school.

Basics like eating a sensible diet, doing regular exercise, getting adequate sleep and managing your stress all help support your immune system. Whilst not a guarantee that you cannot get sick, it can make it less likely.

It is almost certain that this virus will spread worldwide. There is nothing, at this stage, to suggest that it is any more dangerous than a host of other viruses that we are more familiar with. Make sure you keep up to date with advisories from health authorities but there is no need for panic.

As always, if you are in any doubt or feeling unwell please see your local GP.

Coronavirus Health Information Line 1800 020 080



Teenage Acne

Under hormonal influence (mainly testosterone) sebaceous glands in the skin produce excess oil. This can block the pores allowing bacteria to multiply leading to acne. Most common in teenage years, it also affects adults. Males are more prone as are those with naturally oily skin and there are genetic tendencies.

The face, chest, back and neck are the most affected areas. Acne can be made worse by stress, oily cosmetics and some medications. For women it may be worse with periods. Although it is an infection, it is not contagious.

There are lots of myths about food causing acne – but none have been shown to make a difference. Eating sensibly and drinking plenty of water will help but not cure acne.

Basic treatments include keeping the skin clean and using good quality skin cleansers. Next steps are more specific anti acne creams or gels applied on the affected areas. Most of these are available

without prescription.

If this is not helping your doctor can prescribe antibiotics. The length of the course varies according to response. For some females there is a hormonal treatment which doubles as a contraceptive.

In the most severe cases you may be referred to a dermatologist. Severe cystic acne can be treated with more potent medications, but these need to be carefully monitored, as side effects can be a problem.

Fortunately for most acne resolves by late teens or early twenties. Scarring can occur but infrequently and can be treated increasingly successfully.

Diabetes

There are two types of Diabetes and they broadly divide into insulin requiring (type 1) and non-insulin requiring (type 2). This is not absolute as some people who do not need insulin at the start may go on to do so.

Type one occurs where the body cannot produce insulin and often starts in childhood or adolescence. There are genetic tendencies although the exact inheritance pattern is not known. Type two comes about when the body's cells become resistant to the effects of insulin and this generally occurs later in life.

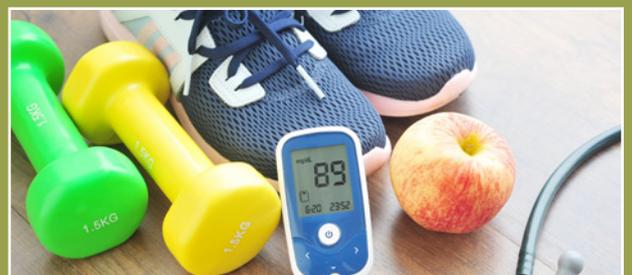
Weight and consumption of refined carbohydrates play a bigger role although there are genetic tendencies here too.

Diabetes is diagnosed by testing for glucose in the blood stream. If glucose is elevated a further test known as a glucose tolerance test will be done. This involves "challenging" the body with a sugar load and monitoring how the body handles it.

Management of diabetes includes lifestyle changes and possibly medications. Those with type one will need lifelong insulin. Being on a low sugar diet is vital for diabetics. For those who are overweight, losing weight can help control glucose levels. Regular exercise is good for blood sugar too.

Blood glucose monitoring helps people with diabetes control their blood sugar and live in relative freedom. Formal blood tests through your doctor are also important.

Complications of diabetes can be largely avoided by good blood sugar control and this is not as hard as you might think.

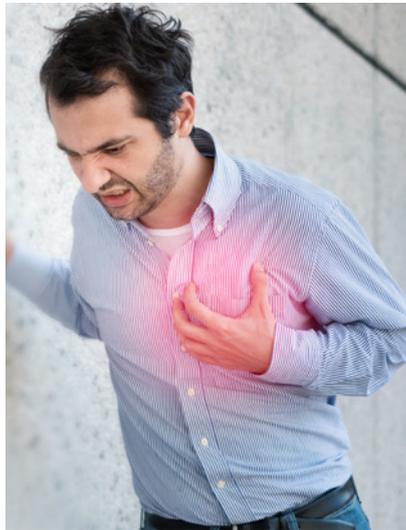


Angina

Angina pectoris is a condition where people experience pain in the chest most commonly in relation to exertion. It is a form of Ischaemic Heart Disease (IHD) but not the same as a heart attack. In the latter there is total blockage of an artery of the heart whereas in angina there is narrowing of the artery without total blockage.

The pain comes about from the heart muscle not having enough oxygen. When you exert yourself, the heart needs more oxygen than at rest. If the "pipes" carrying blood to the heart are narrowed, then the extra blood cannot get through and you experience pain. Generally, this is felt in the centre of the chest but can be felt in the neck jaw or left arm. Rest typically relieves angina pain.

Whilst not all chest pain is angina it is vitally important that your doctor assess chest pain. Most people with angina will need tests done on the heart and will require medications including the type that you pop or spray under the tongue when the pain occurs.



