

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

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MBBS FRACGP

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MBBS FRACGP Dip Pall Med (clin)

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MBBS FRACGP

Dr Christopher G Platis

MBBS

Dr Janet Davie

MBBS FRACP

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

YOUR DOCTOR

FREE!!
TAKE ME HOME



FEBRUARY 2019

Be wise and immunise

To protect you and your children from serious contagious diseases, immunisation has been proven as an effective and safe choice.

In the era before vaccines, thousands of children died from diseases like diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. Today in Australia, it is extremely rare to die from these diseases.

The important concept is that vaccinating people protects not only them, but others in the community. If I'm protected, I can protect others.

"Immunisation protects more than you and your child from serious diseases."

This type of protection is known as "community immunity" or "herd immunity." When enough of the community is immunised against a contagious disease, most other members are protected from infection because there's little opportunity for the disease to spread.

Newborns, pregnant women or people whose immune systems are weakened may be unable to receive certain vaccines. Yet even they will get some protection because the spread of contagious disease is contained.

A disease can die out altogether if enough people are immunised and the infection cannot spread. For example, in 1980 smallpox was eradicated and in 2014 measles was eliminated in Australia. Unfortunately, measles can still be brought into the country by international travellers, so it is important we maintain high levels of vaccination against this contagious disease.

Most people can be immunised, however there are certain circumstances where this is not possible. Ask your doctor if there is any reason why you or your child shouldn't be vaccinated.

You become vulnerable to different diseases at different stages in life, and therefore vaccinations will differ depending on your age. In addition,

there are also lifestyle choices, health conditions and some high-risk occupations that need to be taken into consideration when assessing an individual's vaccination requirements.

"Vaccination rates of 5-year olds in Australia are over 93%, but this needs to be higher."

The National Immunisation Program (NIP) offers free vaccines against 17 diseases for everyone who is eligible, and some states and territories also offer additional vaccinations for free. It is hoped that by making the vaccines accessible, it will increase national immunisation rates and as a result reduce the risk of contracting a preventable disease for all Australians.

Strict safety testing is completed before a vaccination is registered for use by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Even after approval is given, monitoring the safety and effectiveness of a vaccine in the community continues.

Conditions and diseases that can be prevented by vaccine include chickenpox (varicella), diphtheria, flu (influenza), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, Hib (Haemophilus influenza type b), HPV (Human papillomavirus), measles, meningococcal disease, mumps, pneumococcal disease, polio (poliomyelitis), rotavirus, rubella (German measles), shingles (herpes zoster), tetanus and whooping cough (pertussis).

Speak to one of our staff about booking an appointment to receive a vaccination. You may experience a mild reaction to a particular vaccine, but we will tell you what to look out for and what to do if you're worried about it and make sure you sign up to receive a reminder when your vaccinations are due.

When we choose to immunise, we're helping more than just ourselves. Make sure your child's immunisations are up to date and talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about vaccine safety.

See inside for an easy fresh and healthy RECIPE. Give it a try!

Go bananas!

People consume more bananas worldwide than most other fruit, but what can they do for your body and why do so many health experts recommend them?

Bananas are rich in potassium and fibre and feature a range of vitamins and minerals such as folate, iron, and protein. They don't have salt, fat or cholesterol, and only contain 110 calories. There's more to the humble banana than meets the eye. Below are some of the more prominent health benefits, however, not all are proven with high-quality research.

HEART AND DIGESTIVE HEALTH

Vitamin C, potassium, fibre, and vitamin B6 are all present in bananas, and funnily enough, all support heart health. If you suffer from digestive health



problems such as diarrhoea, bananas form part of the recommended BRAT diet of bananas, rice, apple sauce, and toast. Bananas are also beneficial for helping to promote regularity and for replenishing lost nutrients.

CANCER

Bananas are an excellent source of vitamin C which helps to combat cancer-causing free radicals. What's more, bananas alongside oranges and orange juice may all help to reduce the risk of childhood leukaemia.

ASTHMA

The Imperial College of London conducted a study about the benefits of bananas relating to asthma. The study found that in children who consumed one banana daily, the risk of developing asthma was 34 percent less than those who didn't.

