



JUNE-JULY 2012

Your next appointment:



> Testosterone Deficiency



> Bleeding from the uterus



> Prevent childhood burns



> Croup

TAKE ME
HOME!

Enjoy this free newsletter

from our practice. Please remember that decisions about medical care should be made in consultation with your health care provider, so discuss with your doctor before acting on any of the information.

www.healthnews.net.au

● DOCTORS & THEIR INTERESTS

Dr Betty Patapis

MBBS, FRACGP
Women & Children's Health

Dr Elaine Caplan

MBBS
General Medicine

Dr Robert Vial

MBBS, BMedSc, FRACGP, FACNEM
General and Nutritional Medicine

Dr Fung Cheung

MBBS, FRACGP
Minor Surgery

Dr Christel Romano

MBBS
Women and Children's Health

Dr David Mark

MBBS, FRACGP

Dr John McCririck

MB ChB

Dr Chris Ward

MBBS

Dr Paul Klemes

MBBS, FRACGP
Sports Medicine

Dr John Cooper

MBBS
General Medicine

Dr George Spicer

MBBS

Dr Lakshmi Kadaba

MBBS
General Medicine

Dr David Leaf

MBBS

● ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Kingsley Gibson Physiotherapy

Cameron Elliott Physiotherapy

Megan Coventry Physiotherapy

Rob Mullard Physiotherapy
(see leaflet inside newsletter)

Emma Vowels Exercise Physiologist

Neeti Chadha Audiologist

Tanya Bonner Psychologist

Available for appointment Mon-Sat.

Please call 9998 3400 for appointments.

BULK BILLING MEDICAL CENTRE

● PHARMACY 9998 1900

Monday to Friday 7.30am - 9pm

Saturday 8am - 8pm

Sunday 8am - 6pm

● APPOINTMENTS

Appointments are available 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday with all Doctors. Please enquire at Reception or phone the Centre.

Booking a long appointment. If you want an insurance medical, review of a complex health problem or a procedure etc., please book a longer appointment.

● SURGERY HOURS

Monday to Friday 7am - 9pm

Saturday 7am - 8pm

Sunday 8am - 6pm

Public Holidays 8am - 6pm

● AFTERHOURS & EMERGENCY

Family Care Medical Services - Ph: 13 74 25

Mona Vale Hospital - Ph: 9998 0333

Home Visits are available to patients of this practice (for emergencies). This service incurs a fee.

Monday - Friday 4pm - 8am \$130.00

Saturday & Sunday 10am Sat - 8am Mon \$140.00

Public Holiday all day \$150.00

Medicare rebates on above: approximately \$100.00

Patients in nursing home/aged care facilities Bulk billed

Veterans' Affairs patients DVA Gold Card

Patients with concession cards are encouraged to telephone for further information regarding fees as there may be a reduction in fees in certain circumstances.

● OTHER SERVICES OFFERED

- Pathology
- Dentist (Private Billed)
- Menopause Counselling
- Family Planning
- X-ray
- Vaccinations
- Medicals
- Skin Cancer Checks
- Minor Surgery
- STD checks
- Allergy Tests

● BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

The Centre directly bills Medicare all patients who present their Medicare cards at reception.

All appointments are privately billed with the fees advertised at reception.

Workers Compensation, ancillary services and overseas are charged AMA rates. Fees vary according to the complexity of the service or if a procedure is performed.

Payments can be made by **cash, cheque, Visa, Mastercard and EFTPOS.**



Testosterone Deficiency

Testosterone: hormone of 'maleness'

With our ageing population and shrinking workforce, it is important we keep men fighting fit for as long as possible. Some men are below their best because they lack testosterone but who?

Testosterone is made in the testicles, driven along by brain hormones (from the pituitary and hypothalamus). Conservative estimates suggest that by age 65, 10% of men will have testosterone deficiency and by age 70, this figure will rise to over 20%. Hormone levels do not decrease quickly in men -- as with menopause in women -- but they slowly decline from the age of 40 or so.

Diagnosing this problem is not simple. For a start, although erection problems can be linked to low testosterone, this problem is more often linked to lifestyle factors (e.g. smoking, alcohol) and other health problems (e.g. obesity, poor circulation, diabetes, depression).

And although testosterone deficiency is a known cause of poor sex drive (libido), poor motivation, tiredness, mood swings, hot flushes, loss of muscle bulk, decreased tolerance for exercise, and osteoporosis, these problems can be caused by other health disorders as well.

