



## FEBRUARY - MARCH 2025 EDITION

FREE TO TAKE HOME!



Back-to-School Anxiety



Understanding Puberty



The Importance of Sleep



Skin Cancer Checks

### ● PRACTICE DOCTORS

**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 (Proceduralist)  
 MBBS, FRACGP, FARGP (Surgery)  
 Endoscopies, Hernia Repair, Carpal Tunnel,  
 Vasectomy & Appendectomy

**Dr Clifton Washaya** - Special General Surgeon  
 MB, ChB, FCS(ECSA) FCS (SA) FRACS (Gen Surg),  
 MMed (Surg) FAMILC  
 General Surgery, Trauma, GI Endoscopy,  
 Colonoscopy, Gastroscopy, Skin Cancer, Breast  
 Surgery, Phlebology (Vein Surgery) Laparoscopic  
 surgery, (gall Bladder, Hernias, bowel) Melanoma,  
 Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Vasectomy, Hydroceles,  
 testicular/epididymal cysts, Robotic Surgery

**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 Kugapiriyan** Registrar

**Dr Kavita Kasana** - GP

**Dr Daniel Garces** - GP

**Dr Farhana Huq** - GP

**Dr Gifty Abraham** - GP

**Dr Emenike Muonanu** - GP

**Dr Leila Mirbagher Ajorpaz** - GP

**Dr Mainul Zubair** - GP

**Dr Ashish Paul** - GP

**Dr Sana Haroon** (Registrar)

**Dr Mostafa Kamal** (Registrar)

**Dr Aqsa Tufail** (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 – 12pm 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

**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.

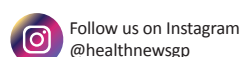
It will be easier to get an appointment with your preferred doctor for regular checkups or prescriptions if you make your appointments well in advance.

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



▷ Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.



# Managing Back-to-School Anxiety in Children

The start of a new school year often brings excitement, but for many children, it also triggers anxiety.

This anxiety can stem from a variety of factors, such as fear of academic challenges, social pressures, or changes in routine.

Recognizing and addressing these concerns is essential to helping children transition smoothly back to school.

Children may express their anxiety through physical symptoms like headaches, stomach aches, or disrupted sleep. Others might become irritable, clingy, or withdrawn. It's important for parents and caregivers to acknowledge these feelings rather than dismiss them.

Open communication is key—encourage children to share their worries and validate their emotions.

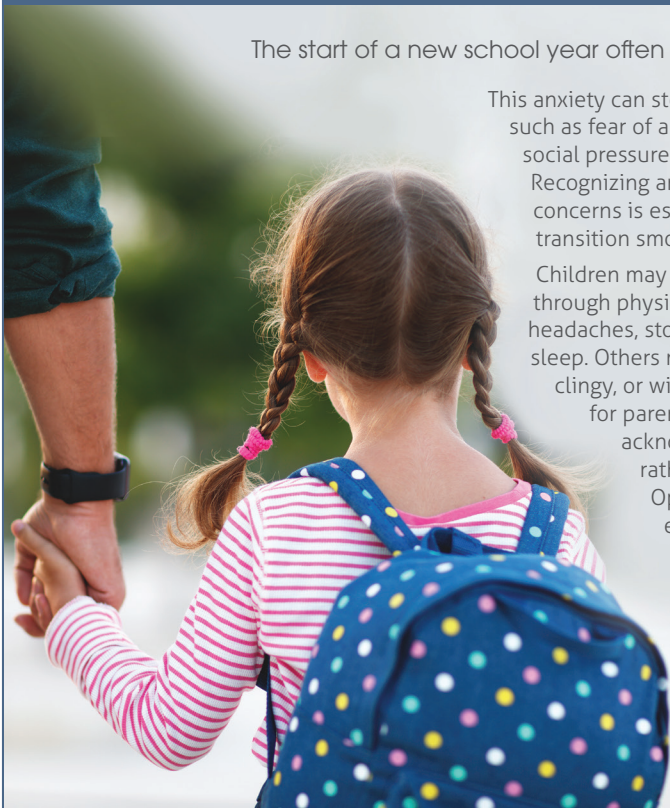
Preparation can significantly reduce anxiety. Visiting the school ahead of time, meeting teachers, and familiarizing children

with their schedules can provide a sense of control. Setting a consistent routine a few weeks before school starts, including regular sleep and meal times, also helps ease the adjustment.

