

# 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**

**Dr Karen Hand**

**Dr James Robertson**

**Dr Jyothi Menon**

**Dr Stephen Davis**

**Dr Hamad Harb**

**Dr Janet Davie**

## ASSOCIATE DOCTORS

**Dr Robert D Rushton-Smith**

**Dr Suresh Babu AM**

**Dr Paul Veitch**

**Dr Christopher G Platis**

**Dr Georgia Peters**

**Dr Emily Harty**

**Dr Siang Ding**

**Dr Natasha Lambert**

**Dr Chloe Shelton**

## 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

JANUARY 2023



HOW TO PREVENT ANKLE SPRAINS



SIMPLE SWAP FOR WELLBEING



MANAGING BACK PAIN



THE HISTORY OF IMMUNISATION

*Compliments of your GP*

## The bigger the belly, the bigger the health risks

Did you know that we have more than one type of fat, and that there are more health risks associated with one than another?

Your fat cells are stored mainly as subcutaneous or visceral fat. Subcutaneous means beneath the skin, so it refers to the fat that lies just under your skin all over your body. If you can grab or pinch it, it's subcutaneous fat.

Visceral fat is internal fat that collects in your belly throughout the abdominal cavity and is too deep to feel. It surrounds your organs and it's hard to shift! Just to confuse matters, you also have subcutaneous fat around your middle, so your waist measurement incorporates both types of fat.

### Which type is a problem?

There are many health problems that are linked to being very overweight regardless of where you carry that weight, but there are specific health risks associated with having more visceral fat, which don't apply to the amount of subcutaneous fat you have. There are some particularly serious ones that relate to visceral fat, including: type 2 diabetes, some forms of cancer, and cardiovascular disease like heart attacks and stroke.

### How much visceral fat do I have?

Excess body fat around your middle is an indicator of visceral fat. Generally, the larger your waist measurement the higher your health risks. Diabetes Australia and the Heart Foundation recommend that an adult female should have a waist measurement of 80cm or less, and an adult male 94cm or less. Some ethnicities have stricter recommendations as they have a higher risk of some conditions.

### How do I lose visceral fat?

Most people don't find it easy to lose weight once they've gained it, and there isn't any quick fix.

Knowing the cause can help you make a plan to reduce fat. Things that make us gain fat are:

- **Too little exercise** – so getting any exercise you can is a good start. You might need to start slowly and build up gradually – whatever works within your own limits – but every little helps.
- **A poor diet** – reducing sugar, processed food and unhealthy fats is a great start. Make sure you get a plentiful and wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, lean proteins and dairy or dairy alternatives, and wholegrains.
- **Too much alcohol** – the classic 'beer belly' – alcohol plays a huge role in increasing visceral fat for those of us who drink – stay within the recommended limits, or lower if you're trying to reduce belly fat.
- **Stress** – there are lots of reasons why stress can make us more prone to gaining weight, and it seems to specifically increase visceral fat too.

It's important to protect yourself from future illness and discomfort by reducing your belly size. There's a lot of information and support available to help you achieve a healthy weight, and we can advise you on the right approach for your body.

*Starting with just one small healthy change a day can make you feel better*

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

## Try this simple swap for your wellbeing

Social media is undeniably a powerful tool, and can be a great way to keep in touch with friends and family, find events, even to find support groups. During lockdown, when face-to-face contact was severely limited, it was one of the few ways people had to socialise outside of their own households.

For some, this was a lifeline, but the internet can also be a hotbed of misinformation and disturbing content. Social media can be addictive; it can affect your mood and mental health, sleep patterns and physical health. During the pandemic in particular, spending a lot of time on social media meant a bombardment of controversial

and negative content, leaving users feeling drained, worried and stressed over things that they couldn't control or change.

The increased online activity prompted more research on the link between social media and mental health – or illness. One recent study had what may seem an obvious outcome. “Participants who cut back on social media and exercised more, experienced greater happiness and less stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Researchers at the Ruhr-Universität in Germany found that participants who swapped screen time on social media for

just 30 minutes of physical activity reported better overall health, and, particularly, less stress. There was also a marked link to tobacco use; people who took that 30 minute break smoked less. The benefits continued well past the end of the project.

This kind of data is just one of the many research projects on the effects of social media use on mental health, and the results are consistent; taking a break is good for you.

Start with just swapping out 30 minutes a day and build up until you have a good balance between physical and other activities that don't involve screens!

## Understanding and managing back pain

Back pain is one of the most common reasons people attend their GP. This means that you're not alone, and that there is lots of support and ways to help ease your pain.

### What causes back pain?

The vast majority of back pain is caused by simple musculoskeletal changes or minor injuries. It's rare that back pain is an indication of a more serious condition, but if you're in doubt, get it checked out.

Arthritic changes are a common cause of back pain, and, although arthritis is a long term condition that can gradually worsen, there are lots of treatment options for managing it. Other things that can cause or contribute to back pain include:

minor injuries – like sprains, poor sleep, poor posture, lack of exercise, and being overweight.

