



Child obesity



Hearing loss in adults



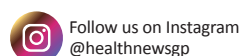
Deep Vein Thrombosis



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
Diving Medicals & Skin Clinics

Dr Peter Brown - GP
MBBS, DRCOG, DRACOG

Dr Siv Rajeev
MBBS, FACRRM

Dr Raj Swamy
MBBS, FRACGP

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

Dr Sanjay Verma - GP (Surgeon)
MBBS, FRACGP, FARGP (Surgery)
Endoscopies, Hernia Repair, Carpal Tunnel,
Vasectomy & Appendectomy

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 Lojene Raveenthiran
MBBS, AMC

Dr Raviraj Kugapiriyar Registrar

Dr Kavita Kasana - GP

Dr Daniel Garcés - GP

Dr Farhana Huq - GP

Dr Callum Walker - GP

Dr Gifty Abraham - GP

Dr Emenike Muonanu - GP

Dr Leila Mirbagher Ajorpaz - GP

● 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 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- \$90.** 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.

Child and adolescent obesity

We tend to think that only America has issues with weight. The reality is that one in four Australian children are overweight or obese. This is a significant increase in one generation. Why? Firstly, children tend to snack on high-calorie foods and drinks, and second, is replacing physical activity with time on screens. We can't turn back time, but it is not all bad news. There is much you can do as a parent or guardian to help a child get and maintain a healthy weight.

Substitute water for sweet drinks. Eliminating liquid calories reduces calorie intake without leaving a child hungry. Allow soft drinks only on special occasions or no more than once a week. Replace fruit juice with a piece of fruit and a glass of water. This gives them more fibre and fewer calories.

Research shows that we eat more when distracted, so ban the screen while eating. It has also been shown that children who eat at the table with others are 40% less likely to be overweight. This is partly the "screen effect"

mentioned before, but it also means the child is likelier to eat a proper meal instead of snack foods.

Teach your children about cooking. Children who get active in the kitchen will eat less junk food and learn about healthy eating.

Limit screen time and get your child active. This can be in an organised sport or a play in the park or back yard. Get a ball or Frisbee and join in, as exercise is good for parents too.

Good habits from childhood will serve your child well in adult life.



Hearing loss in adults

As we get older, our senses are less acute. It is estimated that over half of Australians aged between 60 and 70 have some hearing loss, increasing to 80% in those aged over 80. Severity, of course, varies. Hearing loss can be sensorineural (affecting the cochlea and/or nerve), conductive (blockage in the middle ear), or mixed. Generally, age-related loss is sensorineural. Additional risk factors include noise exposure, genetics, ear trauma and chemical exposure.

As we age, the hair cells in the inner ear become damaged and less effective. This cannot be reversed. Typical symptoms are difficulty hearing voices. This usually starts with picking up speech in a crowded room or when background noise (e.g. television) is on. Sometimes, those around the individual notice it first.

Hearing loss can be isolating as many feel (incorrectly) embarrassed about asking for words to be repeated. Collectively, we tend to be less accepting of hearing loss than visual loss and the need for glasses. There is no valid reason for this.

Hearing can be assessed by an audiologist. Depending on circumstances, you may need a referral from your GP. There are no other specific tests required. Treatment is the use of a hearing aid. Modern ones are far smaller and less noticeable. When is a hearing aid needed? That depends on the individual and how much their hearing loss affects them and those around them. Chat with your GP about any concerns you have with your hearing.



More info »



Deep Vein Thrombosis

A thrombus is a blood clot. The ability of the body to form clots is critical as this stops bleeding when we cut ourselves. However, a blood clot forming in a blood vessel can cause serious problems.

A deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when a blood clot forms in the deep veins in the calf. Risk factors include smoking, family history, being overweight, prolonged sitting (e.g. plane travel), and surgical procedures. Some people may have a genetic predisposition, and there may be no predisposing or risk factors.

Typical symptoms are pain and swelling in the calf. It may be hot or red. There may be pain in flexing the ankles. Diagnosis may be apparent by history and examination. However, a Doppler study will usually be ordered to confirm a diagnosis and reveal the extent of the thrombus.

