

## ST AGNES SURGERY

1251 North East Rd  
Ridgehaven 5097

P: 8264 3333



## TEA TREE SURGERY

975 North East Rd  
Modbury 5092

P: 8264 4555



### PRACTICE PARTNERS

#### Dr John Lepoidevin

MBBS DRCOG (Eng)

#### Dr Karen Hand

MBBS FRACGP

#### Dr James Robertson

MBBS FRACGP

#### Dr Jyothi Menon

MBBS FRACGP MRCP (Paed)

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#### Dr Hamad Harb

MBBS (Russia) FRACGP

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#### Dr Hung Tran

MBBS FRACGP

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#### Dr Robert D Rushton-Smith

MBBS DRCOG FRACGP FACRRM DRANCOG

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MBBS DipAvMed(UK) MSc OccMed(UK) FACaSM

#### Dr Paul Veitch

MBBS FRACGP

#### Dr Christopher G Platis

MBBS

### SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

#### ST AGNES SURGERY

**Monday to Friday** 8.00am–5.30pm

#### TEA TREE SURGERY

**Monday to Friday** 8.30am–6.00pm

**Saturday** 8.00am–1.00pm

### WEEKEND AFTER HOURS & PUBLIC HOLIDAY HOURS

Tea Tree Surgery will close at 1.00pm on weekends. After hours service sessions are at **Tea Tree Surgery**.

**Saturday** 8.00am–1.00pm

**Sunday & Public Hols** 9.00am–1.00pm

An appointment time is required.

For urgent medical problems outside these hours, a duty doctor can be contacted on 8264 3333 (St Agnes Surgery) or 8264 4555 (Tea Tree Surgery). Follow the instructions on the recorded message.

You can now find us on the web at

[www.stagnessurgery.com.au](http://www.stagnessurgery.com.au)

# YOUR DOCTOR

FREE!!  
TAKE ME HOME

FEBRUARY 2018

## The rise of the **superbug**

Large scale misuse of antibiotics is contributing to an ever-growing issue in health care: antibiotic resistance and the threat of 'superbugs'. It's tempting to think that antibiotics are a cure-all, but in many cases, they won't help at all. We need to ensure that antibiotics are reserved for instances where they are truly appropriate, or else they may lose their power altogether.

When you start to feel ill, with a sore throat, sneezing or a chesty cough, it can be an automatic response to think, 'Right-o, I'll get myself off to the doctors to get some antibiotics'. No-one likes being ill, and it's tempting to think our GP can sort it out with tablets. However, for many common illnesses, antibiotics won't help.

Many know that common colds, for example, are actually caused by viruses. Unfortunately, as antibiotics only target bacteria, the best treatment is to ensure adequate rest and to let our body do the healing. Antibiotics for these types of respiratory infections won't make any difference, and even minor bacterial infections can get better on their own. The less reliant we are on antibiotics the better, because the overuse of antibiotics is beginning to cause serious problems.

Some strains of bacteria have now become resistant to antibiotics, resulting in the development of what are commonly referred to as 'superbugs'. A superbug is when a 'bug', or in other words bacteria, remains unresponsive to more than one type of antibiotic. This means that the bacteria can flourish within the host's body, despite treatment, leading to serious ill health or even death.

Superbugs that commonly make headlines include MRSA (Methicillin-resistant

Staphylococcus aureus) and C. diff (Clostridium difficile) however, any bacteria can become a superbug. To help prevent development of superbugs, doctors are educated to only prescribe antibiotics when truly necessary, and patients are being reminded not to pressure their GP into writing antibiotic prescriptions.

Another important reason for promoting responsible use of antibiotics lies inside our hospitals. Many surgical procedures rely on antibiotics to ensure that patients don't catch an infection during or after the surgery. Surgical patients are particularly susceptible to infection, because surgery often requires incision through the skin, causing temporary damage to the body's inbuilt shield against germs. Without effective antibiotics to ward off bacteria, a simple procedure could become very risky.

Medicine has come a long way in the fight against bacterial infections in the last 50 years, but health experts warn that if superbugs aren't stopped in their tracks, we could once again see bacterial diseases that we thought were all but extinct creep back into prevalence.

So the next time you start to feel under the weather and want to head straight to your GP, think twice. Can you wait for a couple of days? Chances are, that with adequate rest, fluid and good nutrition, you'll improve by yourself. If you've got a full-blown cold, remember that antibiotics don't work on viruses, and your best bet is to grab a box of tissues and a blanket, and settle in for some TV time. Avoiding use of antibiotics when they're not indicated is helping to ensure their continued effectiveness when they're needed most.

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

# WORD SEARCH

ALCOHOL	IMMUNITY
ANTIBIOTICS	INDIA
ANXIETY	MATES
BACTERIA	MEN
BARBEQUE	SALMONELLA
BULLYING	STAPHYLOCOCCUS
CANCER	STATISTIC
CHILDREN	SUPERBUG
CONTROVERSIAL	SWIMMING
DEBATE	TALK
DIGNITY	TYPHOID
DROWNING	VACCINE
EUTHANASIA	VIRUS
EXAMS	VULNERABLE
HOMEWORK	WATER

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

## Anxiety and school: How we can help our kids

A new international study looks at what parents and teachers can do to help teenagers who are suffering from anxiety or who are being bullied at school.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development recently published a report examining the performance and wellbeing of school children from 72 countries. The report investigators issued a questionnaire to kids in order to gain insight into how they were coping with school.

