



Cardiovascular Risk



Myasthenia Gravis



Exercise in Childhood



Preventing Falls

● 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 Timothy Howell Registrar

Dr Lojene Raveenthiran Registrar

Dr Tasha Sandhu

Dr Mehedi Biplab

Dr Omar Akram

Dr Sione Akauola

Dr Kenneth Brito

● 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.



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

► Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.

Cardiovascular Risk Assessment & Management

Heart disease remains a major killer of Australians with 17533 deaths in 2018. On the plus side, fatalities have decreased over 20% in a decade.

Typical symptoms are pain in the chest, left arm, neck, jaw or back, together with nausea, sweating and shortness of breath. Not everyone gets typical symptoms. Warning signs can include tiredness, chest discomfort on exertion and shortness of breath.

Diagnosis is based on history, electrocardiogram (ECG) and blood tests. You will likely undergo an angiogram where dye is inserted into the arteries to examine blood flow to the heart. Survival rates have increased due to better and earlier treatment. This can include medications, stenting (opening the artery) or surgery. Length of hospital stay is much less than in the past.

Risk factors include a family history, smoking,

raised cholesterol, high blood pressure and having diabetes. There may be no risk factors.

Prevention, where possible is key. There are online tools where you can work out your overall risk. These tools consider a number of factors. There is much you can do to reduce your risk. Don't smoke. Eat a healthy diet and maintain a healthy weight. Get some regular exercise. Have a regular check up with your GP. Managing risk factors such as high blood pressure, raised cholesterol and diabetes can include both lifestyle measures and medication. Regular monitoring is important. Limit salt intake, reduce weight (if overweight) and reduce sugars in the diet. Managing stress also can help.

 www.cvdcheck.org.au/calculator



Myasthenia Gravis

This condition causes muscle weakness and fatigue. It is thought to be due to antibodies "attacking" the nerve receptors on the muscles. The Thymus gland, which sits in the chest, produces the antibodies but what triggers this is not known. There is also a form of Myasthenia without antibodies involved.

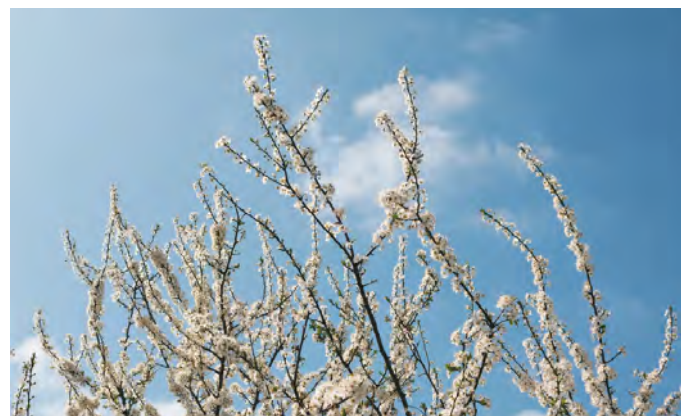
It can occur at any age but is more common in women under 40 and men over 60. Symptoms are typically weakness and tiredness, and severity ranges from mild to near full paralysis. It can affect any muscles but the upper body more than the lower part. Facial muscles are often first affected. People may notice droopy eyelids or problems with swallowing or chewing. In the most severe cases, breathing muscles can be affected.

Diagnosis is based largely on the symptoms and a neurological examination, which shows muscle weakness but no effect on sensation. Blood tests may show the presence of antibodies. You would be referred to a neurologist, and some specialized tests can be done.

Treatments include cholinesterase inhibitor medications (to improve muscle function) immunosuppressants, (e.g. steroids), and plasmapheresis (filtering the plasma from the blood). Some have a growth in the Thymus gland, which can be surgically removed.

Around 20% will go into spontaneous remission. Living with Myasthenia Gravis can mean making adjustments to your routine. You may need to do things more slowly and plan your day. Simple measures like an eye patch, eating smaller, more frequent meals and installing handrails or other aids can help.

 <https://brainfoundation.org.au/disorders/myasthenia-gravis/>



Spring Time

Spring is when allergy symptoms are most prevalent. The classic "hay fever" is a runny nose sneezing and watery eyes. The technical term allergic rhinitis means inflammation of the nose caused by an exaggerated response to a substance.

Allergic conjunctivitis is when the same underlying response affects the eyes, causing watery red and itchy eyes.

The symptoms are a result of the body trying to get rid of an irritation. Sneezing and runny nose are brought about by the production of mucous under the influence of histamine (produced by the body's reaction to an irritant). Other symptoms can be (paradoxically) a blocked nose, sinus congestion and itchy throat. In the eyes, the watering redness and itching are also brought about by the release of histamines.