As you age, you're more likely to develop conditions like various forms of arthritis, osteoarthritis – leading to risk of fractures, herniated discs and more. Sometimes back pain is associated with seemingly unrelated conditions like stress and depression.

### What can I do about back pain?

Prevention is better than cure, and it's important to take care of your back. Learning about your condition and taking control of your treatment can lead to the most successful outcomes.

- Make sure your work area is comfortable and safe. Employers have a duty to provide necessary equipment and training to prevent injuries in the workplace.
- If you're overweight, losing some weight can improve the impact of back pain – just losing a few kilos can reduce the strain your bones and muscles bear.
- Exercise can help, even if it's restricted by pain, a little gentle stretching and movement can start to make a difference. Strengthening the muscles of your core and back will help support your spine and enable you to perform all the complex tasks of daily movement.
- Physiotherapists can give you more intense or targeted exercises to improve existing conditions and reduce the risk of future problems.
- Simple painkillers might be enough in the short term to help you go about your everyday life; but if painkillers aren't helping, or if you need to take them more frequently, or over a longer time, you should see your GP.

The burden of living with pain is often underrated; it can affect sleep, work, enjoyment, and affect both mental and physical health. If pain is affecting your life, see your GP. We can give advice and reassurance, or refer you for further tests and treatments if necessary. We can also work with you to create a plan for managing pain to allow you to carry on enjoying your life despite back problems.



Think about the things you enjoy - you may still be able to do some of them or modify those that you find challenging. Be careful to pace yourself and stop if it's not helpful. For tips and advice visit [www.mybackpain.org.au](http://www.mybackpain.org.au)

## Lemony blueberry bran muffins

These delicious muffins are light and moist, yet low in fat and sugar. They're perfect for summer picnics, breakfast, or a mid-morning snack.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ¼ cups self-raising flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 1 ¼ cups wheat bran
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 Tbsp milk
- ¼ cup rice bran or canola oil
- 2 medium eggs
- ½ cup maple syrup or melted honey
- Finely grated zest of 3 lemons
- 1 large ripe banana, mashed
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- ¾ cup natural Greek yoghurt
- 1 cup fresh or defrosted blueberries



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Line or grease a 12-hole muffin pan.
2. Sift flour and cinnamon into a large mixing bowl, stir in salt and bran.
3. Add baking soda to milk and stir.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk oil, eggs, syrup or honey, lemon zest, banana, baking soda mixture, vanilla, and yoghurt until smooth.
5. Pour in the wet mixture into the flour mixture and stir gently until just combined – be careful not to over-mix. Add the blueberries and gently fold through. Spoon mixture into muffin tin, dividing equally.
6. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until they rise and the tops are golden.

# The background and benefits of immunisation



Immunisation helps to protect you, your family and others in your community from serious diseases. Learn about the background and benefits of immunisation and how it works.

## What is vaccination?

Vaccination is the practice of giving a dose of a weakened or dead virus to trigger an immune reaction. When your immune system has been exposed to a safe amount of

a virus, it creates antibodies to fight off and protect against that infection in the future.

Some form of immunisation has been used for hundreds of years, but modern medicine has enabled us to understand more about how it works. This means we can now produce vaccines that are safe and effective.

## The history of vaccination

Probably the most famous historical example is the smallpox vaccine – this is credited as being the first ‘proper’

vaccine ever developed, in the late 18th Century. Before then, a form of immunisation practiced against smallpox, involved giving someone a mild case by scratching them with pus from someone else’s smallpox spots. This was fairly unreliable and pretty unpleasant!

A reliable method was created when Dr Edward Jenner noticed that people who had a mild illness called cowpox didn’t develop smallpox. Giving people a dose of cowpox protected them from smallpox, and the first ‘vaccine’ was created.



The word vaccine comes from ‘vacca’, the Latin word for ‘cow’. As medicine and healthcare practices developed, more people received the vaccine, and in 1980 the World Health Organisation declared smallpox officially eradicated.

Since then, many more vaccines have been developed, as well as research into creating rapid response vaccines against new infections like Covid-19.

The vaccines that we give routinely are designed to protect us against some of the most serious diseases. Illnesses that used to tear through a population with devastating results are now rare or even eradicated. In some cases, a vaccination can give complete protection against a disease; in others, you’re more likely to get a milder form of the infection, or be less likely to pass it on.

## Routine vaccinations

Australia’s National Immunisation Programme provides free vaccines to eligible people from birth through to adulthood. You can ask us for information on which ones you and your family should have or check the full schedule by scanning the QR code.