BLOOD PRESSURE

If you suffer from high blood pressure, eat a banana! While

lowering salt consumption can aid in regulating your blood pressure, increasing your potassium levels may help too.

But before going for those bananas, be sure to consult your doctor if you are on any medication, such as beta-blockers, where increasing your potassium intake can be of concern. If you suffer from migraines, consume no more than half a banana per day, and refrain from eating them if you notice wheezing, swelling, hives, itching, or similar allergic reactions.

Banana Ice cream

A healthy one-ingredient ice cream to make at home!

Ingredients

2 ripe bananas

Other flavours to try:

Berry – 1 c blueberries (fresh or frozen)

Tropical – 1 mango (canned or fresh) and a dash of coconut cream

Chocolate – 1/2 avocado and a dessertspoon of cacao or cocoa powder

Method

1. Peel and cut bananas into small pieces.
2. Place in a freezer-safe container or bag. Freeze until solid. (At least 2 hours, but ideally overnight).
3. Add banana pieces to food processor. Pulse, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides. Blend until smooth - approximately 3 minutes.
4. Scoop into a bowl and enjoy immediately as soft serve! For firmer ice cream, place into an airtight freezer-safe container and freeze for at least an hour.

Try adding different flavours to your banana ice cream after you've blended it in the food processor. We've given some healthy ideas above, but for a special treat you could also add a spoonful of peanut butter or a dollop of Nutella.



Early detection key to survival

The road to digestion begins with you consuming food and ends with a trip to the bathroom. However, the hard parts happen in the middle.

After eating food, your body breaks it down, absorbing the nutrients for repairs, energy, and growth. With a 30-foot gastrointestinal tract in your body, taking care of your digestive health is a complicated yet necessary process that requires care and attention.

Even though the majority of Australians consider themselves to be in good health, and the country as a whole has a high life expectancy, there is still the elephant in the room: digestive tract cancers and detecting them early enough for a better chance of survival.

Out of all cancer diagnoses in Australia, two in ten will relate to the digestive tract such as colorectal and pancreatic. Digestive tract cancer then accounts for three in ten cancer deaths. Men are also 1.6 times more likely to die from a digestive tract cancer than women, and almost half of new cases in 2018 will result in death from it – close to 14,000 out of nearly 29,000 new cases.

The statistics are concerning, especially given the survival rate goes up with earlier detection, giving you a better chance of a long and prosperous life. If you have stage I bowel cancer, your five-year survival rate is 99 percent, compared with only 13 percent if you have stage IV – detected later on. As a result, it's clear to see that early diagnosis is paramount to combating the disease and living your life.

In an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report released in 2018, the links between cancer screening programs and survival rates were favourable. Earlier stage cancers could be diagnosed quickly, and treatment could take place sooner rather than later for a better chance of success.

Cancer affects many Australians every year, but it's clear to see that screening programmes and regular GP visits can work in your favour. If you have not yet taken part in a screening programme you are eligible for, or you have any health concerns, make an appointment with a medical professional. Remember, early detection is the key to survival.

March through menopause – what you need to know

Menopause is a natural part of a woman's life, but it's not always smooth-sailing. Misinformation and lack of knowledge can make it far harder than it needs to be.

Menopause is not something that sneaks up and catches you by surprise. In fact, it's not unexpected at all. Every woman will, at some point, run out of eggs – marking the end of their natural childbearing years. In an ideal world, your ovaries would cease to produce eggs, and that would be that. Unfortunately, however, the process can be uncomfortable and lengthy and involves both the discomfort of perimenopause symptoms in the lead-up, then menopause itself.

In Australia, the average age for the start of menopause is 51. However, 10 percent of women can get it earlier at around 45, or, with ovary removal surgery and chemotherapy treatment, even earlier than that. After about two years of symptoms and unpredictable hormones, your body no longer produces sex hormones for reproduction, and both progesterone and oestrogen levels are at an all-time low. However, with age, these levels lower naturally over time up to that point.

Perimenopause symptoms, which can be present for up to two years, are the first real signs that your body is changing. Your breasts may feel swollen and sore and you may have heavier and more frequent periods. Some suffer the side effects of lower



oestrogen levels such as night sweats, hot flushes, irregular periods, and mood and sleep changes, yet some women experience none of these symptoms at all.

