

# ALICE STREET MEDICAL CENTRE



15 Alice Street  
Atherton QLD 4883

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A/H: 0418 184 070  
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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**  
**Dr Takehiro Ichikawa**

*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, Sasha Snow, Gabrielle Turner, Lisa Blaney, Lerae Hubner and Mandy Allcock.

## NURSING STAFF

Robyn Trimble RN    Marea Mead RN  
Lauren Caines RN    Heidi Baker 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

DECEMBER 2020

FREE!

This month we talk about...



TAKING CARE OF  
STRESS LEVELS



SWEATY  
ISSUES



DECEMBEARD  
& BOWEL CANCER



SUMMER SKIN  
CONDITIONS

## The three 'omegas'

*The omega fatty acids are essential nutrients which we need to maintain good health. They're unsaturated fats, and are obtained through our diet.*

Why aren't they numbered in order? They're numbered according to the placement of double bonds within their structure – the number is a part of their chemical description.

**3** Omega-3 plays a variety of roles in the body, and is associated with brain development, heart health, bone and joint health. Omega-3 has been shown to help slow memory decline in people with dementia, improve mental health, and promote a healthy heart by reducing LDL ('bad') cholesterol.

Our bodies can't produce omega-3, so you need to obtain it from your diet; however it's thought that most people following a standard Western diet are low in this nutrient. Ensuring adequate omega-3 intake throughout pregnancy is also essential for the baby's brain development.

**6** Omega-6 also needs to be obtained from your food, however most people's intake is actually higher than it needs to be from a Western diet. Omega-6 is certainly essential, but can begin to cause problems if not part of a healthy balanced diet incorporating adequate levels of omega-3. Getting the ratio of Omega-3 to Omega-6 seems to be important, as a high level of Omega-6

relative to Omega-3 can contribute to inflammatory conditions. Omega-6 is found in most oils, meats, dairy products, eggs, cereals, and processed foods.

**9** Omega-9, like omega-6, is common in most people's diets, and is one of the nutrients created within our body. It's found in almost all oils and nuts, and it would be very rare to have an inadequate intake.

## BEST SOURCES OF OMEGA-3, -6, & -9

As omega-6 and -9 are already abundant in most people's diets, ensuring adequate omega-3 intake is usually the most important goal. The best dietary source of omega-3 is oily fish, and it can also be found in walnuts, flaxseeds, and chia seeds. The term 'oily fish' includes mackerel, tuna, sardines, and salmon, which are all an excellent addition to a healthy diet.

Omega-3 supplements may be useful, particularly for people following strict vegetarian or vegan diets. Supplements should be high quality, and only taken in addition to a healthy and varied diet, as the wide range of nutrients found in the diet cannot be properly replicated by pills. Consult a health professional if you are considering supplements.

The World Health Organisation recommends eating two portions of oily fish per week, not only for its omega-3 content but also for vitamins A, D, and B, its lean protein content, and a range of other minerals and essential nutrients.

Our newsletter is free! You can take a copy with you.

## Smoked salmon appetisers

These bite-sized appetisers are so easy to make, and look stylish for any occasion.

### INGREDIENTS

- 100-150 grams smoked salmon
- Dense dark rye bread or pumpernickel (about 6 slices)
- 200 grams cream cheese
- 1 medium avocado
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 bunch of dill, to garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. Using a small round biscuit cutter, cut out 20-24 circles from the rye bread.
2. Beat the cream cheese, avocado, lemon juice and half the zest together.
3. Spread the cream cheese filling on top of each of the rye bread circles.
4. Top with a piece of smoked salmon.
5. Garnish with a sprig of fresh dill and sprinkle over the rest of the zest.

### Optional garnishes

Thinly slivers of radish or lemon, capers, strips of red pepper, ground black pepper.



## Common summer skin conditions

Our summers are a beautiful time of year, with people taking the chance to enjoy the sunshine. However, summer can be particularly hard on our skin, when harsh sun, heat, and stinging insects abound.

