



YOUR DOCTOR



APRIL 2015

ELECTRA PARK MEDICAL CENTRE

154 High Street Road
Ashwood 3140

P: (03) 9807 1102
P: (03) 9807 1311
F: (03) 9888 1449



Dr Jing Pan

MB BS FRACGP Diploma In Child Health
(University Of Sydney)

Special interests include women's health, dermatology, paediatrics, diabetes and other chronic illnesses.

Dr Peter J Webster

MB BS (Hons) FRACGP Dip (Obst) RCOG
Grad Dip Fam Med

Special interests include gynaecology, family medicine, palliative care and aged care. Involved in teaching Monash University students.

Dr Walter Tereszkiwicz MB BS (Monash)

Special interests include paediatrics, geriatrics, ear, nose and throat. Minor surgery.

Dr Victoria Hayes MB BS

Special interests paediatrics, family medicine, immunisation, women's health.

Dr Hogan Chen

MB BS

EPMC would like to welcome Dr Hogan Chen to our practice. Hogan is available Monday to Friday.

Shania Khalani

DIETITIAN

Now consulting at Electra Park Medical Centre. Shania is a qualified Accredited Practising Dietitian and Member of the Dietitians Association of Australia. Patients on a Chronic Disease Management Plan will have their consultations bulk billed.

Children 12 and Under Now Bulk Billed.

PRACTICE NURSE

Dianne and Alison

PRACTICE MANAGER

Nicole

RECEPTIONISTS

Lorraine, Lyn, Chris and Stephanie

SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS by appointment: (subject to change)

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 8.30am – 7.00pm
Wednesday 8.30am – 6.00pm
Weekends & public holidays 9.00am – 11.00am (no appointment required)

Urgent medical problems dealt with promptly. The practice provides a complete range of medical care, including home visits, hospital and nursing home care. If you are in need of a home visit, please contact the surgery as soon as possible after 8.30am.

We have onsite parking.

After Hours Care -

After Hours GP Clinic or After Hours Doctor
36 Wellington Road, Box Hill or Service (Locum)
Ph: 8820 7500 13 SICK (13 7425)

In case of an emergency please call 000.



SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT HEARING LOSS

Presbycusis, also known as age-related hearing loss, is the progressive effect of ageing on hearing ability. Capacity to hear in high frequencies diminishes, making it harder for people to hear in noisy situations. Hearing loss can greatly affect people's quality of life, often making it difficult to participate in social situations.

Hearing loss is typically caused by loss or damage of fine hairs in the inner ear that act as sound receivers. These hairs are unable to rejuvenate so are irreplaceable once damaged. The environment plays a role in damaging these hairs, particularly ongoing exposure to loud and repeated noise. Other lifestyle and health factors like smoking and diabetes also play a role in hearing loss. Both of these also affect the circulatory system, increasing people's risk of heart disease and blood clots.

Building on the link between blood flow and hearing, researchers looked at whether a diet designed to improve the circulatory system may also prevent or delay hearing loss. A diet rich in fish and other foods loaded with long chain omega-3 fatty acids helps reduce risk of blood clots and heart disease. Similarly, researchers found that women who ate two or more servings of fish each week had a 20% lower risk of experiencing significant hearing loss as they aged.

Further research needs to be done to flesh out the relationship between omega-3s and hearing loss. Nevertheless, adding fish to your diet is a safe and healthy measure that might help with hearing, as well as a number of other health issues like asthma and prostate cancer.

For reference: Curhan, S G et al. Fish and fatty acid consumption and the risk of hearing loss. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 2014; 100: 1371-1377.

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MORE PULSE, LESS CHOLESTEROL

Dyslipidemia (abnormal amounts of lipids – fat and cholesterol – in the blood) can vastly increase a person's risk of heart disease.

It can be, in most cases, reduced or prevented through healthy diet and lifestyle. Non-oil seed pulses like beans, chickpeas, lentils and peas have been flagged for their ability to reduce heart disease risk. However cholesterol lowering guidelines do not directly include recommendations to increase intake of these foods and existing evidence on the topic has often been insufficient.

Researchers analysed randomised controlled trials looking into the effect of dietary pulses on fat and cholesterol levels and people's risk of heart disease. They compared people on diets of similar caloric value, some with dietary pulses and some without. Those consuming dietary pulses were found to have reduced LDL (bad) cholesterol levels when compared to those on similar caloric diets with no pulses. This was observed with a dose of around one serving per day over an average time period of six weeks.