Men can lack testosterone for a number of reasons. Rarely, the testes might have been damaged (e.g. mumps) or brain hormones may be lacking (e.g. pituitary tumour). Far more common is an inherited disorder, Klinefelter's Syndrome, where the man has smaller testicles due to an extra X chromosome (XXY instead of XY, which happens once in 620 live births). Low testosterone is also associated with a number of illnesses, including obesity and depression. Then there is testosterone deficiency that comes with ageing.

Luckily, testosterone can easily be measured with a blood test. Blood is usually taken in the morning, when testosterone levels will be at their highest. If the first result is low (even just above the recommended level), the test needs to be repeated.

If both tests fall below a certain level, this qualifies that person for treatment under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Some men

require treatment for symptoms when testosterone is just above the recommended PBS thresholds.

Before starting treatment, other tests are done to exclude other hormonal disorders (e.g. thyroid) and cancer of the prostate (which is very important because hormone treatment may worsen a pre-existing cancer).

Testosterone replacement therapy can be done using tablets, long-acting injections, creams or gels. The injections are convenient for those who forget to take pills, but the right dose has to be worked out. Hormonal gels/creams are convenient because you can vary the daily dose to suit you. Ask your doctor.

Treatment should aim to reverse troublesome symptoms within a reasonable time (weeks), and it should be reviewed by your doctor.



www.andrologyaustralia.org
 Crossword: **Across:** 3 HPV; 6 GALLSTONES; 8 IUD; 9 UTERINE; 12 BONE; 14 RETINOPATHY; 15 BURNS; 16 RETINA; 17 DIABETES **Down:** 1 SCALDS; 2 COLD; 3 HRT; 4 DEFICIENCY; 5 DEPRESSION; 7 TESTOSTERONE; 10 LIVER; 11 LIBIDO; 13 OVULATE; 15 BILE

Abnormal bleeding from the uterus

Abnormal vaginal bleeding in women is common and is usually nothing to worry about. Your doctor may ask targeted questions and do appropriate tests before recommending the right treatment.

Periods that are too frequent, long, or heavy may be due to **failure to ovulate**. In women of childbearing age, this cycle disturbance can be due to excessive weight loss or exercise, chronic illness, drug abuse, stress, thyroid problems, or polycystic ovary syndrome.

Your doctor may want to exclude **infection** as a cause of abnormal bleeding. And if you are over 35, fibroids on the uterus can be picked up using ultrasound, although they may not be the cause of bleeding. Alternatively, problems with the **oral contraceptive pill** may require a change in type to prevent abnormal bleeding.

Persistent abnormal bleeding is investigated with an internal examination, blood tests and pelvic ultrasound. For women over 40, **cancer** of the lining of the uterus (called endometrium) may need to be excluded by taking a biopsy of the lining.

When all the above causes are ruled out, the problem is usually **hormonal**, called dysfunctional uterine bleeding. Treatment depends on cause, age and the desire to have more children. Excessive bleeding from the uterus -- with large clots or flooding -- most commonly affects women around menopause.

A number of medications are available to reduce bleeding or regulate periods, which is particularly important if bleeding is leading to anaemia.

A hormone-releasing intrauterine device (IUD) is available for women with heavy bleeding -- those who do not respond to or are not suitable for oral hormonal treatment. The IUD, which is already in use for contraception, slowly releases small doses of a female hormone (progesterone) that 'shrinks' the lining of the uterus. The IUD reduces menstrual blood loss in more than 8 out of 10 women within 3 months (more so as time increases), and it stops the normal cycle in more than half of women. In younger women who use this treatment there is the added benefit of contraception.

In general, **surgery** is no longer considered first line treatment for heavy abnormal bleeding.



The least traumatic surgery shrinks the lining of the uterus (called endometrial ablation) in those women who do not want further children. Hysterectomy may be considered where there are other physical problems that need repair (e.g. prolapse or cancer of the cervix).

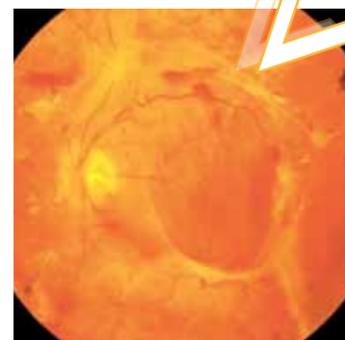
Vasectomy

Vasectomy is a form of permanent sterilisation for males. Whilst reversal can be done and success rates have improved over the last decade, the procedure should be seen as permanent and only done when you are certain that you do not want more children.

