

# 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)

### Dr Stephen Davis

MBBS FRACGP Dip Pall Med (clin)

### Dr Hamad Harb

MBBS (Russia) FRACGP

Dip Skin Cancer Surgery and Molescan

### Dr Janet Davie

MBBS FRACP

## ASSOCIATE DOCTORS

### Dr Robert D Rushton-Smith

MBBS DRCOG FRACGP FACRRM DRANCOG

### Dr Jamie Mattner

MBBS DCH FRACGP

### Dr Suresh Babu

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)



## Can alcohol cause weight gain?

Everyone knows the health risks associated with high alcohol consumption – the effects go beyond risky behaviour, injuries and a hangover the next day. High alcohol intake is associated with lots of chronic health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, liver disease, and even some cancers.

Alcohol can also make you put on weight. We've all seen the 'beer bellies' of serious drinkers, but did you know that even a moderate amount of alcohol can contribute to significant weight gain? There are several reasons for this:

- **Sheer volume of calories, or kilojoules** – these are the measure of energy in anything you eat or drink. Your body converts the kilojoules into energy or stores it as fat. Alcohol is high in kilojoules – almost as much as fat – and doesn't have any real nutritional value. Drinking your kilojoules means you can take in a lot more without feeling full.
- **Altered metabolism** – not only are there lots of kilojoules in alcohol, it actually affects the way your liver regulates that energy balance. This means you're more likely to store energy – both from alcohol and other food sources – as fat. This continues long-term, not only when you've just had a drink.
- **Snacking** – it's very easy, after a few drinks, to reach for unhealthy snacks and greasy takeaways. Alcohol alters our blood sugar levels, making us hungry. Even relatively small amounts of alcohol can lead us to make poor decisions and choose the worst possible food types.

We're more likely to drink alcohol in the evenings too, leading to the fat storage associated with night-time snacking.

- **Effects on sleep patterns** – not just passing out drunk – that's clearly a bad idea. Some people think a nightcap helps them get to sleep, but did you know that alcohol can have a serious adverse effect on the quality of your sleep? The 'buzz' from alcohol causes night-time wakefulness, spikes and troughs in blood sugar levels, excessive thirst and frequent trips to the toilet. Not only does a bad night's sleep make you feel awful the next day, you may actually eat more – as if to compensate for being tired. If your body doesn't get enough sleep it needs to fuel itself somehow, and that usually leads to more snacks and coffee.

There has been extensive research into the possible health benefits associated with having a small amount of wine regularly – especially red wine. There's some evidence that it has some cardio-protective and antioxidant qualities. However if you don't already drink red wine there's no need to start. There are many antioxidant-rich foods, and a healthy diet and exercise can promote cardiovascular health – and help you lose weight.

Think before you drink – drinking alcohol of any kind comes with risks. It's worth checking the guidelines to know how many standard drinks you're really having. Moderating alcohol intake, or going without, has well known health benefits... even if you're not looking to lose any weight, you'll be gaining a healthy body.

## WHAT'S INSIDE



SEXUALITY  
AND AGING



WHAT IS  
GINGER?



TAKING CONTROL  
OF TANTRUMS



WHAT COLOUR  
SHOULD MY POO BE?



## Taking control of toddler tantrums

**Almost all children have periods of tantrums. These outbursts of anger and frustration can be difficult to manage and sometimes leave parents feeling overwhelmed. If you're frustrated by your little one's behaviour, you're not alone, and there are ways to help.**

### Why do children have tantrums?

There are lots of triggers for tantrums, and many of them are perfectly reasonable things for a child to be upset about – like being tired or hungry. Even losing a favourite

toy must be incredibly frustrating with a small child's limited communication skills and reasoning ability.

Tantrums are particularly common around age two and three. It's an age where toddlers rapidly progress through physical milestones – learning to stand, to walk – while remaining completely reliant on the people around them. At this age physical abilities progress faster than the maturity to be able to use those skills safely.