This study has limitations but may help to inform risk reduction for heart disease. One serving per day of dietary pulses is an attainable amount and can be a tasty addition to a healthy, balanced diet. In addition to helping manage cholesterol levels, pulses are a great source of protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

For reference: Ha, V et al. Effect of dietary pulse intake on established therapeutic lipid targets for cardiovascular risk reduction: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *CMAJ* 2014. DOI: 10.1503/cmaj.131727

MOBILE DEVICES: A PAIN IN THE NECK

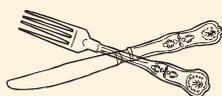
Modern society is addicted to technology. Most people use mobile devices like iPhones and tablets many times a day.

While these devices make a huge difference to our lives in terms of convenience and saving time, frequent use might be wrecking havoc on our necks.

People are estimated to spend between two and four hours each day with their head bent over a mobile device. When reading or texting on one of these devices people tend to drop their head and hunch their shoulders, increasing pressure on their cervical spine (the section of spine in the neck). This stress can lead to the early degeneration of the cartilage and bones in the neck and upper back.

Correct posture involves shoulder blades being drawn back and ears being aligned with the shoulders. People tend to look down when using a mobile device, thus tipping the ears well in front of the shoulders and drawing the shoulders forward into a hunched stance. To minimise risk to your neck and spine, try to use mobile devices at head height and be conscious of drawing back your shoulders so that they are not hunched over.

For reference: Hansraj, K K et al. Assessment of stresses in the cervical spine caused by posture and position of the head. *Surgical Technology International* 2014;25:277-279.



Good Health on the Menu

KORMA LENTIL CURRY

A delicious curry with a little bit of pulse.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1cm piece of ginger, grated
- 1 green chilli, sliced
- 2 tbsp korma curry paste
- 1 potato, peeled and cubed

- 1 cup small cauliflower pieces
- 1 large carrot diced
- 1 cup chopped string beans
- 150g chopped spinach leaves
- 1 ½ cups vegetable stock
- 1 tin coconut milk
- ½ cup fresh coriander
- 400g can brown lentils, drained and rinsed
- Low-fat plain yoghurt

Method

1. In a saucepan heat oil and sauté onions until translucent
2. Add garlic, ginger and chilli and cook for a further two minutes
3. Add korma paste and cook for a further two minutes

4. Add potatoes, cauliflower and carrot with the vegetable stock and coconut milk – cook for 20 minutes
5. Add string beans and spinach and cook for a further 10 minutes
6. Add lentils and cook for three minutes or until lentils are heated through
7. Turn off heat and garnish with fresh coriander
8. Serve with a small dollop of yoghurt



Enjoy!

MYTH VS. FACT IS CAFFEINE IN SOFT DRINKS JUST TO ENHANCE THE FLAVOUR?

A majority of soft drinks contain caffeine in addition to sugar. Soft drink manufacturers claim that the caffeine serves to add flavour to the beverage however research has shown that this is unlikely to be the case. The reason is that the doses used in soft drinks, including the larger quantities used in energy drinks, are too small to be detected by human taste receptors. If caffeine isn't in soft drink to enhance the flavour, why is it there?

Researchers tested this theory in a group of healthy young adults over a one month period. They were divided into two groups – one group were given a caffeinated soft drink and the other group, a non-caffeinated alternative. They were asked to consume 600mls of the assigned drink every day for the first two weeks. In the final fortnight they were allowed to drink as much as they pleased. Researchers found that those who were consuming the caffeinated soft drink reported liking their drink more and drank around 200 mls more each day in the final two weeks than those consuming the non-caffeinated beverage.

The results of this study suggest that the caffeine had a somewhat addictive effect in the soft drink, stimulating a 'liking' response and increasing people's consumption. It's not known how this works exactly and more research is required however it should serve as a caution when consuming soft drinks. Soft drinks are bad for our health in a number of ways including increasing risk of overweight and obesity.

For reference: Keast, R S et al. Caffeine increases sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in a free-living population: a randomised controlled trial. *British Journal of Nutrition* 2015. Jan 8. Epub doi: 10.1017/S000711451400378X

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD: NOT A HEALTHY MANTRA

A large number of people exceed 38 hours of work per week in Australia. While this is harmless when exceeded by a small amount, working excessively long hours on an ongoing basis has been associated with a number of poor health outcomes including increased risk of heart disease, depression, anxiety, insomnia and occupational injuries – all of which are also linked to alcohol use. The association between longer work hours and alcohol use has not been well studied although it's plausible that increased

working hours may be the result of financial pressures, job insecurity or a highly stressful work environment where people in such circumstances may turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Researchers conducted a systematic review of studies looking at the association between long work hours – usually involving more than 50 hours per week – and risky alcohol use, defined as more than 14 drinks per week for women and more than 21 drinks per week for men or 'binge drinking' which was having six or more alcohol units in one evening on at least two occasions in the previous month. The results showed an association between long work hours and an increased likelihood of higher alcohol

consumption, with those working standard hours (35 – 40 hours/week) having lower risk than those working 49 – 54 hours/week.