The questions covered everything from how well the kids did in subjects such as science, maths and reading, to how they coped with typical school pressures such as taking exams, completing homework and receiving their grades. The results showed that, while the majority of kids were happy at school - the average score on the happiness scale used in the study was 7.3 (out of a maximum of 10) - many also suffered from anxiety. Their primary worries were about poor performance or failing exams, and falling victim to bullying.

Importantly, the survey also asked the children what they considered would be most helpful to support them in dealing with their problems. Many children responded that a good relationship with their teacher, where they could express their worries and feel supported, was highly valued. They also said that having this support at home was equally important.

As a result of the responses, the report recommended that teachers engage in specialised training in how to notice growing anxiety in their students, and how

best to communicate with them to resolve problems. The report also recommended setting realistic goals and providing constructive feedback to students in order to bolster their confidence. For parents, the survey revealed that those who spent more quality time with their kids by having family mealtimes together, or by taking time out to talk to their kids one-on-one, had children that were generally happier and more satisfied with their lives.

The report recommended that teachers and parents should work together to tackle bullying, in order to have a meaningful impact students' outcomes and general levels of contentment. The main strategy suggested was to create and implement an anti-bullying program. One useful tip suggested involves getting students to fill out anonymous surveys about their experiences with bullying or anxiety. This would allow children to share their feelings openly, without worrying about potential repercussions. The report concluded that implementing the recommendations could help stem anxiety in children before it led to further problems, and could result in a significant reduction in bullying.



## Should you have the right to die on your own terms?

The lower house of the Victorian parliament has, in October 2017, passed a bill that will allow voluntary assisted dying. Now comes the question as to whether the upper house, and potentially the rest of the nation, will follow suit.

The bill represents a major breakthrough in the way that euthanasia is handled by allowing certain patients the right to assisted dying. This legislation means that terminally ill patients with less than 12 months to live and who are in a great deal of pain could apply to receive a dose of lethal medication to end their life. If the upper house also votes in favour of the bill, it could lead to other states passing similar legislation and, ultimately, to a change in federal law. It could also spark the debate in neighbouring New Zealand as well as other countries further afield.

Euthanasia has historically been a difficult subject. On the one hand, no-one wants to see a loved one suffer unnecessarily when it's clear their time is coming to an end, and some feel that the option of having a carefully regulated euthanasia plan could allow patients to pass peacefully and with dignity. On the other side of the argument is the simple belief that no-one has the right to end another person's life, regardless of the circumstances, and that vulnerable or fragile people could be persuaded into doing something they don't want to. The debate in the lower house was reported to have been a heated one, and it is likely to be just as heated in the upper house.

Whichever side you're on it's clearly an issue that provokes a lot of passion. In many instances, opinion is linked to a personal experience of how a loved one has died. A high profile example of this was in the case of Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews, who revealed that he began to support legally-assisted dying after watching his father die slowly and painfully of cancer.

What's clear is that the discussion occurring in Victoria over next few months could prove an important turning point in how Australia deals with the controversial topic of euthanasia, and outcomes to date indicate that a real change could be just around the corner.

## Alcohol and water aren't made to mix

What's a summer holiday without a few beers and a get together at the nearest beach or creek? It seems to be a part of Aussie culture to have a couple of drinks and a swim, but the dangerous mix of open water and drinking alcohol means you could be heading into trouble.

Australia Day lands on a Friday in 2018, so you're probably already planning to fire up the barbie and stock the esky for a long weekend of celebrating. It's a great time to get together with family, friends and neighbours and let your hair down, and to find reprieve from the searing temperatures in the water. But when the sun starts to beat down and you fancy a dip to cool off, take a minute to stop and assess your safety. If you've had a fair bit of the amber fluid, staying out of the water could save your life.

Higher rates of drownings are reported on public holidays each year, and are often linked to parties and barbeques held by the beach, river or swimming pool. Royal Life Saving Australia (RLSA) has embarked on a campaign to educate against mixing alcohol and swimming, warning that it can prove deadly. Their figures for the last decade show that men accounted for 80% per cent

of all drownings, and that one in four of these drownings involved alcohol.

In an effort to draw attention to these worrisome statistics, RLSA has launched a new campaign ready for the 2017/18 summer, called, 'Don't Let Your Mates Drink and Drown! The warnings, which are to be printed on alcohol labels, will remind drinkers that alcohol may impair judgement and advise that men are more likely to take riskier decisions and overestimate their capabilities in the water when intoxicated. Other sensible recommendations include: wearing a life jacket, learning life-saving skills, avoiding swimming alone and keeping a look-out for mates.