The procedure involves "cutting" the Vas Deferens, which is the tube through which sperm leave the testes in ejaculation. After the procedure men still ejaculate semen fluid but there are no sperm in it.

A vasectomy is usually done under local anaesthetic so there is little down time. Complications can be bruising and soreness. Infection is a rarity. Three months post-op a sperm count is done to check it has "worked" and until that time you are advised to use contraception.

www.vasectomyinfo.com.au



The doctor's view of a diabetes damaged retina

Retina Care Crucial for Diabetes

The retina at the back of the eye contains the specialised cells (called rods and cones) that allow us to see. These cells need regular nutrition supplied from blood travelling through very fine blood vessels in the retina.

Diabetes damages blood vessels over time, the very reason people with diabetes are more prone to poor blood supply in the legs or strokes and heart attacks. Small blood vessels in the retina can block, leak or burst -- a condition called retinopathy. New, weaker blood vessels can form, a condition called proliferative

retinopathy, and if this affects the most light-sensitive part of the retina (called the macula) it causes permanent damage to central vision, that part of vision so crucial to reading.

Luckily, diabetic retinopathy can be prevented using regular eye examination and treatment with a laser, or regular injections into the eyeball of a substance to prevent blood vessels from building up abnormally. Of course, good control of diabetes and blood sugars is central to success.

Tackling gallbladder problems

The gallbladder sits between the liver and the bowel, connected to both by a tube (bile duct). It stores bile, a digestive fluid produced by the liver that is important for digestion of fats. When you eat a fatty meal, gut hormones 'tell' the gallbladder to squirt bile down the bile duct and into the small bowel to mix with the food.

Surprisingly, people can live perfectly well without a functioning gallbladder but gallbladder disease may cause symptoms. Most common is inflammation, usually caused by gallstones (but not always).

Because gallbladder symptoms can mimic problems with other abdominal organs, your doctor may require tests to sort it out - blood tests, ultrasound, or special x-rays or a nuclear scan. For example, feeling sick or nauseous after fatty food is very common but often not due to gallbladder trouble.

What about pain? An inflamed gallbladder causes pain and tenderness under the right rib cage, towards the front. Gallstones can cause intermittent obstruction to the gallbladder outlet. This causes severe abdominal colic (the type of pain you get with severe diarrhoea). Fever, nausea and vomiting are common as well.

Who gets gallstones? Anyone can, but they are more common in fair-skinned women who are overweight and whose weight seesaws through dieting. Stones start as tiny cholesterol crystals that join with calcium and other chemicals to grow slowly, at about 3mm a year. Blockage from stones may cause bile to spill into the bloodstream, giving the typical yellow tinge in the eyes and skin that is jaundice. This is a serious situation that requires surgery to remove the stone.

These days, a troublesome gallbladder can be removed using keyhole surgery (laparoscopic cholecystectomy). Other methods of gallstone removal are available -- medication or ultrasound shockwaves -- but are only used in special cases.

Prevent childhood burns

Curious children explore their surroundings and don't understand that hot water or hot drinks burn like fire. Burns and scalds are a major cause of serious injury in children aged 0 to 14 years. Here are some ideas to reduce risks:

- Make sure bathroom hot water is regulated to 50°C. (At 60°C it takes one second for hot water to cause third degree burns. At 50°C it takes five minutes.)

- Don't leave children alone in the bathroom or kitchen. Put an out-of-reach lock on the door.

- Keep hot drinks and handles away from kids.



- Turn the handles of saucepans towards the back of the stove, out of reach of small children.
- Keep hot drinks away from the edge of the table or bench.

- Use a cordless kettle to prevent a child pulling the cord.

- Use the back hot plates or flames before the front ones.

- Give toddlers their own special mug so they don't drink from an adult's mug or cup, which may contain liquid that is too hot.

- Carry plates to pots, not pots to plates.

Finally, remember if the worst happens, don't use butter, oils or ice to treat burns. Cool the burnt area with cold water, such as placing the burnt area under running tap water. Do this for at least 10 minutes while you are seeking medical help.