- **Sunburn:** sometimes even with the best intentions, the sun can cause serious damage. Sunburn can be incredibly painful, with blistering and peeling. Most cases of mild sunburn can be managed at home with simple painkillers, gentle cooling, and soothing lotions.
- **Prickly heat or heat rash:** heat rash is caused by blocked sweat glands and irritated skin. It usually looks like red areas with lots of tiny pimples, and is found in the places that get the most hot and sweaty. It can be uncomfortable but should clear up on its own. Keep the skin cool, clean and dry, and prevent chaffing.
- **Fungal infections:** skin infections like candida thrive in moist, warm creases in the skin. Sweaty areas around the groin, under breasts, between the toes, or in any folds of skin can become very sore and itchy. Treatment will be based on the type of infection and which part of the body is affected.
- **Plants and insects:** some summer plants can irritate the skin. Stinging nettles and giant hogweed are particular culprits. Summer is also the season for wasps and other biting, stinging insects.

The best way to prevent summer skin problems is to avoid the things that cause them – staying out of the sun or covering up, staying clean and dry and managing sweat, avoiding insect bites and stinging plants, and carefully managing rashes and infections.

Unexplained severe rashes or rashes accompanied by other symptoms of illness should always be checked out by a doctor.

## Taking care of your stress levels

*While short term stress is a natural response to certain situations, continuous stress and unhealthy coping strategies can become a serious problem.*

Anything that causes stress is known as a 'stressor' – some of the most common ones include:

- **Financial worries:** this can incorporate a huge variety of troubling situations, such as worrying about loss of employment and income, or simply not making ends meet. Financial worries are considered the number one cause of stress in Australia.
- **Health concerns:** about yourself or others. Stress can make the symptoms of physical illnesses worse, creating a spiral of health anxiety. Living through the Covid-19 global health crisis has caused untold stress, anxiety, and grief to millions of people around the world.
- **Work stress:** there are plenty of ways a workplace can cause stress and anxiety; from job pressure to difficult interactions with colleagues or clients.
- **Negative life events:** some of the most serious, such as the death of a loved one, can combine a number of stressors – finances, health, anxiety, and grief, with severe and complex effects on health and wellbeing.

- **Positive life events:** even exciting changes, like a promotion, a new home, or a much-desired addition to the family can feel stressful.

### WHEN IS STRESS A PROBLEM?

Stress is unhealthy when it impacts on your ability to go about your life as normal, feels unmanageable, prevents you from enjoying the things you'd normally enjoy, and when it causes physical and mental problems.

Stress can cause emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, or irritability. It can also cause very real physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, upset stomach, and fatigue.

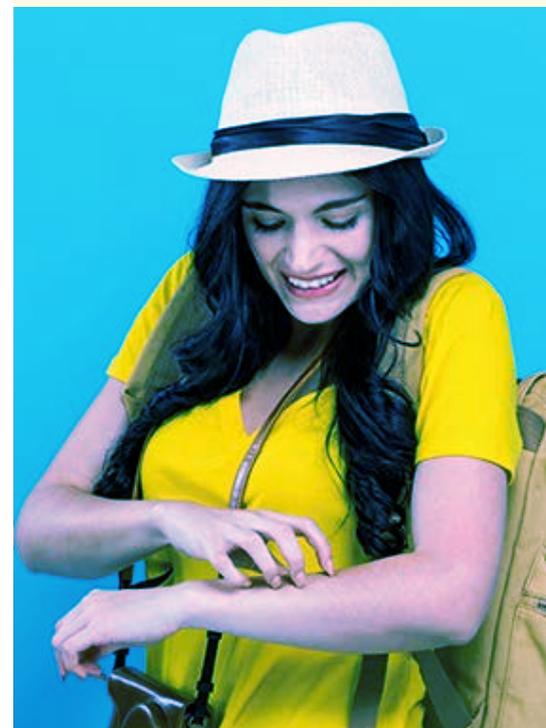
### DEALING WITH STRESS

If stress has a cause that can be tackled with practical actions, that's a great place to start – making positive, simple steps can be helpful.

Sometimes, people find learning coping strategies work – there are numerous resources for meditation and mindfulness exercises to help deal with stress and anxiety.