Treatment is with anticoagulant medication. This does not remove the existing clot but reduces the risk of it extending or spreading. The length of time of treatment depends on individual circumstances.

The main complication of a DVT is spread to the lungs- pulmonary embolism (PE). This is a serious condition generally needing hospitalisation.

Reduce your risk by maintaining a healthy weight and not smoking. Other preventative measures depend on the circumstances. For example, you may be advised to take anticoagulant medication before an operation, together with compression stockings. When flying, stretch your legs frequently and try to avoid crossing them. Taking aspirin has not been shown to reduce the risk of DVT.



More info »



Eczema - Prevention and treatment

Eczema is a red, itchy rash often starting in infancy or early childhood. The most typical places are the face, neck and "flexures", which are the skin creases at the knees and elbows. It can be a few scattered areas or may be widespread. It ranges from the mild to the severe and may weep or be crusty.

The mainstays of treatment are moisturisers and steroid-based creams. Avoiding known triggers can reduce the frequency and severity of episodes. Unfortunately, it is not always possible. Dust mite allergy can worsen existing eczema. Contact occurs via bedding, carpet or soft furnishings. Shake sheets daily to remove skin scales (the food of dust mites!). Change sheets twice a week after a hot water wash. Put a special dust mite cover on the mattress.

Soaps and detergents remove natural skin oils and worsen dryness and itch. Wash with aqueous cream. Showers are better than baths. Reverse dry skin by frequent application of a simple moisturiser. Avoid wool and synthetic fabrics and wear cotton. Both cold and heat can worsen itch.

Both natural foods and food additives can worsen eczema in some children. Unfortunately, skin or blood testing for food allergies is inaccurate in uncovering which foods. Instead, strict avoidance of food (two to three weeks) followed by a deliberate challenge with the food (three servings a day for four days) will usually highlight any food allergies. Common ones are dairy, soy, fish, eggs, wheat, citrus, yeast extract or nuts.



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Stingers in the water

While shark attacks make headlines, other creatures in the water can cause problems when swimming. These are many and varied and influenced by season and where on the coastline you are. Most jellyfish stings are not serious but can be itchy or painful. However, tropical marine stingers found across Northern Australia, down to around Bundaberg in Queensland and Broome in Western Australia, can cause serious reactions and even be fatal.

There are ways to minimise the chances of getting stung. Always swim between the red and yellow flags inside stinger nets (where provided). Don't enter the water when beaches are closed. Look for and obey safety signs. Don't enter the water if the beach is closed. Wear a protective lycra suit, especially in the stinger season (usually November to March).

If a person is stung by a marine stinger, they will need first aid. Apply vinegar to the sting area. Call for the lifeguard and seek urgent medical attention. Stings by less toxic jellyfish can be treated firstly by removing the sting. You can use simple analgesia for pain, antihistamines for itching and soothing creams.



More info »



HEALTHY SMOOTHIES FOR KIDS

Smoothies are a great way to add fruit and vegetables to your child's diet. This is especially the case for fussy eaters. In addition to this, healthy ingredients like ginger, chia seeds and kale are difficult to incorporate into your child's diet.

Some of the healthiest things to add in a kids smoothie include Protein, such as a commercial protein powder, Greek yogurt (which is higher in protein than regular yogurt) or nut butters. Fruit, including berries, mango, bananas and avocado. Greens, such as spinach or kale. A liquid base such as dairy or plant-based milk, water or fruit juice.

Healthy Berry Smoothie:

The raw cauliflower will blend up into a creamy texture and will be unnoticed by your children.

- Frozen Mixed Berries
- Frozen Banana
- Raw Cauliflower
- Choice of Milk or Non-Dairy Milk
- Chia Seeds

Healthy Green Smoothie:

The avocado provides a nice thick creamy texture to the smoothie eliminating the need for milk or yoghurts.

- Avocado
- Green Spinach or Kale
- Frozen Banana
- Cucumber
- Honey
- Coconut Water

MERRY CHRISTMAS



● 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