Caring for a toddler is a balancing act –

encouraging the child's progress while keeping them from dangerous situations isn't always easy. It can be frustrating for all involved, and sometimes it's hard to keep your cool when a small child is screaming at you – even the best, most empathetic parents struggle.

### Managing tantrums

A good start is to understand why your child is behaving like this. It could be something very simple, like time for a nap, a snack, or something else that needs a timely and practical solution. If you can treat the cause and stop the tantrum, it's a winner.

If it's something that can't be dealt with reasonably, you could try ignoring the tantrum – if a child is acting up to test boundaries, ignoring it can show them that they won't get any useful response from bad behaviour.

On the other hand, a child acting up when they're genuinely frustrated and upset needs a different approach – they're trying to gain your attention the only way they can. Staying calm and in control is important, but it's also tricky – don't feel bad if you're struggling.

If your child is having a lot of behaviour problems, or if you feel like you need advice with any aspect of parenting, it's okay to ask for help – your family doctor is a good start.

## Sexuality and aging

Our bodies change as we get older, bringing new challenges – some of which we probably don't talk about as much as we should. Our changing bodies and lifestyles can mean new issues in our sex lives, which we need to approach with openness and understanding.

So let's discuss some of the most common problems people encounter in their sex lives as they get older.

### Erectile dysfunction

This means not being able to get or maintain an erection – this is a really common problem, and one that many men feel uncomfortable talking about. Your doctor will have encountered this countless times, and there are lots of ways to help. Remember too, that there are many more ways to enjoy sex – this might be a good time to experiment.

### Vaginal dryness and elasticity

The vagina tends to be less moist and often loses some elasticity after the menopause.

Lubricants can help and are easily available. Remember your pelvic floor exercises – doing regular Kegels can help with your sexual function, as well as continence.

### Loss of libido

This is certainly very common and may fluctuate. It can be affected by medications and your health – both physical and mental health conditions can have a significant impact on your sex drive. And it's okay to just not want sex much – there's no 'normal' amount of sexual desire, and there are lots of other ways of being physically intimate or comforted.

### Changing body image

Many people feel uncomfortable with the physical changes that occur as they age, and that's okay. Take it slowly and remember that even if you don't like the way your body has changed, your partner still sees it as the body of the person they love – think about how you see them. Hopefully you can learn to love your changes, and know that you're

worthy of pleasure and desire, even if you don't like the way you look right now.

### Other health problems

Undeniably, the older we get, the more likely we are to experience chronic health conditions. Some of these have a physical impact on our sex lives, and some may have a psychological impact – making us anxious about exertion or altered body functions. If this worries you, talking to your doctor can give you peace of mind.

### Medications

Some medications come with side effects that include loss of libido, erectile problems, orgasm difficulties and more. If this is an issue, your doctor may be able to help.

Ultimately, if you do feel like your changing sex life or sexual drive is a problem, you can get help. No one needs to face these challenges alone, and there are lots of treatments or management options – talk to your partner, your doctor, and find information online.



# What colour should my poo be?

**Poo – the end product of our digestive process – comes in many shapes, sizes, and consistencies. It can also come in a range of colours; which can tell a little about your diet, and sometimes a lot about your health.**

Our bowel motions are made up of the digested food we've eaten and the waste products of our normal body processes – dead cells, bacteria, and just enough water to make a normal consistency stool. The chemicals that make up bile, particularly bilirubin, are what give it its characteristic brown tone.

Any shade of brown is generally considered normal, but everyone's normal is a little different. Very often, an unusual colour is just the result of something you've eaten. Sometimes, the colour of our stool can give us a clue to something else:

- **Very light, white, grey, or clay-coloured** – if your stool is persistently very light in colour, it can indicate that there isn't enough bile in your intestine. This usually means a problem with the gallbladder, bile duct or liver. These kinds of problems can become very serious without treatment, so pale poo is a reason to visit your doctor.