Then, during the height of menopause, mood changes, increased urination, lowered libido, vaginal dryness, sexual dysfunction and bone loss are all common symptoms.

While it might sound like menopause is horrific, it doesn't have to be. There are many treatment options to suit your unique situation so you can march through menopause. For example, menopausal hormone therapy is recognised internationally as an acceptable treatment method for women under 60. However, if used long-term, it can put you at risk of certain cancers.

If you would prefer non-hormonal treatment, there is medication available to combat night sweats and hot flushes – the most common symptoms. Anti-depressants, anti-epilepsy drugs, and even neuropathic pain medication are common options. However, none are deemed as effective as hormone therapy. If you'd prefer a more natural approach, both cognitive behaviour therapy and hypnosis have shown some promising effect for flushes and sweats.

For some, menopause can produce some debilitating side effects. If you are struggling with your body's changes, speak to your doctor about treatment options that may be suitable for you.

Clever Crossword

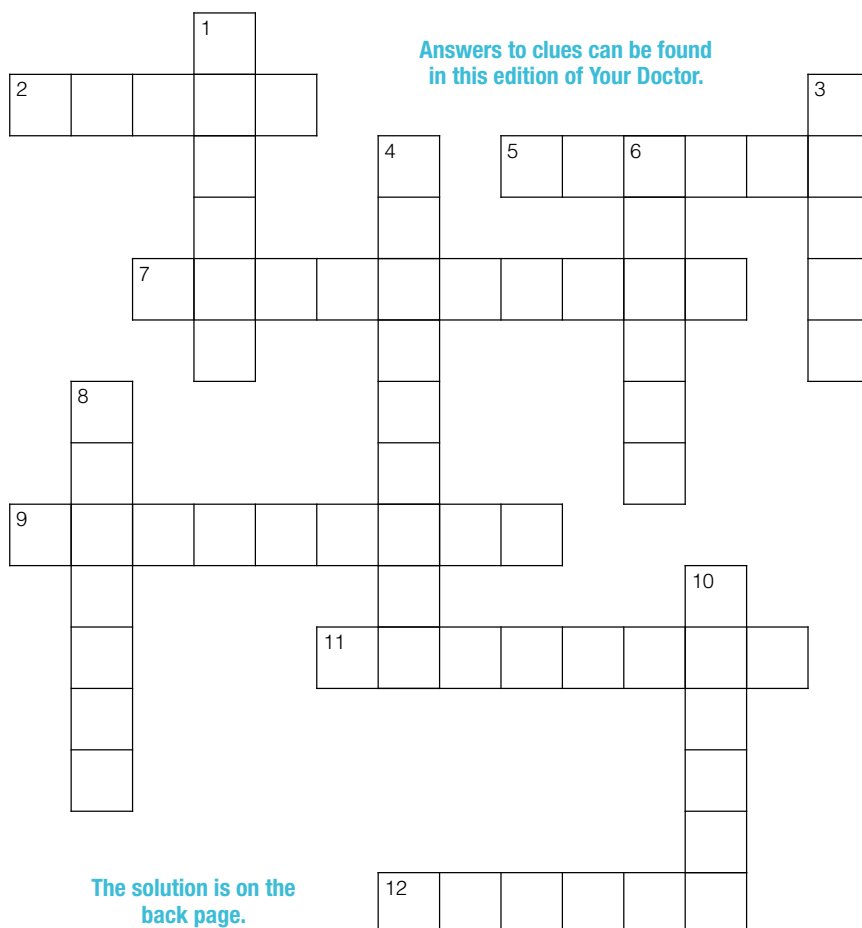
Answers to clues can be found in this edition of *Your Doctor*.

ACROSS

2. One in 13 Australians will receive a diagnosis of this type of cancer in their lifetime. (5)
5. Consuming a banana a day reduces the risk of developing this disease. (6)
7. A disease that can be prevented by vaccine. (9)
9. Increased _____ is a symptom of menopause. (9)
11. Disease that was eradicated in 1980. (8)
12. Exercises for your pelvic floor. (6)

DOWN

1. Pregnancy can cause weakened _____ floor muscles. (6)
3. _____ detection is the key to surviving digestive tract cancers. (5)
4. A mineral that bananas are rich in. (9)
6. Length (in feet) of the gastrointestinal tract of a human. (6)
8. A type of therapy recommended for women in menopause. (7)
10. Bowel cancer often begins with these. (6)



The solution is on the back page.

