

# ALICE STREET MEDICAL CENTRE



15 Alice Street  
Atherton QLD 4883  
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**Dr Tony McLellan**    **Dr Ed Stark**  
**Dr Chris Earl**      **Dr Dan Caines**  
**Dr Robin Leven**    **Dr Emma Griffiths**  
**Dr Gene Walker**    **Dr Meech Freeman**

*Our doctors have satisfied the requirements of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and are on the Vocational Register of General Practitioners.*

They are family doctors experienced in the broad range of general practice and as well as routine consulting involving all age groups they do:

- Obstetrics, including caesarean sections and ultrasound scans
- Epidurals
- General anaesthetics
- Surgery, including both minor surgery and some major surgery
- Immunisations
- Audiograms
- Skin cancers
- Family planning, including tubal ligations and vasectomies

## STAFF

Madeleine Shaw (Practice Manager)  
Jen DeBondi, Melissa McDonald, Julie Pink,  
Sasha Snow, Gabrielle Turner, Lisa Blaney  
and Lerae Hubner.

## NURSING STAFF

Robyn Trimble RN    Marea Mead RN  
Lauren Caines RN    Heidi Baker RN  
Anna Montgomery RN

## SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS are by appointment.

**Monday to Friday**      8am to 5pm  
**Saturday**                8am to 11am

EMERGENCIES will be dealt with immediately. AFTER HOURS the doctor on call can be contacted by ringing 0418 184 070. HOME VISITS are made where appropriate. Please contact the surgery as soon as possible after 8am to arrange a home visit. NURSING HOME VISITS are made on request.

## AFTER HOURS CONTACT DETAILS

Phone numbers are placed on the external door, recorded on our answering service message and noted on all our stationery. These numbers include:

After-hours mobile:      0418 184 070  
1300 Health:              1300 432 584  
GP Helpline:              1800 022 222  
Atherton Hospital:      07 4091 0211  
Ambulance emergency service:    000

# YOUR DOCTOR MAY 2020



## What is the **thyroid** and why does it matter?

The thyroid is often described as 'butterfly-shaped'; a somewhat romantic term for the gland that sits at the front of the neck and helps to regulate our metabolism.

Our thyroid plays an important role in the way our body turns food into energy. The hormones produced by our thyroid and brain form part of a feedback loop which ensures a steady stream of energy for our changing needs. Several different disorders can result when your thyroid produces too much hormone (hyperthyroidism), or not enough (hypothyroidism).

### Hyperthyroidism – overactive thyroid

The symptoms of an overactive thyroid include diarrhoea, weight loss, hunger, insomnia, a rapid pulse, and feelings of anxiety or nervous energy. Some people may also experience a hand tremor and hair loss. Hyperthyroidism is most commonly caused by Graves' disease, an autoimmune disorder.

### Hypothyroidism – underactive thyroid

The symptoms of an underactive thyroid can be similar to the symptoms of other conditions. They include unexplained weight gain, fatigue and lethargy, constipation, muscle and joint pain, and feeling excessively cold. Hypothyroidism is fairly common, especially among women. The most common cause is an autoimmune condition affecting the thyroid, which may be related to other autoimmune conditions like rheumatoid arthritis or coeliac disease.

Other disorders of the thyroid include goitre – a visibly swollen thyroid gland, or nodules. Nodules are small lumps and swellings to the thyroid which are nearly always benign and often require no treatment. The thyroid can also be affected by cancer, although this is much rarer than any other thyroid condition. Thyroid disorders can also be associated with pregnancy, and can be serious if not treated.

### For thyroid health

A thyroid condition will need to be diagnosed, managed and monitored by your healthcare provider. Many people have written articles and books claiming to have the answer to an ideal 'thyroid diet', but the quality of these claims varies a lot. Some nutrients that we know are associated with thyroid health are iodine, selenium, iron and zinc.