Lifestyle measures for those with and wanting to avoid angina is to not smoke, to maintain a healthy body weight, reduce fats in the diet and perhaps follow a Mediterranean type diet high in fruits and vegetables, low in red meat and with a splash of olive oil and red wine (note just a splash).

Regular exercise is important as it improves the circulation and you will be surprised at how you progress over time. Start gently and take professional advice.

Checking for Head Lice - signs & symptoms

Most parents have experienced the note or email from the School saying head lice have been found. But should we be really concerned?

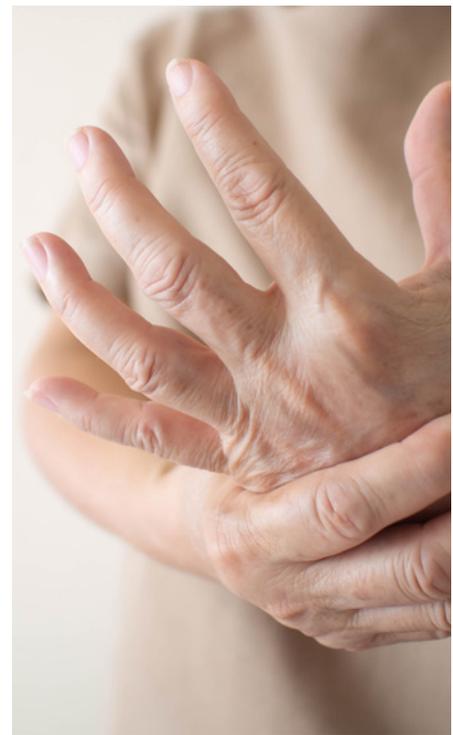
Common in school age children but potentially affecting anyone, lice are annoying but not serious. The head louse is a tiny wingless insect. It can only live on humans (lice die within 24 hours if not on the body) and feeds on miniscule amounts of blood drawn from the scalp.

As it cannot jump or fly but only crawl, it is spread by direct hair to hair contact. The typical symptom is an itchy scalp.

Adult lice are gray or tan insects the size of a sesame seed on the scalp whilst Nits (lice eggs) are tiny white or brown dots usually attached to hair near the scalp. They have a dandruff-like appearance however they can't be "shaken" off.

To find them comb hair with any conditioner and then use a fine toothcomb. Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel. Look for eggs or lice. Do this through all the hair a few times.

Treatment is removing lice and nits from the hair. You can use the conditioner method (described above) every other day till none have been found for ten days. There are also specific head lice treatments (both synthetic and organic) that can be used. Follow the directions on the pack. Wash pillowcases in hot water. Family members need only be treated if lice or nits are found on them.



Lupus (SLE)

This is an autoimmune condition of unknown cause that can affect many organ systems with Genetics playing a key role. It is nine times more common in women than men and peak age of onset is between 20 and 40.

The most common symptoms are joint aches and pains and a red skin rash, which is worsened by sun exposure. Fever, fatigue, hair loss, mouth ulcers, and dry eyes may occur.

Symptoms can be few or many and very mild through to severe. Internal organs (kidneys, lungs) may be affected. It is notoriously difficult to diagnose with no specific tests as all autoantibodies found in people with Lupus may be found in people without any medical issue.

Diagnosis is based on a combination of examination findings and numerous tests. It generally takes quite a while from first onset of symptoms to establish a diagnosis and symptoms can be episodic or ongoing.

Treatment depends on the nature and severity of the symptoms. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) are used to treat painful joints. Steroids may be used if internal organs are involved. Topical steroid creams are used for skin eruptions.

There is no specific cure so be wary of products, which claim to do so. Instead opt for lifestyle measures including regular exercise, eating a healthy diet, not smoking and managing stress.

Lupus has no known cure. Most people will have flares from time to time, not need constant treatment and can expect to lead a long and otherwise full and active life.

● **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.

Interpreter Service Available. Please enquire at Reception

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



FEVER



COUGH



SHORTNESS OF BREATH



SORE THROAT

What you need to know

People who have returned from a country or region that is at high or moderate risk for COVID-19 should monitor their health closely. If you develop symptoms including a fever and cough you should isolate yourself immediately and urgently seek medical attention. **Go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers for the list of at-risk countries.**

People who think they may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus should also monitor their health and seek urgent medical attention.

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly. From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

- people with compromised immune systems (e.g. cancer) elderly people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people people with diagnosed chronic medical conditions

- very young children and babies*
- people in group residential settings
- people in detention facilities.

At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.

While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness – not coronavirus.

 Taken direct from: <https://www.health.gov.au>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you feel any of the above symptoms and have recently come into contact with someone exposed to the COVID-19 virus or suspected of having the virus OR have recently returned from overseas contact the General Practice on this Newsletter urgently.

PLEASE DO NOT PRESENT TO THE SURGERY OR PRACTICE UNLESS ADVISED TO DO SO BY THE DOCTORS OR PRACTICE STAFF.

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au.

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.