Are you doing enough kegel?

Kegel exercises, or kegels for short, help to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles. Are you doing enough of them?

It doesn't matter whether you're a man or a woman, pregnant or not; you can still benefit from kegel exercises. Developed in the 1940s by Dr. Arnold H. Kegel, they became known for helping women in particular to prevent urine leakage.

A kegel exercise involves strengthening the muscles that you would use to stop the flow of urine or passing wind. Squeeze them together while lifting your pelvic floor, holding them for five seconds. You can then relax before repeating the five-second hold up to ten times. The goal is to strengthen your pelvic floor enough to offer your organs support for controlling wind, urine, and faeces. They can also help to reduce pelvic pain and even make sex more pleasurable.

Kegel muscles can weaken for many reasons, including from pregnancy, childbirth,

constipation, and even aging. If you have had bladder or bowel surgery, or you're overweight, you are also more at risk. The same goes if you have a constant cough through asthma, bronchitis, or a similar condition.

For many women, pregnancy and childbirth can often be to blame for weakened pelvic floor muscles. Hormonal changes, downward pressure, and a growing baby can all contribute to bladder and bowel leakage, pelvic pain or prolapses, and even abdominal separation. However, by carrying out kegel exercises on a regular basis, you have an 84 percent success rate with being able to prevent leakage going forward.

If you believe your pelvic floor muscles are not at their best, then it might be time to try kegel exercises. If you are unsure if they are right for you, or for advice talk to your GP or health professional.

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.

One of Australia's biggest killers

Bowel cancer treatment has a ninety percent success rate with early intervention, but it's still one of Australia's biggest killers.

One in thirteen Australians will receive a bowel cancer diagnosis in their lifetime, with it more prevalent in Australia than anywhere else in the world. It can affect men, women, the young and the old, as well as those with and without a hereditary or family connection. In fact, seventy percent of those who develop bowel cancer have no family history of it, so it's clear to see that bowel cancer has no preference.

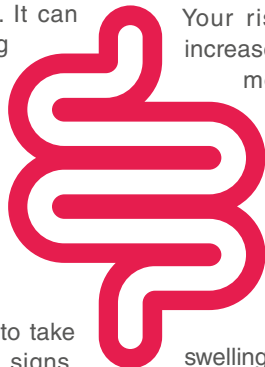
That's why it's so important to take action and be aware of the signs. Reading your body, looking out for changes, and taking advantage of screening programmes may be the difference between life and death.

Bowel cancer can also affect any part of your colon or rectum and is often referred to as colorectal cancer. The colon is a section of the large bowel

used for water absorption, while the rectum and anal canal hold waste material. Bowel cancer often begins as benign polyps which form on your bowel's lining. If left undetected, they can become cancerous tumours that may spread to other areas of your body.

Your risk of getting bowel cancer increases with age, with a diagnosis more common for those aged 50 years or more. However, it's also becoming more common in Australians under 50 as well. Therefore, act promptly if you notice rectal bleeding or bloody stools, a change in bowel movements, abdominal pain or swelling, rectum or anus lumps or pain, symptoms of anaemia, or the feeling that you are not finished on the toilet.

You should also see your GP if you have a family history of bowel cancer, want peace of mind, or would like to take part in screening programmes. Bowel cancer may be one of Australia's biggest killers, but it doesn't have to be.



ACROSS 2. BOWEL 5. ASTHMA 7. DIPHTHERIA 9. URINATION
DOWN 1. PELVIC 3. EARLY 4. POTASSIUM 6. THIRTY 8. HORMONE
10. POLYPS
11. SMALLPOX 12. KEGELS

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Disclaimer: All text and images published in this newsletter are for general information and educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional advice. Always consult a registered health professional regarding any health-related diagnosis or treatment options.

Read the newsletter and test your knowledge - complete the PUZZLE!