Vaccines are one of the greatest success stories of modern medicine, saving countless lives

## CROSSWORD

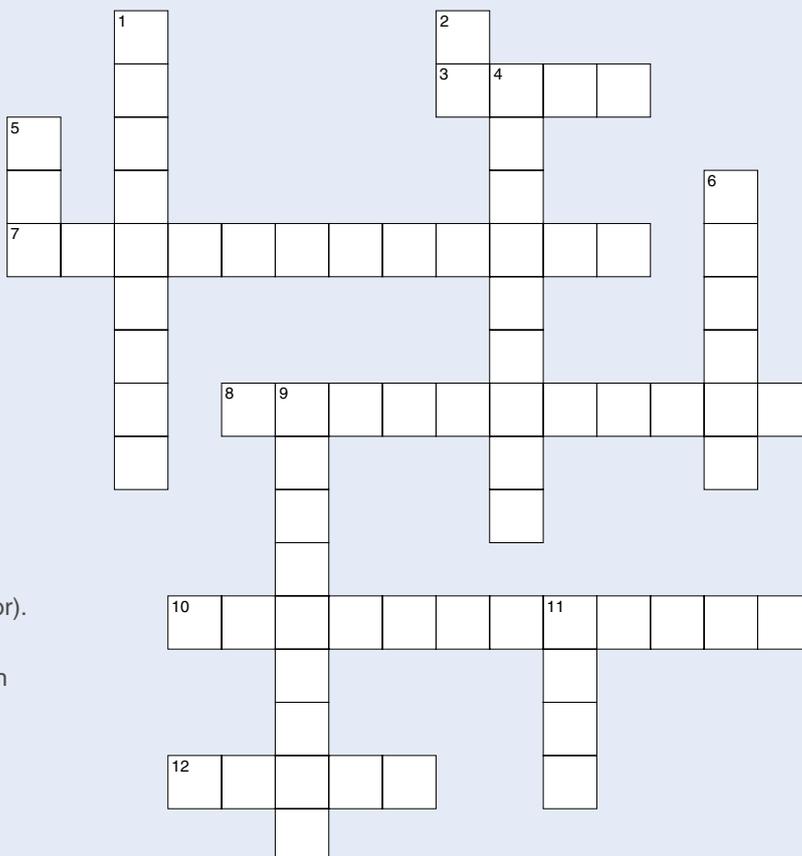
Answers can be found in this edition of *Your Doctor*

### ACROSS

3. A feeling of physical suffering caused by injury or illness.
7. Located, living, or made beneath your skin.
8. Giving a dose of a weak or dead virus to build immunity against disease.
10. An energy source we get from our diet.
12. The line of bones down the centre of your back.

### DOWN

1. A state of being well.
2. Abbreviation for general practitioner (medical doctor).
4. Stomach, or belly.
5. A thick yellowish fluid that forms at sites of infection on your body.
6. A mild viral skin disease in cattle, once used to inoculate humans against smallpox.
9. A condition affecting joints, causing pain, swelling, and stiffness.
11. A meal plan.



Solution is on the back page

# How to prevent ankle sprains

A sprained ankle is a common injury in our sports loving communities. Even minor sprains can be debilitating and take a long time to heal. So let's take a look at what a sprain is and what you can do to protect your ankle.

**Warming-up before exercising or stretching increases blood flow and helps to relax your muscles, making injuries less likely**

## What is an ankle sprain?

Your ankle joints are connected by ligaments which act like thin, strong ropes that hold the bones together. When too much force is applied to a ligament, such as landing too far on one side of your foot, damage occurs. The "rope" can fray or tear – this is called an ankle sprain.

It often happens when you make quick changes in direction – especially playing sports such as tennis, footy, or netball – or when your foot hits an object or uneven surface. Most commonly, people roll their foot outwards, which damages the ligaments on the outside of the ankle.

## Preventing ankle sprains

As with any sport or exercise, being match fit matters. Training and warming up before you begin to move are important. Know your fitness level and take time to build yourself up – slow and steady is better than fast and injured. Wear supportive and appropriate shoes for the activity you're doing.

A lack of ankle strength, stability and poor flexibility raise the chance of injury. Exercises that improve strength, balance and mobility help reduce the risk. Stretching regularly helps to lengthen your muscles and tendons, also making injuries less likely.

## TRY THESE SIMPLE EXERCISES

For stretching: stand on a step with your heels hanging off the edge. Slowly lower and raise your heels. Repeat this 15 times.

For strength and balance: stand on one leg for 30 seconds. Repeat three times on both sides. You can increase the difficulty by bending your standing knee.

If an ankle sprain occurs, the first aid response is rest, ice, compression, and elevation. Seek professional help as soon as possible – it's important to get the right treatment and start rehabilitating your ankle properly to avoid damaging it again.



## Questions to ask at your next doctor's visit

Asking questions is key to good communication with your doctor. To get the most out of your next visit, use the area below to note what you'd like to know and take this list with you to your next appointment so you don't forget what it was you wanted to ask..

| DOCTOR'S NAME | DATE | TIME |
|---------------|------|------|
|               |      |      |
| 1.            |      |      |
| 2.            |      |      |
| 3.            |      |      |
| NOTES:        |      |      |

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 3. PAIN 7. SUBCUTANEOUS 8. VACCINATION  
DOWN: 1. WELLBEING 2. GP 4. ABDOMINAL 5. PUS  
6. COWPOX 9. ARTHRITIS 11. DIET  
10. CARBOHYDRATE 12. SPINE

**Disclaimer:** The information in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Decisions relating to your health should always be made in consultation with your health care provider. Talk to your doctor first.

# PRACTICE INFORMATION

## 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.

## 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.

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