Some coping strategies are unhealthy, and have the potential to cause further harm. Smoking, drinking alcohol, drugs, or unhealthy comfort-eating can all cause serious long-term harm, and are unlikely to help with the underlying stress.

If you're struggling with stress, anxiety, or feel unable to cope, it's important to seek professional advice.



# CROSSWORD CORNER

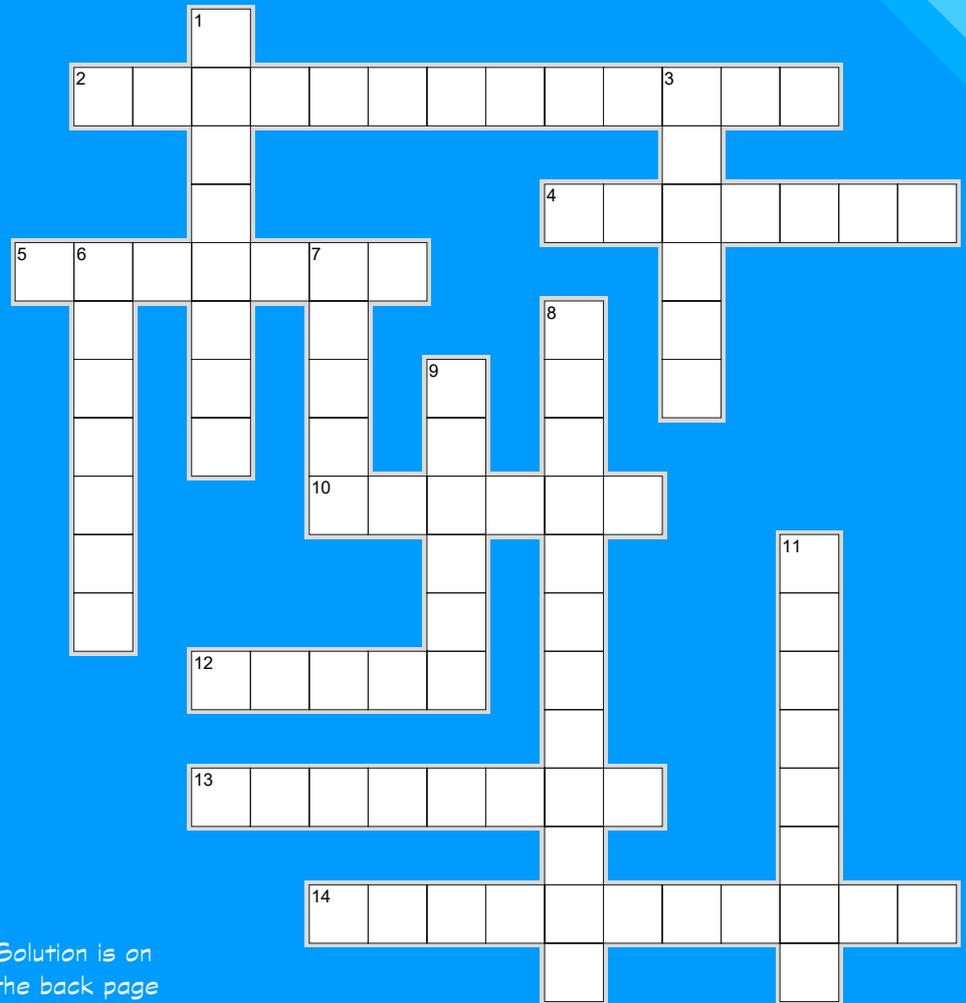
Answers can be found in this edition of Your Doctor

## ACROSS

2. Medical term for excessive sweating
4. Onions, garlic and cabbage contain this element
5. Type of sweat gland found all over the body
10. Small raised areas or wart-like lumps
12. One of the ways we regulate our body temperature
13. A term for loss of thinking, remembering, and reasoning skills.
14. Medical examination of the colon using a long flexible instrument

## DOWN

1. Type of sweat gland found where we have the most body hair
3. Oily fish which is a good source of omega-3
6. Fungal skin infection
7. National Bowel Cancer Screening Program
8. Racing, pounding, fluttering or skipping heartbeat
9. Nut that is a source of omega-3 and omega-9
11. Anything that causes stress



