



FREE TO TAKE HOME!



Family break-ups



Heartburn



Flu vaccination



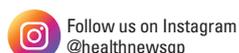
Dealing with Depression

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



APRIL - MAY 2022 EDITION

● 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 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 Raviraj Kugapiriyam Registrar

Dr Mustafa Hafiz Registrar

Dr Kavita Kasana - GP

Dr Ismat Emu Registrar

Dr Aparna Sharma Registrar

Dr Daniel Garces Registrar

● 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- \$87.** 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.

Impact on children with family break-ups

It is estimated that 40% of marriages will end in divorce or separation. In many instances, there are children involved, and the impact on them is significant.

Regardless of whether a couple love each other or not, their children will still love them both. Whilst all children are affected in the short term, American research showed that in the longer term, the vast majority of children in divorced families did as well as their peers regarding behaviour, academic performance, and social relationships.

What has been found is that high levels of parental conflict were associated with poorer outcomes for children. This means it is less, that parents may separate, but how it is managed. It also says that remaining together when there is much conflict is not helpful either.

The effects are those of stress and differ widely. Age is also a factor. Some children may develop night terrors or become anxious. Others may cry a lot. Those who are newly toilet trained may regress. Some children may complain of headaches or tummy aches. Some may lose appetite.

Children will need the support of both parents. In turn, parents will also

need support. There are many services available to support families. Talk to your children honestly and listen to what they have to say. Allow them to express emotion and allow them to adjust in their own time.

Talk to your GP about any concerns you have about your child or your own health.



 <https://headspace.org.au/friends-and-family/understanding-school-refusal/>

Heartburn

This is a burning pain in the chest or upper abdomen caused by acid "leaking" from the stomach into the oesophagus.

It is also known as reflux and Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD). It is very common and can affect all age groups starting with infants, and ranges from mild to severe and occasional to daily. Not everyone with heartburn has GORD. Some with GORD may have a hiatus hernia, where some of the stomach "slips" above the diaphragm.

In adults, risk factors include being overweight, smoking, alcohol consumption and a family history. Certain foods will trigger heartburn in certain people, but there is no one set of foods to avoid.

Caffeine, dairy, and spicy foods are common culprits, but each person needs to find what "disagrees" with them.

Prevention includes avoiding known triggers and not overeating at one time. Treatment depends on severity and frequency. Simple home remedies like bicarbonate of soda or herbal teas help some people. Simple



 <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/indigestion>

antacids can relieve symptoms. At night it can be helpful to sleep on a slight incline from the head down to the toes.

If simple approaches fail, you need to see your GP. Often the history is sufficient for diagnosis, but you may be sent for tests to rule out other causes.

For ongoing problems, there are prescription medications that can reduce acid production. Some people need short courses of these, and others need it long term. If symptoms are not relieved after some weeks, you may be referred for a gastroscopy to assess the oesophagus and stomach.

Flu vaccination

With all the focus on COVID 19 vaccination, including boosters, which many will have had by the end of March, it may be easy to forget that flu season will be with us soon.

Flu vaccination typically starts in the second half of April based on peak flu season, generally from late June to mid-August (albeit this varies year to year and varies from city to city within the same season). As flu strains change, you need a shot each year. The annual vaccine is not a "booster" but to cover the strains anticipated for the upcoming winter. Vaccination is recommended for everyone older than six months.

Like other viral illnesses, the severity of influenza varies from mild to severe. Typical symptoms are fever, headache, fatigue, muscle pains and loss of appetite. People generally

feel more unwell with the flu than a cold- the two illnesses are not the same.

Certain groups who are at increased risk of complications from flu are eligible for a free vaccine under the national program; those over age 65, ATSI people aged over six months, pregnant women, those over age six months with a chronic medical condition, and children aged six months to five years. Some states have programs that cover additional groups.

Many clinics will run dedicated flu vaccination sessions and/or do it as part of a regular consultation. Ask your GP about flu vaccination for you and your family.



 <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/vaccines/influenza-flu-immunisation-service>



 <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression>

Dealing with Depression

Depression is common, affecting as many as one in five Australians. For some, it can be an ongoing condition with ups and downs. For others, there may be only one isolated episode.

Depression is more than just feeling sad for a day or two. It is feeling miserable for at least two weeks together with lack of enjoyment of usual activities, withdrawal from friends and often sleep and appetite disturbance.

There are no diagnostic blood tests or scans. Diagnosis is based on the symptoms.

There are non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatment options. There are several medications that can be used if needed. Counselling through a psychologist or counsellor will be of benefit to many. Your GP can refer you.

Lifestyle measures also help. Eating a healthy

diet rich in vegetables and lower in sugar may help. Cut down on alcohol use. Regular exercise is good for mental health. Meditation or guided relaxation can help. Getting enough sleep is also important. Equally, do not stress if your sleep pattern takes a while to get back to normal. Switch off screen at least 30 minutes before bed and have a regular night-time routine.

Regular follow up with your GP is important. Changes in treatment may be needed if you are not making improvements. With recovery, medication (if prescribed) may be reduced and then stopped. Do not stop your medication without talking to your doctor.



 <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/otitis-media>

Otitis Media

The human ear has three parts (outer middle, and inner). All three can get infected. Otitis media is an infection of the middle ear.

It is most common in children with a peak between six and 18 months. The cause may be bacteria or viruses. It can affect one or both ears and may come with a "cold" type illness or be of itself. It is more common in Indigenous children.

Typical symptoms are a painful ear. There may be a sore throat in the lead-up or concurrently. Fever may be present but is usually mild. Children may lose appetite and be distressed – especially younger children.

Diagnosis is made by examination of the eardrum. This is typically bright red in colour when infected. There may be fluid in the middle ear "behind the drum". Glands in the neck may be enlarged, and the throat may be inflamed too. There is generally no need for blood tests.

Until recently, antibiotics were given routinely. Current thinking is that most viral infections will settle without antibiotics in a few days. Some cases will still need them. Pain relief is important, as is comforting your child. Maintain hydration, but if appetite is low, there is no need to force this.

Children with repeated middle ear infections can develop glue ear (where fluid stays in the middle ear and does not drain to the sinuses), which can impact on hearing. These children may benefit from the insertion of grommet tubes by an ENT surgeon.

● **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



KEY LIME PIE

Ingredients

- 300g digestive biscuits
- 150g butter, melted
- 1 x 397g can condensed milk (we used Nestlé)

Directions

- Heat the oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3.
- Whizz 300g digestive biscuits to crumbs in a strong plastic bag and bash with a rolling pin.
- Mix with 150g melted butter and press into the base and up the sides of a 22cm loose-based tart tin. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove and cool.
- Put 3 medium egg yolks in a large bowl and whisk for a minute with electric beaters.
- Add a can of condensed milk and whisk

- 3 medium egg yolks
- finely grated zest and juice of 4 limes
- 300ml double cream
- 1 tsp icing sugar
- extra lime zest, to decorate

for 3 minutes, then add the finely grated zest and juice of 4 limes and whisk again for 3 minutes.

- Pour the filling into the cooled base, then put it back in the oven for 15 minutes. Cool, then chill for at least 3 hours or overnight if you like. When ready to serve, carefully remove the pie from the tin and put on a serving plate.
- To decorate, softly whip together 300ml double cream and 1 tbsp icing sugar. Decorate as desired and finish with some extra lime zest and lime slices.



COLOUR FUN!