Iodine is essential for normal thyroid function. Iodine deficiency is now very uncommon in developed countries due to iodine additives in salt and food. People following a strict vegetarian or vegan diet may need to consider supplements, but seaweed is also a great source. Eating a balanced diet makes taking supplemental iodine unnecessary, however iodine

requirements increase in pregnancy, so supplementation may be recommended by healthcare professionals at this time.

Selenium is another nutrient essential for thyroid health, and is found in a balanced diet which includes meat, fish, cereal, eggs, sunflower seeds and nuts (particularly Brazil nuts).

Iron and zinc can improve thyroid hormone production in an underactive thyroid and are found in green leafy vegetables, legumes, red meat, and egg yolks.

There is a range of thyroid conditions which can be affected in different ways by these nutrients, so it's advisable to get expert advice on your intake. If you are concerned about any symptoms you're experiencing, make an appointment with your doctor.

**May is Thyroid  
Awareness Month  
- be aware of your  
thyroid health**

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- Intermittent fasting and weight loss
- What's all the hype about hemp?
- Lower your risk of fatty liver disease
- Technology and your teeth
- Banana-berry protein smoothie

Take me home to complete our **PUZZLE** – check inside!



## What's all the hype about hemp?

**Hemp looks set to be the next 'superfood' with a huge range of nutritional benefits.**

Hemp is commonly confused with marijuana, but the plants are different. Hemp contains less than 0.5% of the active compound THC, so has none of the psychoactive effects of marijuana. This means that it is legal, safe, and readily available.

### What are the benefits?

So why are people getting so excited about edible hemp? It turns out that it is a great source of lots of essential nutrients, such as fats, vitamins and minerals, protein, and fibre.

Hemp seeds contain the 'good' fats found in plant-based oils, essential for maintaining good cholesterol levels and carrying vitamins and minerals to the body. Hemp seeds and hempseed oil are particularly good sources of Omega 3 and 6. Hemp is one of only a handful of plant-based sources of these essential fatty acids. This makes it a perfect choice for vegetarians and vegans who may have struggled to find these without supplements.

Hemp seeds are good sources for vitamins A and E, and many of the B vitamins. They also have high levels of

magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, and iron, which are essential for many of our bodily functions, a strong immune system, and general health.

A hemp seed comprises more than 35% protein – a highly concentrated, complete protein source, containing all of the amino acids necessary in a healthy diet.

Hemp seeds have a good amount of dietary fibre, contributing to a healthy digestive system.

### Where can you get edible hemp products?

Until recently, edible hemp was mainly in health food shops in the form of supplements or jelly sweets.

As it increases in popularity, hemp is becoming available in a wide variety of products, and is now found in mainstream shops and on the menu in cafes.

With a faintly nutty flavour, it's good in both sweet and savoury forms. The simplest way to eat hemp is just to get the seeds – they're versatile enough to be sprinkled over almost any meal, blended into a smoothie, or mixed into your muesli. The internet abounds with simple, delicious recipes for meals and desserts containing hemp seeds or hempseed oil, which can be a healthy addition to your regular diet.

## Technology and your teeth

Medicine has always been at the forefront of technological advancement, and dentistry is no exception. The latest trend revolutionising dental treatment is 3D printing – which looks set to change the face of dentistry and orthodontics.

3D printing starts with a digital model which becomes a template for creating a physical object. The physical object is printed by joining materials (usually in layers) based on the 3-dimensional digital template. A variety of materials can be used including plastic, glass and ceramics in different forms.

### 3D printing in dental care today

It seems like science fiction even in the 21st century, but dentists are now able to scan your mouth and existing structures

– your teeth, gums, and skull – which a computer translates into a 3D image. This 3D image can be used as a template to design customised aligners, crowns, teeth and dentures, based on the most accurate representation of your mouth.

Dental surgeries are increasingly adopting technology which has clear benefits for monitoring changes in your mouth over time. It also means that any treatment can be tailored to you without the uncomfortable, and often dreaded, invasive investigations usually required.

