

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

Dr Natasha Lambert

ASSOCIATE DOCTORS

Dr Suresh Babu AM

Dr Paul Veitch

Dr Georgia Peters

Dr Emily Harty

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–12.00pm

WEEKEND AFTER HOURS & PUBLIC HOLIDAY HOURS

After hours service sessions are at **Tea Tree Surgery**.

Saturday 8.00am–12.00pm

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

YOUR DOCTOR

APRIL 2024



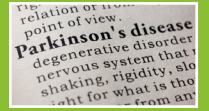
A DEADLY TOXIN WITH HEALING POWERS



THE MARVEL OF APPLES



DATE AND APPLE CAKE



PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Compliments of your GP

Unwelcome guests: a brief guide to threadworms

Worms are not just creatures of horror or science fiction movies; some types of worms can actually find their way into the human body.

Worms are parasites – meaning they survive by living in or on another organism (host) and extract nutrients at the expense of the host's health. One such parasite, threadworm, also known as pinworm, is common in Australia, particularly among children.

The threadworms live in human intestines; the females emerge at night to lay their eggs around the anus, which causes intense itching. They are visible as tiny white moving threads, especially with the aid of a torch.

Children afflicted with threadworms often experience discomfort, disrupted sleep, and irritability due to relentless itching. Persistent scratching also poses a risk of skin infections developing around the anal area.

How do threadworms spread?

Transmission or infection with threadworms occurs mainly by ingesting their eggs; these are often transferred from the anus to the mouth via hand contact.

They can also be transmitted indirectly by contact with contaminated bedding, clothing, food, or other surfaces. Remarkably, these eggs can survive outside the body for up to two weeks.

Treating and preventing threadworms

Medications that eliminate worms are very effective. Consult your family doctor or pharmacist for guidance on suitable medication. It's important to follow the recommended dosage and treat all family members, even if they show no symptoms, to prevent reinfection or spread.

Preventive measures are also essential in controlling threadworm. In addition to good hygiene practices, it's important to maintain a clean household environment.

- Wear underwear to bed to prevent scratching and eggs being picked up on fingers and under fingernails.
- Keep fingernails short and discourage nail biting and thumb sucking.
- Shower every morning and night to get rid of any eggs.
- Ensure all family members wash and dry hands properly after using the toilet and before eating.
- Wash hands after tending to anyone with threadworms.
- Wash all bed linen, clothing and towels regularly in hot water.
- Vacuum soft furniture and carpets thoroughly and clean bathrooms and toilets often.

If you think that your child or any family member has contracted threadworms, seek medical attention for diagnosis and appropriate treatment.



Our newsletter is free! Please take a copy with you.

Date and apple cake: a healthier twist on a classic recipe

Enjoy our healthier version of the classic date and apple cake. It's perfect for any occasion, whether it's a cosy afternoon tea, or a special dessert to share.

INGREDIENTS

2/3 cup any type of milk
2/3 cup pitted dates, chopped
1/4 tsp salt
1 cup grated cooking apple
1 tsp vanilla
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 tbsp. olive or avocado oil
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 tbsp. butter, softened
2 tsp ground cinnamon
1½ cups flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°. Line a 23cm tin with baking paper, or oil it if you prefer.
2. In a saucepan, combine milk, dates, and salt; heat until steaming. Remove from heat and stir in apple and vanilla.
3. When cool add egg and oil; stir until combined.
4. Topping: In a small bowl stir together walnuts, sugar, butter, cinnamon, and 1 tsp of the flour measure.
5. In a medium bowl, sift the baking powder, baking soda, and the rest of the flour.
6. Add milk mixture to flour mixture and stir until only just combined.
7. Spoon batter into the prepared baking pan and sprinkle evenly with walnut mixture.
8. Bake 20-30 minutes at 180°. Or until the centre is springy. Serve warm or cold with yoghurt. Enjoy!



Understanding Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a neurological disorder that affects your nervous system, affecting movement and function. The condition worsens over time.

PD occurs when certain nerve cells in your brain stop functioning well, primarily leading to a reduction in a chemical called dopamine. This decrease in dopamine levels obstructs the transmission of chemical signals in your brain, affecting how your body moves, and causing the typical symptoms of PD.

The exact cause of PD is not fully understood; ongoing research suggests that it may result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors, including potential exposure to toxins.

The average age of a diagnosis is around 65 years old, but it can occur in individuals under 50, contrary to common belief.

Symptoms of Parkinson's disease

PD is commonly categorised into stages according to symptoms, which can vary significantly for each person. It's important to note that not all symptoms are included here. For more information go to: www.parkinsons.org.au

Early-stage symptoms mainly involve movement and coordination difficulties: a classic, rhythmic tremor that starts in the hand, foot or leg and occurs when the body is at rest, muscle rigidity, and slowness of movement.