It is vital to equip children with coping strategies. Teach them deep breathing exercises, positive self-talk, or effective time management. Encouraging friendships and social interactions can also boost their confidence and comfort.

Parents should model a positive attitude toward school and demonstrate problem-solving skills. If anxiety persists or becomes overwhelming, consider seeking support from school counsellors or mental health professionals.

Returning to school can be a challenging transition, but with patience, preparation, and support, children can overcome their fears and thrive in the new academic year. Fostering resilience and confidence will empower them for future challenges.



## Understanding Puberty: A Vital Stage of Growth

Puberty is a critical phase in human development, marking the transition from childhood to adolescence. It is driven by hormonal changes that trigger physical, emotional, and psychological transformations, preparing the body for adulthood.

The onset of puberty varies, typically between ages 8-14 for girls and 9-16 for boys. Hormones, particularly estrogen and testosterone, play a pivotal role. In girls, puberty is characterised by breast development, the start of menstruation (menarche), and the growth of pubic and underarm hair. Boys experience a deepening of the voice, facial and body hair growth, and testicular and penile enlargement.

Significant emotional and social developments accompany physical changes during puberty. Adolescents may experience mood swings, heightened self-awareness, and a desire for independence. Peer relationships often take on greater importance, influencing self-esteem and decision-making.

Puberty also involves rapid growth spurts, with bones and muscles maturing quickly. This growth may cause temporary awkwardness as the body adjusts. Acne, a common skin condition during puberty, is another noticeable change, often linked to increased oil production.

Supporting adolescents through puberty

is crucial. Open communication, education about bodily changes, and fostering a positive body image can ease the challenges associated with this transition. Parents, teachers, and healthcare providers play essential roles in providing guidance and reassurance.

Puberty is a natural and necessary stage of life, shaping individuals' physical and emotional identities. By understanding its complexities, we can better support young people navigating this transformative journey.



# The Power of Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is more than just a feel-good mantra—it is a mindset that has the potential to transform lives. Rooted in optimism, positive thinking helps individuals focus on possibilities rather than limitations, creating a pathway to personal and professional success.



Scientific research has shown that positive thinking can enhance mental and physical well-being. By fostering an optimistic outlook, individuals can reduce stress, improve coping mechanisms, and boost resilience during challenging times. Positive thinkers are more likely to set goals, persevere through difficulties, and adapt to setbacks, viewing failures as opportunities for growth.

One of the key benefits of positive thinking is its impact on mental health. It encourages self-belief and reduces the risk of anxiety and depression. Physically, it has been linked to lower blood pressure,

a stronger immune system, and a reduced risk of chronic illnesses.

Positive thinking doesn't mean ignoring reality or dismissing challenges. Instead, it involves reframing obstacles as surmountable and focusing on solutions rather than problems. Practising gratitude, affirmations, and mindfulness can nurture this outlook.

The power of positive thinking lies in its ability to shape perspectives, fuel motivation, and cultivate a fulfilling life. By embracing positivity, individuals can unlock their potential and create a brighter future.

# The Importance of Sleep

Sleep is a vital component of overall health and well-being, often as important as nutrition and exercise. Despite its significance, many people undervalue sleep, leading to widespread sleep deprivation with serious consequences for physical and mental health.

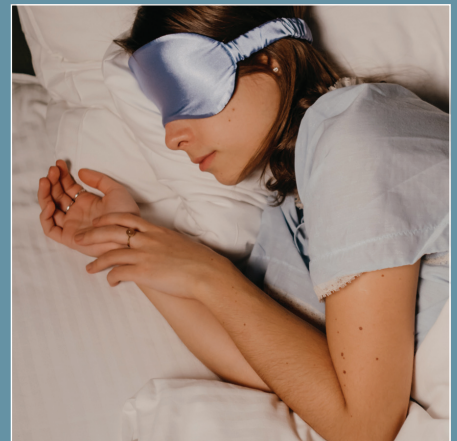
Quality sleep supports essential bodily functions, including tissue repair, immune system strengthening, and hormone regulation. It plays a critical role in brain health, facilitating memory consolidation, problem-solving skills, and emotional regulation. Without sufficient sleep, cognitive abilities decline, increasing the risk of errors and accidents.