Solution is on the back page

## Bowel Cancer

*Bowel cancer is the name for cancers that begin in the large intestine or rectum. Australia has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world.*

Most bowel cancers begin as 'polyps' in the bowel – small raised areas or wart-like lumps. Polyps can take years to turn into cancers, and most polyps never do become cancerous. They can often be easily removed before they have a chance to cause any problems. Untreated, bowel cancer can spread throughout the body and become difficult to treat effectively.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Some of the earliest stages of bowel cancer may have no symptoms, which is why many countries have adopted public health screening programs to try and detect any early signs of cancer before it becomes serious.

One of the first symptoms people often notice with bowel cancer is an unexplained change in their bowel habits. Diarrhoea or constipation that lasts more than a few days and has no known cause can be a concern.

Sometimes people notice changes in the way their stool looks, and may pass some blood or mucous when they move their bowels. People also often report feeling like they still need to go to the toilet after a bowel movement.

Cancer, like many other illnesses, can have general symptoms like excessive tiredness, unexplained weight loss, and pain. It's important to see a healthcare professional as soon as possible for proper investigations, diagnosis, and treatment.

*'Decembeard' encourages men to grow a beard in December to raise awareness of bowel cancer*

If there is any blood within the stool, which could be a sign of a pre-cancerous or cancerous area of the bowel. If blood is detected, further testing – usually a colonoscopy – is offered.

### BOWEL CANCER SCREENING

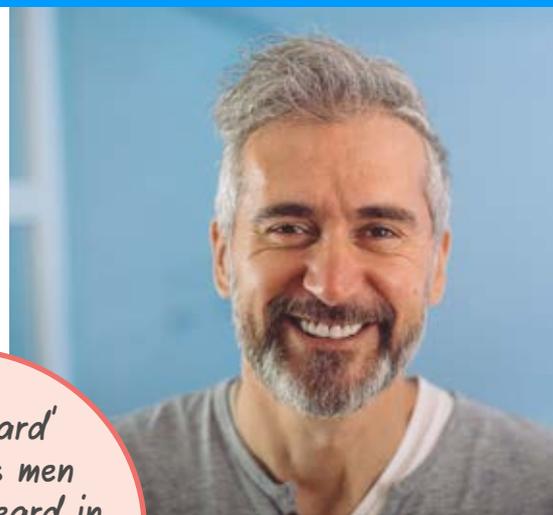
The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) is an initiative designed to identify possible signs of bowel cancer early, even before symptoms begin. This gives people the best chance of early treatment and a good result. The initial test is safe and simple, and it saves lives.

The test kit is used at home to take a small stool sample for testing. The test can show

### PREVENTING BOWEL CANCER

Following a healthy lifestyle is the best way to help prevent your risk of bowel cancer. This means eating a good diet high in fibre, vegetables and fruit, and low in processed meat. Maintaining a healthy weight, low alcohol intake, and not smoking are also important. Being aware of symptoms and taking cancer screening tests when recommended is the best way to catch cancer early.

*"Around 90% of bowel cancer cases are cured if detected early"*



# Sweaty issues

*An old saying goes, 'horses sweat, gentlemen perspire, and ladies glow'. It turns out though, that those kinds of expectations could actually be unhealthy. We all sweat, and for good reasons.*

## WHY DO WE SWEAT?

The main reason we sweat is to regulate our body temperature. When we're too hot; whether from environment, exercise, stress, or hormones, we sweat. Sweat evaporates from our skin and we cool down.

Sweat comes from around three million tiny glands all over our bodies. There are two main types of sweat gland:

- **Eccrine sweat glands** are found all over the body, and they produce the majority of our sweat. They produce mainly water, with a little of the natural proteins, salts, and other electrolytes in the body. These are what make sweat taste a little salty.
- **Apocrine sweat glands** tend to be found in the places we have the most body hair; mostly around the groin and armpits. The sweat produced by apocrine glands is oilier and tends to become smellier.