The commonest treatment is an antihistamine - available without a prescription. Some can make you drowsy as a side effect; others do not so check the label. Other treatments are nasal sprays. Some are on prescription and contain a mild hydrocortisone, which reduces nasal inflammation. There are eye drops for eye symptoms. Some need a prescription.

Avoidance of known allergens is helpful but not always possible. There are ways of being tested for allergies and in some instances being desensitized to what you are allergic to. If symptoms are mild, there is nothing wrong with using a tissue and riding it out as the season passes.

Talk to your doctor about what is best for you.

Preventing Falls in the Elderly

About one third of people over the age of 65 fall every year. Most are not injured and get up and go on with life. However, a fall runs the risk of hip fracture. This is a medical emergency requiring major surgery and can start a decline in independence.

Family and friends can be vigilant – to lessen dangers for an elderly friend or relative and prevent a serious fall happening. Heart conditions, poor eyesight, arthritis, muscular problems, disorders of the feet, or multiple medications all increase fall risk.

Here are some tips to prevent them. Four or more medications together increase the risk of side effects or mistakes on doses. Check regularly that treatment is still needed, and doses are correct. Arrange an eyesight check. Problems such as cataracts, glaucoma or degeneration of the retina can slowly worsen vision in a way that is easily missed.

Unsteadiness on the feet can be due to medical problems of balance or low blood pressure – ask the doctor to check. Lack of exercise may lead to weakness of leg muscles and poor coordination – a light exercise program can make all the difference. Around



the home, check and remedy any hazards likely to lead to a fall. This includes slippery floors, uneven walking surfaces, poor lighting, or cluttered living areas. It may be useful to

have handrails installed into the bathroom or toilet. For people with conditions like Parkinson's disease, walking aids can be a 'must'.

Relevance of Exercise in Childhood

Once upon a time children didn't need to "exercise" because they were active. They walked to and from school and played outdoors rather than on screens.

During lockdowns, we were all less active. Closed playgrounds and cancelled sport meant less physical activity for children. As we get back out there, we need to be getting our children active again.

Over 20% of children aged 12 through 16 are overweight or obese. This reflects both consumptions of more processed foods higher in fats and sugars but also a reduction in physical activity.

We cannot wind back the clock, but we can help our children be healthier. The Australian government recommends one hour of physical activity each day for children over the age of five. This should be a mix of moderate and vigorous exercise. This can include walking, running, bike riding, any form of suitable sport and of course outdoor play. It does not have to be in one continuous block of time.

Do not fret if you can't manage this amount every day. Any amount of physical activity is better than none.

There are many benefits to your child from being active. It reduces childhood obesity. It improves motor function. It improves their



circulation and strengthens the bones and muscles as well as improving balance and coordination skills. Active children tend to sleep better and often have enhanced self-esteem. Mental health problems are less common in inactive children.

It also establishes good habits for later in life where regular exercise reduces the chances of many diseases, including heart disease, stroke and some forms of cancer.

A bonus is when you encourage your children to exercise it may encourage you to do the same.



BEEF AND BROCCOLI

- 2/3 c. low-sodium soy sauce, divided
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 3 tbsp. packed brown sugar, divided
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp. cornstarch, divided
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 lb. sirloin steak, sliced thinly against grain
- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/3 c. low-sodium beef (or chicken)broth
- 2 tsp.
- Sriracha (optional)
- 1 head broccoli, cut into florets
- Sesame seeds, for garnish
- Thinly sliced green onions, for garnish

Directions

In a medium bowl, whisk 1/3 cup soy sauce, lime juice, 1 tablespoon brown sugar, 1 egg, and 1 tablespoon of cornstarch until

combined. Add steak, season with salt and pepper, and toss until steak is coated. Marinate 20 minutes to 1 hour.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add steak in a single layer, working in batches if needed, and cook until seared, about 2 minutes per side. Remove steak and set aside.

Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Then stir in broth, remaining 2 tablespoons brown sugar, remaining 1/3 cup soy sauce, and Sriracha. Bring mixture to a simmer. Add broccoli and simmer until tender, about 5 minutes. Add remaining cornstarch (in a slurry) and season sauce with salt and pepper (if necessary), then return steak to skillet.

Garnish with sesame seeds and green onions before serving.

Serve with steamed rice.

WORD SEARCH

M D I S E A S E Z E
 E Y P R B L F B D X
 G L A R J L T N B C
 Z R D S P R I N G E
 E T A E T X M M T R
 F P B V R H E L I S
 A D S X I L E V I I
 L D Q O U S Y N I S
 L L H E A R T L I E
 S C H I L D R E N A

MYASTHENIA
 DISEASE
 EXERCISE
 ELDERLY
 GRAVIS
 SPRING
 HEART
 CHILDREN
 FALLS
 TIME



● 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