For adults, 7-9 hours of sleep per night is generally recommended, while children and teenagers require even more to support their growth and development. Chronic sleep deprivation has been linked to a host of health problems, including obesity,

diabetes, heart disease, and depression. It also weakens the immune system, making the body more vulnerable to illnesses.

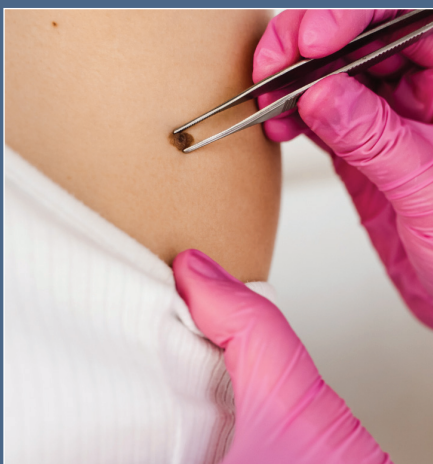
Good sleep hygiene practices can enhance the quality of rest. Effective strategies include maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, creating a comfortable sleep environment, limiting screen time before bed, and avoiding stimulants like caffeine late in the day.

Sleep is not a luxury but a necessity. Prioritizing rest is an investment in long-term health, productivity, and overall quality of life. Make sleep a priority for a healthier, more vibrant you.



# The Importance of Skin Cancer Checks

Skin cancer is one of the most common types of cancer worldwide, yet it is highly preventable and treatable when detected early. Regular skin cancer checks are essential for identifying potential issues before they become serious, potentially saving lives.



The primary cause of skin cancer is exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or tanning devices. Prolonged or intense UV exposure damages skin cells, leading to abnormal growths that can develop into cancer. The three main types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma, with melanoma being the most aggressive and deadly form.

Skin cancer checks allow for early detection of suspicious moles, spots, or lesions. Early-stage skin cancers are often easier to treat and have a higher survival rate. A professional skin examination by a dermatologist or your GP is thorough, but self-examinations also play a crucial role. Regularly checking your skin for changes in

size, colour, or shape of moles and looking for new growths or sores that don't heal can help catch issues early.

People at higher risk, including those with fair skin, a history of sunburns, excessive sun exposure, or a family history of skin cancer, should be particularly vigilant.

Skin cancer checks are a simple yet powerful tool in maintaining skin health. By prioritizing regular check-ups, individuals can reduce risk, catch problems early, and promote a proactive approach to long-term well-being.

If you have noticed any suspicious spots, moles or skin discolouration, seek your local GP's advice.

● **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



## GRILLED BARRAMUNDI WITH MANGO SALSA

This summery, flavourful dish celebrates Australia's fresh seafood and tropical produce that is prevalent at this time of year.

**Ingredients**

**For the barramundi:**

- 4 barramundi fillets (or any firm white fish)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste

**For the mango salsa:**

- 1 ripe mango, diced
- 1/2 red capsicum (bell pepper), diced
- 1/4 red onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 red chili, finely chopped (optional)
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
- Salt, to taste

**For serving:**

- Steamed jasmine rice or mixed greens
- Lime wedges

**Method**

**1. Prepare the mango salsa:**

In a bowl, combine diced mango, red capsicum, red onion, chili (if using), lime juice, and coriander. Mix gently and season with salt to taste. Set aside.

**2. Prepare the barramundi:**

Preheat a grill or barbecue to medium-high heat. Pat the barramundi fillets dry with paper towels and rub them with olive oil, lemon zest, and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper.

**3. Grill the barramundi:**

Place the fillets skin-side down on the grill and cook for 3-4 minutes, depending on thickness. Flip and cook for another 2-3 minutes until the flesh is opaque and flaky.

**4. Serve:**

Plate the grilled barramundi with a generous scoop of mango salsa. Serve with jasmine rice or a fresh salad and lime wedges on the side.

# WORD SEARCH

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- MANGO
- PUBERTY
- SKIN
- CANCER
- IMAGE
- POSITIVE
- SCHOOL
- BODY
- SLEEP
- IMMUNE
- GRATITUDE
- GROWTH
- RISK
- SUNBURN
- CHILDREN
- CHRONIC