PD is often associated only with these tremors and mobility issues, but it can start out with minor signs which may go unnoticed or be dismissed. These include: loss of smell, speech

issues, sleep disturbances, constipation, dizziness, smaller handwriting, fatigue, mood disorders, and persistent pain and cramping.

Non movement-related symptoms include: cognitive changes (memory, learning, thinking and reasoning), anxiety, depression and personality changes.

Living with Parkinson's

Managing symptoms can make a huge difference to a person's ability to live independently with PD.

Medications mainly aim to increase the level of dopamine that reaches the brain, and play a key role in reducing symptoms.

Exercise can improve the body's response to dopamine and supports general health, and physical therapy helps manage issues such as speech and mobility problems.

As the disease progresses, mobility challenges may make it harder to carry out everyday activities. Support from family or a formal care package is very important. In the later stages, memory, thought processes and communication can also be severely reduced, making nursing care essential.

The progression of PD varies widely, some people may experience rapid onset of symptoms, while others manage their symptoms for a long time with carefully tailored treatments. It's important to remember that many individuals lead long and rewarding lives, continuing to work and maintain a good quality of life for many years after diagnosis.

Research

While there's currently no cure for PD, there is significant research and advancement in understanding it. This progress is opening up new possibilities, offering hope for preventing or slowing the progression of the disease and improving the management and quality of life for those affected.



April is Parkinson's Awareness Month

Recognising the early signs of Parkinson's can result in prompt diagnosis, management and treatment.

www.parkinsons.org.au

Autumn's health bounty: the many marvels of apples

As autumn arrives, there's one fruit that takes centre stage in orchards across the country - the humble yet mighty apple. Beyond their crisp bite and sweet taste, apples offer numerous health benefits.

Nutrient-rich goodness

Apples are packed with essential nutrients. They are a rich source of fibre, vitamin C, antioxidants like vitamin E, and flavonoids and polyphenols. These natural compounds play a crucial role in protecting cells from damage and contribute to overall well-being.

Supporting immune and heart health

As we head towards winter, maintaining a robust immune system is essential for staying healthy. Apples, with their high vitamin C content, contribute to this defence mechanism. Vitamin C is known for its immune-boosting properties, helping your body ward off infections.

Additionally, apples have a compound called quercetin, a flavonoid which helps fight inflammation and viruses. Quercetin can help support your immune system, so eating apples is a tasty way to make your body stronger against illnesses.

Quercetin also plays a role in promoting heart health. Along with the fibre content, it contributes to lower cholesterol levels and improved cardiovascular well-being.

Digestive well-being and weight management

After exploring the immune-boosting properties of apples, it's worth noting their significant impact on digestive health as well.

The fibre content, primarily in the form of soluble fibre called pectin, promotes regular bowel movements and helps prevent constipation. It also aids the balance of gut bacteria and overall gut health.

For those watching their weight, the fibre in apples also helps control appetite by promoting a feeling of fullness. Including apples in your diet is a smart strategy for weight management, and an excellent choice for a healthy lifestyle.

Ways to enjoy apples

Apples are versatile and delightful in many dishes. From salads to baked treats, the options are endless. Pair apple slices with nut butter for a satisfying snack. Grate apple into oatmeal or yogurt for added nutrients. (Try our recipe for apple and date cake in this edition.)

For an 'on-the-go' health drink, blend apples into a smoothie with spinach, banana, and almond milk. But let's not forget the joy of just biting into a fresh apple! To maximize the health benefits, leave the skin on, as it contains half of the fibre and most of the polyphenols.

From digestive support to immune health, these crunchy delights show that good health can be as simple as reaching for the fruit bowl!



Apples act as a natural, gentle cleanser for your digestive system.

An insight into itchiness 'down under'

We've all been there – that persistent itch in the anal or genital region that makes you squirm in your seat. It might be a bit awkward to discuss, but rest assured, you're not alone – it's an issue that many people face, and there are a number of causes.

Common causes

Hygiene habits: overzealous wiping or using harsh soaps can irritate the delicate skin around your nether regions, leading to itching.

Fungal infections: warm and moist areas like the genital region create the perfect breeding ground for yeast infections.

Skin conditions: conditions like eczema and psoriasis don't discriminate; they can also set up camp in these areas, causing itching and discomfort.

Allergies: a reaction to certain substances, such as laundry detergents, fabrics, or personal care products, can cause irritation or lead to allergic contact dermatitis.