## WHY DOES SWEAT SMELL SO... SWEATY?

Sweat is mainly water, so doesn't have very much odour of its own. It does, however, create a nice moist, warm environment for the bacteria that lives on our skin, and this is what produces that characteristic sweaty smell.

Everyone has natural variations in hormone levels and skin bacteria which affect the kind of smell produced. Foods high in sulphur such as onions, garlic, and cabbage seem to make sweat smell more unpleasant. Experiments where volunteers sniffed pads from each other's armpits found that people who ate red meat regularly smelled worse than those who didn't eat any red meat.

## WHEN IS SWEATING A PROBLEM?

If the amount of sweat you produce means you're changing your clothes several times a day and normal antiperspirant deodorants aren't working, then it could be a problem. Excessive sweating is known as hyperhidrosis. If you're distressed or embarrassed by how much you sweat, or if you're experiencing skin problems caused by moisture, see a doctor for advice.

## Discuss your concerns with the doctor

It's a good idea to think about what you'd like to discuss before your visit. This form can help you organise your thoughts. After you make an appointment, take a minute to write down the doctor's name and appointment details. Then use this form to make a list of your concerns.

DOCTOR	DATE	TIME

1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>NOTES:</b>

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 2. HYPERHIDROSIS 4. SULPHUR 5. ECCRINE 10. POLYPS  
 DOWN: 1. APOCRINE 3. SALMON 6. CANDIDA 7. NBCSP  
 8. PALPITATIONS 9. WALNUT 11. STRESSOR

**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

## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

It certainly has been a year like no other, we would like to sincerely thank all our patients for their compliance and understanding when we had to change our systems and processes to accommodate each stage of the Covid 19.

We hope that going forward our region remains safe and allows us to remain free in our daily activities. We will continue to manage the surgery as is necessary to keep up with any changes to ensure the safety of our patients.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

Alice Street Medical Centre will only be closed for the Public Holidays over Christmas and New Year but please phone the after hours on call Doctor anytime on 0418184070.

## A NEW BOOK KEEPER

After 11 years our book keeper Julie Pink decided to move on to new adventures and we wish her all the best for all she chooses to do.

Luckily our newly appointed receptionist Mandy Allcock is also able to do bookkeeping!!

So hello book keeper, goodbye receptionist.

## A NEW DOCTOR

A big welcome to our new Registrar Dr Bradley Lovie. As we say goodbye to Dr Take Ichikawa and wish him all the best with his next posting, Dr Lovie will be coming to Alice Street Medical for a 12 month posting. He is coming over from Atherton Hospital as part of his training program, we welcome him.

## KEEP UP WITH YOUR CHECK UPS

A big problem with 2020 and all the Covid 19 issues interrupting our daily routine, is that people are putting off having regular checks for skin, mammograms, bowel cancer screening, endoscopy and other things. Please ensure that you check with your doctor and keep up to date with all medical needs.

Perhaps look to book in 2021.

## SCRIPTS ARRANGED AHEAD OF TIME

It is vital that you have a good supply of your medications and that you are regularly monitored by your GP to make sure they are doing their job.

It is a policy at Alice Street Medical that you see a doctor to have your scripts renewed, but if it is left until your last tablet it is highly unlikely that we can get an appointment with your preferred Doctor. Also, we only have limited emergency appointments on the day and this impacts our availability for the numerous other emergencies. Thankyou for your understanding in this matter.

## CALL 000

We are having increasing phone calls from our patients that would be more appropriate for phoning 000. We are limited in our resources and facilities to treat urgent cases and it saves valuable time if you call an ambulance for the following symptoms as per the PHN guideline:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing/talking
- Facial swelling and rash
- Facial/limb weakness
- Collapse/altered level of consciousness
- Extensive burns/bleeding

## DOCTORS ON LEAVE DECEMBER

Tony McLellan	25th Nov – 6th Dec
Dan Caines	5th Dec – 19th Dec
Emma & Chris Earl	12th – Dec- 31st Dec
Ed Stark	21st Dec – 3rd Jan

*Our newsletter is free! Take a copy with you.*