Quality of life is an important aspect of good health. Make sure that you don't work to the point of damaging your physical and mental health. By all means reward yourself for hard work but not in a way that is bad for your health.

For reference: Virtanen, M et al. Long working hours and alcohol use: systematic review and meta-analysis of published studies and unpublished individual participant data. *BMJ* 2015;350:g7772 doi: 10.1136/bmj.g7772 (Published 13 January 2015)

Clever CROSSWORD

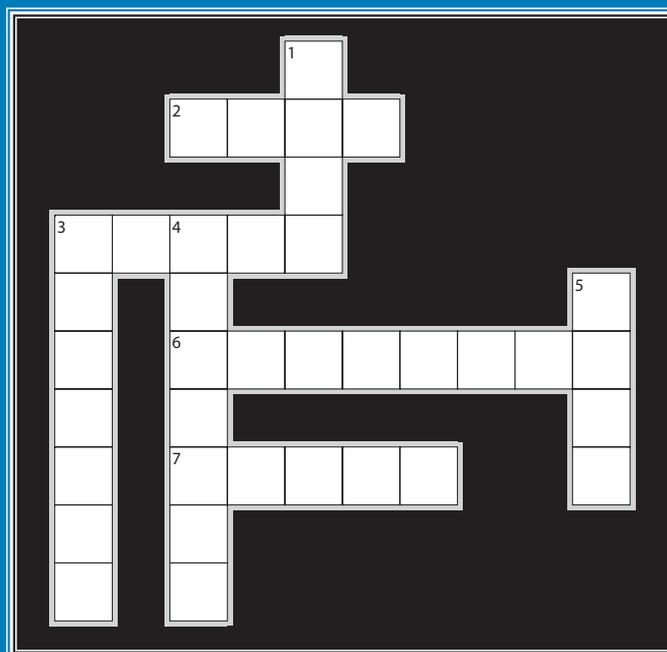
Down:

1. Dyslipidemia can be reduced or prevented through a healthy what?
3. Presbycusis is age-related _____ loss.
4. Working excessively long hours on an ongoing basis can lead to depression and _____ use.
5. Mobile devices used frequently might be wrecking havoc on your _____.

Across:

2. What cancers account for around 80% of all newly diagnosed cancers?
3. Dyslipidemia can vastly increase a person's risk of what disease?
6. The majority of soft drinks contain what, in addition to sugar?
7. Hearing loss is typically caused by loss or damage of fine _____ in the inner ear.

EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF YOUR DOCTOR. ANSWERS ARE SHOWN ON THE TOP RIGHT OF THE BACK PAGE.





Dr Norman Swan

A MATTER OF HEALTH

PLAN AHEAD

It's not something we like to talk about but it could make an enormous difference to you and your family as time goes by.

I'm speaking about planning for the end of your life – advanced care planning. All too often what happens is that people age, become very sick and lose the ability to make decisions and families argue by the bedside about what you might have wanted to happen. Would you have asked for all the stops pulled out or just to be made comfortable?

States have various kinds of legal documents you can write to tell doctors and your family your wishes but while Advanced Directives

are worthwhile, it's hard to predict every circumstance which might arise.

What's very important, is while you're well and probably from middle age on, to have conversations with the whole family about what sort of medical care you'd want if you lost the capacity to make your own decisions. That way everyone hears the same thing at the same time. You need to revisit this every ten years or so because what you thought at 50 might be very different at 70 or 80.

That way, when the time comes your loved ones can focus on being by your side and making sure you have what you'd have wanted rather than wondering, arguing and feeling guilty.

Your GP and lawyer can also help with this process if you want to make a formal statement. It's planned that this will eventually be able to be loaded on to your personally controlled electronic health record so that your doctors and hospitals know your wishes too.



DID YOU KNOW? NSW SAYS SAYONARA TO SOLARIUMS

The sun plays a major role in the Australian lifestyle with the beach and surf forming a large part of Australia's national identity. While outdoor activities can be great for our health in terms of increasing levels of physical activity and encouraging social activities, the sun can also be bad for us. According to Cancer Council Australia skin cancers account for around 80% of all newly diagnosed cancers and between 95 – 99% of these are caused by exposure to the sun. Australia has one of the highest skin cancer rates in the world, causing around 2000 deaths each year.