### The future of dental care

3D printing in dental care has applications far beyond just straightening, replacing and repairing teeth – as important as these procedures are. Innovative new materials which actually inhibit the growth of bacteria will help combat gum disease and tooth decay – lowering the risk of serious problems both in the mouth and throughout the body. 3D printed teeth made from materials that actually stop tooth decay in its tracks will save more than time and money – gum disease costs lives.

As technology improves and becomes more cost-effective, more and more dental centres will have the devices in-house to perform timely and effective procedures – your new teeth could be created while you wait!



## Banana-berry protein smoothie

*This delicious smoothie is packed full of protein and fibre, and will keep you full for hours.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe banana
- ½ cup frozen blueberries or raspberries
- 1 Tbsp hemp protein powder
- 1 Tbsp tahini or nut butter
- 1 tsp ground flaxseed or psyllium husk
- 200ml cashew or coconut milk

### INSTRUCTIONS

Place all ingredients into a blender, and blend until smooth and creamy.





# Lower your risk of fatty liver disease

You might be surprised just how common fatty liver disease is, with around one in three Australian adults thought to have the condition. In the Western world the problem is growing, where increasingly sedentary lifestyles and poor diets are contributing to a range of diseases.

Fatty liver disease is exactly what it sounds like; it's a condition where there's a build-up of fatty tissue in and around the liver. Your liver is your largest internal organ and is responsible for many essential life processes – it's crucial for digestion and removing toxins from your body. A healthy liver contains very little or no fat. Fat around the liver can start to cause health problems like diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

The medical term for fatty liver is hepatic steatosis. It's more common in people who are overweight or obese, and more common in women than men. Fatty liver is closely linked with alcohol excess, but also occurs in people with low or no alcohol intake – this is known as Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD).

## Symptoms

The early stages of fatty liver disease may cause no symptoms at all, and the condition may only be picked up during medical investigations for something else. For many people, the problem will never develop beyond this stage, and some might never even know they have it.

As fatty liver disease develops, it can start to cause:

- abdominal pain and swelling (ascites)
- yellow skin and eyes (jaundice)
- loss of appetite and weight loss
- general weakness
- itchy skin
- fatigue and confusion

## Causes

Obesity, a diet high in saturated fat and refined carbohydrates, and high levels of fat in the blood are major contributors to fatty liver. Very rapid weight loss can also be a culprit. Some medical conditions, including diabetes, high blood pressure, and some autoimmune diseases increase risk. Certain medications can contribute to fatty liver, including immunosuppressants and long-term steroids. Sometimes, fatty liver develops quickly in pregnancy and can be serious.



*Yellowish eyes and skin can be a sign of liver disease.*

The effects of an excessive alcohol intake on liver health cannot be overstated; fatty liver disease is very common in people with a very high alcohol intake. The current National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guidelines state that no one should drink more than ten units of alcohol per week, and no more than four in one day.

## Prevention

Preventing fatty liver disease means identifying the cause; some of the risk factors can't be changed, but many people can prevent or manage it with simple – though not always easy – lifestyle changes. Maintaining a steady, healthy weight, eating well, regular exercise, and watching your alcohol intake are the best steps you can take for your liver and all-round health.

# WORD SEARCH

- PHOSPHORUS
- MINERALS
- ORTHODONTICS
- SKULL
- IODINE
- LIVER
- JAUNDICE
- MAGNESIUM
- VITAMINS
- DENTISTRY
- GUMS
- GOITRE
- FATIGUE
- WEIGHT
- CHOLESTEROL
- IRON
- FIBRE
- TEETH
- AUTOIMMUNE
- GLAND
- DIABETES
- HEMP
- ZINC
- PROTEIN
- BACTERIA
- THYROID
- SELENIUM
- ALCOHOL

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



# Intermittent fasting and weight loss



**Intermittent Fasting (IF) for health and weight control is currently advertised as one of the great success stories of the diet world; prompting much investigation into its effectiveness.**

Fasting has been practiced for millennia by people around the world for reasons of self-discipline and spirituality, but some research shows that it may help us lose weight and benefit our health. How does intermittent fasting work? The goal is to stop eating (or fast) long enough for your insulin levels to drop, sending a message to your body to start using its fat reserves for energy.