Recipe for health

POTATO & SPINACH FRITTATA

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 400g (washed) potatoes, peeled, cut into 3cm pieces
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 80g baby spinach leaves
- 4 eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Cook the potato in a large saucepan of salted boiling water for 7-8 minutes or until tender. Drain well.

Heat oil in a 20cm-diameter (base measurement) non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the potato and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5-6 minutes or until golden. Reduce heat to medium. Add the baby spinach leaves and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes or until spinach wilts.

Preheat grill on high. Whisk together the eggs, egg whites and garlic in a medium jug. Season with salt and pepper.

Pour the egg mixture into the pan. Cook for 4-5 minutes or until frittata is set around the edge but still runny in the centre. Cook under preheated grill for 3-4 minutes or until golden brown and just set. Cut into wedges to serve.



Croup

Croup is caused by congestion or swelling of the vocal cords, brought on by a variety of different viruses.

It starts with a slight cough and fever which worsens at night, becoming a harsh, barking cough followed by a crowing noise as the child draws air in past the swollen vocal chords.

Attacks can last a few hours and are worsened by spasm in the voice box (larynx).

The cough can be distressing for everyone, especially at night. The most important home treatment is to dampen (or humidify) and

warm the air that your child breathes. The easiest way to do this is to move the child into the bathroom, turn on the hot shower and close windows and door to allow steam to fill the room. Nurse your child on your lap and soothe him or her as best you can.

This will usually settle the cough and get you through the night. However, if your child still has breathing difficulties after this treatment they may require medical attention.

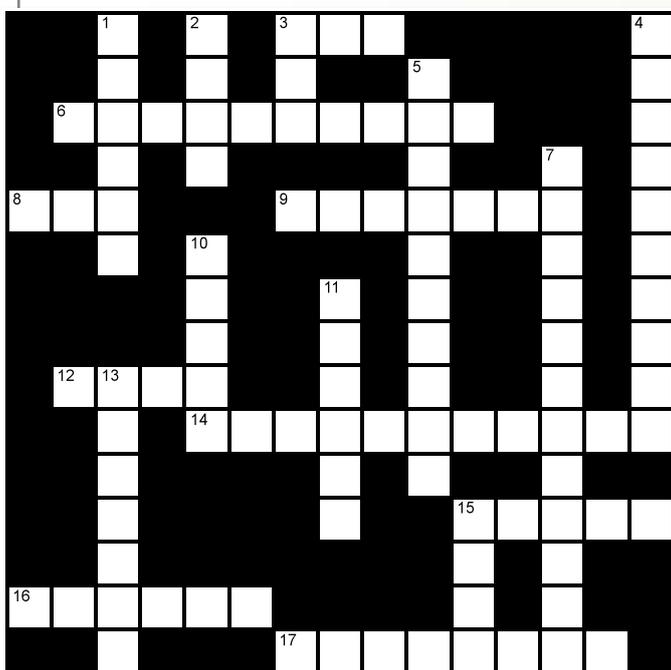


Laughter the Best Medicine

■ He had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, yet his wife stayed by his bedside every day. One day, when he came to, he motioned for her to come nearer. As she sat by him, he whispered, eyes full of tears, "You know what? You have been with me all through the bad times. When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business failed, you were there. When we lost the house, you stayed right here. When the truck hit me, you called the ambulance and

stayed by my side. You know what?" "What dear?" She gently asked, smiling as her heart began to fill with warmth. "I think you're bad luck."

■ Before going in for surgery I thought it would be funny if I posted a note on myself telling the surgeon to be careful. After the surgery I found another note on myself, "Anyone know where my mobile phone is?"



Health Crossword

Across

- Sexually transmitted disease (3)
- Stones in the gallbladder (10)
- Device used to prevent pregnancy (3)
- Relating to the womb (7)
- Forms a skeleton (4)
- Leaking small blood vessels in the back of the eye causes a condition called ___ (11)
- ___ and scalds cause serious injury in children (5)
- Thin layer of cells at the back of the eyeball (6)
- High sugar levels in the blood is called ___ (8)

Down

- Scorch
- The common ___ (4)
- Post-menopausal women may require ___ (3)
- Iron ___ leads to anaemia. (10)
- Sad feelings of gloom (10)
- Male hormone replacement (12)
- What is the largest organ in the body that manufactures and secretes bile (5)
- Lack of sexual desire (6)
- Women ___ about once every month ((7)
- The gallbladder stores ___ (4)