Solariums have become a popular form of tanning, particularly in the winter months when the opportunity to expose oneself to sunshine is limited. Many people are also under the impression that solariums present a safer way of tanning in comparison to lying on a beach. This, however, is not true. The ultraviolet (UV) radiation from solariums can greatly increase a person's risk of skin

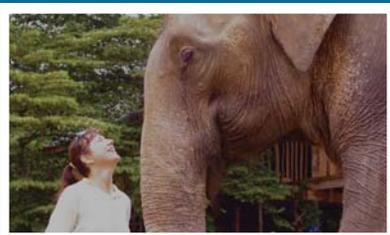
cancer and can also cause eye damage and skin irritation.

In an attempt to reduce unnecessary risk of skin cancer, the NSW government has taken a step in the right direction criminalising the use of solariums in NSW. The ban came into effect on December 31st, 2014 and stipulates that commercial solarium units are illegal in the state of NSW. This act removes a significant risk factor for what is a largely preventable disease.

In addition to this, skin cancer risk can be greatly reduced by safe sun practice. This includes wearing a hat, sunscreen and protective clothing when outside, avoiding going outside at the hottest times of the day and, in winter months, using safer tanning methods like spray on fake tans.

For more information visit **Cancer Council NSW website: www.cancerCouncil.com.au**

HOLIDAY PHOTO COMPETITION: WINNER!



Thank you to all those who took the time to enter our **February** competition. So many amazing photos came in! But the lucky winner was **Caryn Kneale**, congratulations!!

6. Caffeine; 7. Hairs.
Across: 2. Skin; 3. Heart;
4. Alcohol; 5. Neck.
Down: 1. Diet; 3. Hearing;

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD

PRACTICE UPDATE

TELEPHONING YOUR DOCTOR

Patients of our practice are able to contact doctors by phone during surgery hours. It is important for our receptionists to determine the urgency and nature of the call. In non urgent situations, patient calls need not interrupt consultations with other patients. The receptionist will take a message for the Doctor whilst he or she is consulting. The Doctor will then endeavour to return the call at the end of their session. However, if the matter is urgent then staff will put the call through immediately to the Doctor concerned or to the Doctor on duty. Emails and SMS messages of a clinical nature will not be accepted by Practitioners of this practice.

TEST RESULTS/X-RAYS:

So that we can provide the best possible service for you, patients are requested to contact the surgery after 11am each day to obtain test results. In most cases, a follow up appointment is required, and we can let you know this at the time.

Your x-rays are your responsibility and are important to your ongoing medical care as they are often required for comparison at some time in the future. If you have had an x-ray in the past and not collected it, please ask reception for them at your next appointment.

APPOINTMENTS:

When making an appointment, please let reception know if you need more time than a standard consultation or if you will be bringing another family member so that an appointment will can be made for them as well. Longer consultations are usually required for complicated health problems and completing medical and insurance reports. Patients are seen according to the appointment order, so by advising us beforehand, you'll help avoid long waiting periods for other patients.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Legal constraints and Best Practice Procedures dictate that a consultation is made for all repeat prescriptions.

REFERRALS

It is a legal requirement under the Medicare Act that a referral to a specialist only be given after due consideration by the treating physician. This therefore requires the physical attendance to the practice.

FEES AND BILLING POLICY

The AMA fee structure forms and basis of our billing policy, our current consultation fees are displayed at the clinic front desk. Fees are payable at the time of consultation by cash, cheque, credit card or EFTPOS. Should you have any difficulties with our fees, please discuss with your doctor.

We use the HIC online system, which allows us to claim your rebate directly, or send your claim to Medicare who can refund directly to your bank account. Please ask our receptionist if you require further information.

REMINDER SYSTEM

This practice is committed to preventative care. Our computer system allows us to issue you with reminder notices appropriate to your care eg. PAP smears, Immunisations, cholesterol checks etc. If you do not wish to be part of this system, please let us know.

YOUR RIGHTS

If you have a problem we would like to hear about it. Please feel free to talk to your doctor or our Practice Manager or you may wish to put your concerns in writing. We take your suggestions, concerns and complaints very seriously, however, you feel the need to take the matter further and discuss your issues outside the surgery contact:

Victorian Health Services Commissioner
Level 26, 570 Burke Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
Telephone: 1300 582 113 • Fax No: (03) 9032 3111
E-mail: hsc@health.vic.gov.au

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the process of continuing quality improvement – to let you know we have met the standards set for the medical profession. The Standards used have been written by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Electra Park Medical Centre has consistently achieved unconditional accreditation since November 2002. Electra Park Medical Centre continues the accreditation cycle every three years.