Parasites: tiny creatures like threadworms can cause anal itching. They're quite common, especially in children - (see our article on threadworms).

Treatment and preventative tips

Gentle care: Use mild products for sensitive skin and avoid scrubbing. Pat the area dry gently. Identify and avoid any allergens.

Comfortable clothing: wear breathable underwear made from natural fabrics. Tight, synthetic fabrics can trap moisture and heat, creating a welcome zone for itch-inducing issues.

Over-the-counter creams: for fungal infections or mild irritation, over-the-counter creams or ointments may provide relief.

Cool compresses: ease the itch with a cool compress. Just make sure it's not too cold – we're aiming for relief, not a frosty situation.

Ditch the scratching: as tempting as it may be, it only causes further irritation.

If the itching persists or worsens, consult your doctor. While most cases are harmless and easily treatable, there are some medical conditions that can cause genital and anal itchiness. It's essential to get professional medical help for managing these issues.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Try to unscramble the words in this worksheet. If you can't find the correct word the answers are on the back page. Good Luck!

- ueqicretn** _____
A compound which helps fight inflammation and viruses.
- eppla** _____
A round fruit with firm, white flesh and green, red, or yellow skin.
- rheradtowms** _____
Also called a pinworm.

- epaasrit** _____
Organism which lives in or on another organism and gets nutrients from it.
- tnxio** _____
A poisonous substance.
- mrinaige** _____
A very bad headache.
- gllraeen** _____
A substance that causes an allergy.

- gcneeit** _____
Of, relating to, or involving genes.
- coniigetv** _____
Mental activities (thinking, reasoning, learning, and memory).
- dmnapioe** _____
A chemical found in brain tissue that acts as a neurotransmitter.

The surprising medical potential of a deadly toxin

Botulinum toxin, commonly known by its brand name Botox, is a powerful substance derived from bacteria. While it's usually associated with cosmetic procedures, it has been found to have some unexpected medical benefits.

Understanding botulinum toxin

The toxin can cause botulism, a severe illness caused by consuming food contaminated with the clostridium botulinum bacterium. This condition can result in paralysis and, if not treated promptly, can be fatal.

In medicine, a diluted form of the toxin is given through injections to treat various conditions. Basically, it works by blocking nerve signals in the muscles where it's injected, leading to temporary muscle paralysis.

Although the illness and the medication involve the same toxin, the doses for medical usage are strictly regulated for safety.

Medical applications

One of the most remarkable applications is for migraine headaches. For those who suffer



from chronic and frequent migraines, it has shown to be an effective preventive measure, reducing the frequency and intensity.

Botulinum toxin can be used to relieve cervical dystonia, a condition where neck muscles contract involuntarily. This can cause abnormal posture issues, tremor and muscular spasms.

Botulinum toxin can be a game-changer for individuals experiencing excessive underarm sweating. By blocking the nerve signals responsible for triggering sweat production, it effectively reduces sweat.

The toxin is increasingly being used to treat certain eye conditions; such as crossed or misaligned eyes, and uncontrolled or excessive blinking. By relaxing the muscles responsible for these involuntary muscle spasms, it can offer relief.

Botulinum toxin has emerged as a potential solution for bladder control problems caused by certain nerve-related conditions. By calming the bladder muscles, it can help reduce urgency and frequency of urination.

Botulinum toxin offers hope to individuals with upper limb muscle spasticity, a condition where muscles become stiff and difficult to control. This treatment can help those dealing with the aftermath of strokes or other neurological conditions, by improving control and mobility.

As researchers continue to explore new possibilities, botulinum toxin may become an increasingly common treatment for conditions that go beyond skin-deep, offering relief and solutions for a range of medical issues.

Questions to ask at your next doctor's visit

Asking questions is key to good communication with your doctor. To make the most of your visit, write down what you want to know in the area below. Bring this list to your next appointment so you remember what you wanted to ask.

DOCTOR'S NAME	DATE	TIME

1.
2.
3.
NOTES:

WORD SCRAMBLE SOLUTION

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. QUERCETIN | 4. PARASITE | 7. ALLERGEN | 10. DOPAMINE |
| 2. APPLE | 5. TOXIN | 8. GENETIC | |
| 3. THREADWORMS | 6. MIGRAINE | 9. COGNITIVE | |

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

SKIN CHECK CLINIC

Skin Check Clinic is available through Dr Harb at Tea Tree Surgery.

DUTY DOCTOR CLINIC

Each weekday for our patients who need to be seen on that day but cannot get an appointment, can be seen by the Duty Doctor. An appointment is required. Private fee applies for all patients.

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 January 2027. 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! Please take a copy with you.