- **Red** – some foods can cause your stool to look red – beetroot, in particular. Blood in the stool could mean there's a bleed in the bowel, and that means a visit to the doctor. Bright red blood on the surface of the stool usually indicates piles (haemorrhoids) or an anal fissure – other symptoms might include pain around your back passage, especially when moving your bowels.
- **Green** – this usually just means that you've eaten a lot of green food – particularly chlorophyll-rich dark green leafy vegetables. It can also mean that the stool has moved through your body quickly, and the normal digestive process isn't complete.
- **Black** – Some foods can make your stool black – liquorice is a particular culprit for this. People who take iron tablets or vitamin preparations containing iron will usually find that their stool is very dark or black.

Black, tarry stools can also be a result of bleeding higher up in the digestive system – lower intestinal bleeding is redder. An unexplained black, very strong-smelling tarry stool is a reason to seek medical advice immediately.

It's not something we're in the habit of discussing much, but if you notice anything that isn't normal for you, or you're worried about a change in your stool or bowel habit, it's always good to get advice.

## WORD SEARCH

MAGNESIUM  
MANGANESE  
GINGER  
ARTHRITIS  
DEMENTIA  
NAUSEA  
TANTRUMS  
TODDLER  
BILE  
BACTERIA  
DIET  
IRON  
TARRY  
KEGELS  
SEX  
LIBIDO  
CHRONIC  
ALCOHOL  
LIVER  
ENERGY  
FAT  
ANTIOXIDANT  
BONES  
ADVERSE  
EMPATHETIC  
HUNGRY  
WEIGHT  
TOILET  
MODERATE

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

# What is ginger?

The ginger that we use in cooking is actually the root of the ginger plant, which can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes.

It has a sharp, sweet flavour, with a peppery heat. It's native to Southeast Asia, but is now popular across the globe. It was particularly prized by the Ancient Greeks and Romans for its flavour, spice, and health benefits.

## Is ginger good for us?

As well as being a delicious addition to sweet and savoury dishes— fresh ginger contains some essential nutrients, especially:

- **magnesium** – for muscle and cardiovascular health
- **manganese** – for healthy bones and metabolism
- **potassium** – for healthy blood pressure and essential cardiovascular function
- **vitamin B6** – for good metabolism and healthy red blood cells

Dried ginger is a good source of the essential element manganese, but doesn't have significant quantities of other nutrients.

## Some other health benefits of ginger

As well as providing us with essential nutrients, ginger in all forms has a wide

range of supposed health benefits – some with good evidence, and some which are not clinically proven.

One of the active ingredients, gingerol, has useful anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties, which may have some application in inflammatory conditions like arthritis and rheumatism. It also has antimicrobial potential which can help in treating infectious diseases.

There is ongoing research suggesting that some of the active ingredients in ginger may be useful in some forms of cancer treatment, and possibly for preventing or limiting the changes in the brain associated with Alzheimer's or dementia.

Ginger has been used for hundreds of years for digestive health and to ease nausea and vomiting. It's often recommended for morning sickness; however you should seek medical advice before trying natural remedies during pregnancy.

Although ginger is generally safe to use and has potential health benefits, it can also have interactions with some medications, and adverse effects for some people. Ask your doctor for guidance if you're thinking of using ginger for medicinal purposes.

# 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 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 conducted by our Nurse, followed by a medical check-up with your Doctor.

## PRACTICE ACCREDITATION

St Agnes Surgery and Tea Tree Surgery have achieved FULL ACCREDITATION until 2023. 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.

# Homemade ginger tea

Ginger tea is a warming and restorative drink – perfect for those cold winter evenings.

## INGREDIENTS

2½cm piece of fresh ginger (no need to peel), thinly sliced or grated  
1 cup water

## INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the ginger slices and water in a saucepan over high heat.

Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes (or up to 10 minutes for a stronger brew).

Remove pot from the heat and pour mixture through a fine sieve into a heat-safe mug.

If desired, serve with a slice of lemon or orange, and a drizzle of honey to taste.

Serve hot.

## ADD SOME VARIETY

Add any one of these to your mixture before bringing it to a simmer:

- a cinnamon stick
- fresh piece of turmeric (thinly sliced)
- a few sprigs of fresh peppermint

**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.

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