There are many different techniques for IF, and it seems to be a personal preference as to which works best. The aim is to give people an easy (in theory) approach to calorie restriction that is sustainable.

Some people choose to fast for two full days; normal and healthy eating five days of the week, and fasting for two non-consecutive days. On fast days, most guidelines allow an intake of around a quarter of your recommended daily calories. The number of fasting days can be adjusted to suit.

Another approach to IF is the circadian rhythm fasting approach; this is designed to follow normal patterns of eating, with restrictions to the hours when people naturally eat. Typically, this might involve a 16 to 18 hour fast period, which includes the hours of sleep, with a six to eight hour window for healthy eating.

Studies show some evidence that IF can help with weight control and improve insulin levels and metabolism, however research is still ongoing. It's also important to emphasise that eating "normally" doesn't mean you can eat anything. If you overeat or binge on junk food, then you may even gain weight.

The main drawback to IF is hunger – people find it difficult to stop eating for long periods. Compared with a more conventional approach to calorie restriction, the research subjects who persisted with fasting lost a similar amount of weight, but the drop-out rate was higher. Once you stop any restrictive diet you may return to your unhealthy eating patterns, causing a cycle of on-off dieting which can bring its own health problems.

Like all approaches to health and diet it comes down to balance – the best diet is a healthy eating plan that you can live with and enjoy for life. Before embarking on any weight loss program consult a health professional to make sure it's right for you.



**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only, and is not intended as a substitute for sound health care advice. We are not liable for any adverse effects or consequences resulting from the use of any information, suggestions, or procedures presented. Always consult a qualified health care professional in all matters pertaining to your physical, emotional and mental health.

## CLINIC UPDATE

### RENOVATIONS

At Alice Street Medical Centre we are always trying to improve our services so that our patients are getting the best possible care. Recently we have created a fully functional sterilization room here on site to ensure all instruments used in our wide range of excisions and procedures are compliant to standards.

We have now set up another book keeping and administration office to provide more room for the tasks performed by Julie our Book keeper, and some of the reception tasks that may require more privacy and create more space for the front reception area.

This also means that our Practice Manager Maddie has a larger office for the complex role that she has. No more fights over the air conditioner temperature!!

### VACCINES – COLD CHAIN, WHAT IS IT?

The **cold chain** is a system of transporting and storing vaccines within a recommended temperature range of +2 to +8 degrees Celsius (°C). The **cold chain**: begins from the time the vaccine is manufactured.

If you have been given a script by the Doctor to have an immunisation we strongly recommend that you ask the pharmacy to deliver it to Alice Street medical, they come once a day to the surgery, every day. Do not take it home and put into your fridge as it is very important not to break the cold chain.

### FLU SHOTS

We will be running clinics for our patients to receive their flu shots so make sure you are booked into an available spot during this month. If you are aged between 70-80 years of age, this is also a good time to speak to your doctor about shingles vaccine.

### MISSED APPOINTMENTS

When you make appointments at Alice Street Medical Centre the reception staff will always offer an appointment card. Sometimes people prefer to put the appointment into their phone or write it in a diary. Recently we are finding that a lot of appointments are not attended/missed.

Our SMS reminder system is sent the previous day of your appointment or if that option is not registered with us, our staff will phone the day before to alert you of your appointment the next day. It is very important that you advise our staff if your mobile number has changed.

Once you have missed 3 appointments you will be charged a nonattendance fee as our appointments are valued and in high demand.

If you have any queries about your appointments or our reminder systems, please do not hesitate to chat to the girls at reception.

### EAR FACTS

- Ear wax production is necessary for good ear health
- The inner ear is the main organ of balance
- Your ears never stop hearing, even when you sleep. Your brain just ignores incoming sounds
- Ears never stop growing through your lifetime
- After eating too much, your hearing is less sharp.

If you have any concerns about your ears the best place to start is with your GP, they can check for loss of hearing, build up of wax and any balance issues that may be concerning you.

To try the latest **RECIPE** take me home...