It's important to understand that alcohol impairs decision making, and that even sensible people are much more likely to make poor decisions and take risks when intoxicated. So, with a scorcher of a summer on the way, it's a good time to start planning to party responsibly and be alert when there's water involved. Keep a look out for your mates and don't let them make that one silly mistake that could end up costing their life.



### Ingredients

- 2 avocados - flesh removed and chopped
- 200g good quality dark eating chocolate, chopped
- 1/3 cup milk (cow, almond, coconut - depending on your requirements)
- 1-2 tablespoons liquid honey or pure maple syrup (optional)

### Method

- Melt chocolate gently in a double boiler over simmering water. Do not let water or steam get into the chocolate, or it will seize. Another option is to melt it in a microwave on a low setting, in short bursts.
- Place avocado and chocolate in a food processor and blend together until smooth. Pour in the milk whilst blending until the mousse is very smooth and creamy.
- Taste. If you prefer it a little sweeter, simply add a bit of honey or maple syrup.
- Spoon into serving glasses and chill for 15 mins. Garnish with berries if desired.

## Lifting to avoid injury

Approximately 3.7 million Australians have back issues, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014-15 National Health Survey. Furthermore, it is estimated that between 70% and 90% of the population will have lower back pain at some point during their lifetime.

One of the ways to protect your back and prevent injury is to use a proper lifting technique when lifting heavy objects. The Mayo Clinic and Better Health break down the steps for lifting properly to avoid injury.

The first step is to thoroughly plan out your lift and ensure that the area is free of obstacles. Begin in a safe position with your feet shoulder width apart and positioned as close as possible to the object you are going to lift. Bend at the knees while maintaining the natural curve in your lower back, and tighten your core muscles while you reach for the object.

Once you have a secure grip on the object, use your leg muscles (not your back) to push yourself back up into a standing position, while keeping the object as close to your body as possible. Ensure that you don't twist your back when you're carrying the object – if you need to place it to the side, take a step and pivot with your feet.

If you need to position the object back on the ground, bend at the knees again into a squatting position, while still maintaining the natural curve in your lower back, and place the object on the floor slowly before returning to the standing position.

Remember to never try to lift an object that you think is too heavy, and ask a friend for help instead of attempting a potentially hazardous lift.

Unsafe lifting techniques put your back at risk of injury, which can lead to pain and disability. By being conscientious of your lifting technique, you can help to protect your back and decrease your risk of suffering a debilitating injury.



## Typhoid - a thing of the past?

Recent trials of a new vaccine have yielded promising results, suggesting there is hope for eradicating typhoid disease altogether.

Each year, millions of people become ill with typhoid infection and many thousands die as a result, particularly in poorer nations of the world located in parts of Africa and Asia. The disease is caused by a type of bacteria called Salmonella Typhi, which is spread through contaminated food or water. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, and loss of appetite.

Children are the most susceptible to typhoid disease and, until now, there has been no effective vaccine available for children under five years old. In addition, vaccines available for older children have not been successful in providing long-term immunity. The overuse of antibiotics has also encouraged the development of new strains of typhoid, making the fight against the disease even tougher.

The good news is that a promising new study, published in The Lancet journal

in September 2017, could be the first real evidence that a novel, safe and long-lasting vaccine may have been found. The research so far shows that it could significantly reduce rates of typhoid infection and even eliminate the disease for good. The trial, undertaken by the University of Oxford, examined the efficacy and safety of the vaccine and found it to be safe for babies, children and adults, with the potential to provide full immunity across all age groups.

This study follows more than 10 years of research and development into a vaccine for typhoid and the developers hope that it will be able to protect up to 90% of children and adults from the disease. It has been endorsed by the World Health Organisation and is already being used in India for children as young as 3 months old. Outcomes will be monitored over the next few years and it is hoped that it will result in thousands of lives being saved from this deadly disease.

## PRACTICE UPDATE

### MOLESCAN

Molescan is available again through Dr Harb at Tea Tree Surgery.

### DUTY DOCTOR CLINIC

Each weekday from 4.00pm to 6.00pm our patients who need to be seen on that day, but cannot get an appointment, can be seen at Tea Tree Surgery by the Duty Doctor. An appointment time is required. Normal fees apply.

### DIABETES CLINICS

St Agnes Surgery and Tea Tree Surgery offer a Diabetes Clinic (held at the St Agnes Surgery) which is proving very successful with patients achieving significantly improved control and knowledge of their diabetes.

### PAP SMEAR CLINIC

Saturday mornings at Tea Tree Surgery with a female Doctor. Normal fees apply.

### ENURESIS CLINIC

Dry Bed Program for children 6 years and over. Speak to your Doctor for more information.

### SENIOR'S HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

St Agnes Surgery provides a comprehensive health assessment for patients 75 years of age and over – the program involves a detailed functional and safety assessment at home conducted by our Nurse, followed by a medical check-up at the Surgery.

### PRACTICE ACCREDITATION

St Agnes Surgery and Tea Tree Surgery have achieved FULL ACCREDITATION until 2020. Accreditation reflects the attainment of national standards of quality at a practice level.

### PRIVACY

This practice is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your personal health information. Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of this practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff.