



JUNE-JULY 2013

Your next appointment:

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> Fatigue and You



> Childhood Communication Problems



> Men's Health – Neglect Not



> Early Menopause in Women



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](http://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**

MBChB

**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

● ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

**Kingsley Gibson** ..... Physiotherapy

**Cameron Elliott** ..... Physiotherapy

**Chris Parfett** ..... Physiotherapy

**Luise Hollman** ..... Physiotherapy

**Emma Vowels** .. Exercise Physiologist

**Neeti Chadha** ..... Audiologist

**Tanya Bonner** ..... Psychologist

**Lynda Hamilton** ..... Dietitian

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

● 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.**



# Fatigue and You

Fatigue is commonly seen in general practice, usually accompanying a host of illnesses from the common cold to cancer, and for which other symptoms are obvious. Your doctor's task is to work out what the other symptoms point to by using a careful history, physical examination, and tests. Persistent fatigue (e.g. a few weeks) can be a sign of lifestyle problems.

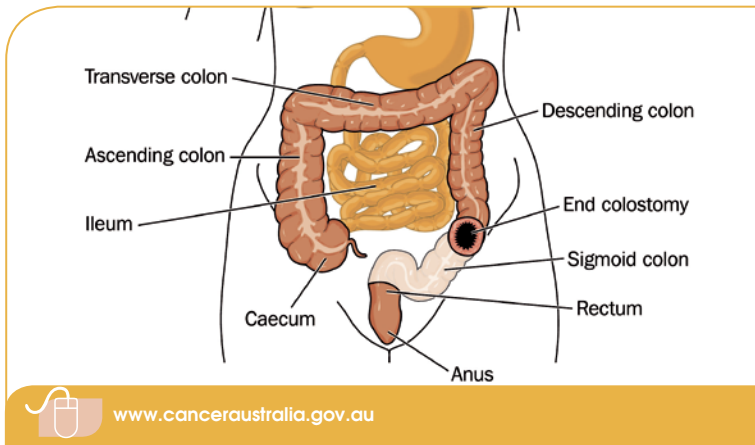
Lack of sleep will lead to fatigue, as does stress, which can also impact on sleep (a double whammy). Good sleep tips include going to bed at the same time each night, stopping caffeine after 5pm, doing guided meditations and switching off screens at least half an hour before bed.

Managing stress may help. Or there may be some depression. Regular exercise helps both, reduces fatigue and helps with better sleep. Eating a sensible diet with not too much processed foods is good for energy levels.

Where fatigue is part of some other problem, treatment will be directed to that problem. Possibilities include:

- low levels of iron or vitamin B 12, more common in women in the reproductive years.
- underactive thyroid gland – treated with thyroid hormone replacement
- chronic virus infection – glandular fever, or Ross River Virus
- chronic pain problems like fibromyalgia
- mental health problems like depression
- side effect of medications – a medications review is sometimes helpful.

*You don't need to exercise to feel fatigued*



# Communication Problems in Childhood

A communication disorder in a child affects how they share information and usually shows with difficulty speaking certain sounds, speaking fluently, putting words together or understanding what others say.

You can inherit a problem, or acquire one, or both. There are many things that can contribute to a problem so your doctor will go through their checklist and often seek help from others.

The list includes: nervous system toxins such as alcohol during pregnancy; meningitis infection or head trauma; inherited developmental disorders such as autism and intellectual disabilities; part of cerebral palsy; physical problems in the mouth or palate; hearing problems due to ear infections or ear damage; etc..

Or there may be no obvious underlying condition or cause!

A child may have problems expressing themselves or problems in receiving and understanding information given to them, or both.

As a yardstick, normal speech will have babies making babbling sounds between 4 and 6 months and saying first words between 6 and 12 months. By 18–24 months most will be making two to four word sentences.

If you have a problem, discuss this with your child's doctor. There is no actual test needed. Speech therapy is needed. See your doctor and then try to help.

If a problem is important – a pathologist can be helpful.

## Bowel Cancer Perspectives

Bowel cancer (usually large bowel or colorectal cancer) affected over 14,000 people last year, which is over one tenth of all new cancers, diagnosed at an average age of 69.3 years and more so in males.

Bowel cancer is more likely with age, if other family members are affected or if you have a personal history of bowel polyps, gynaecological cancer or inflammatory bowel disease.

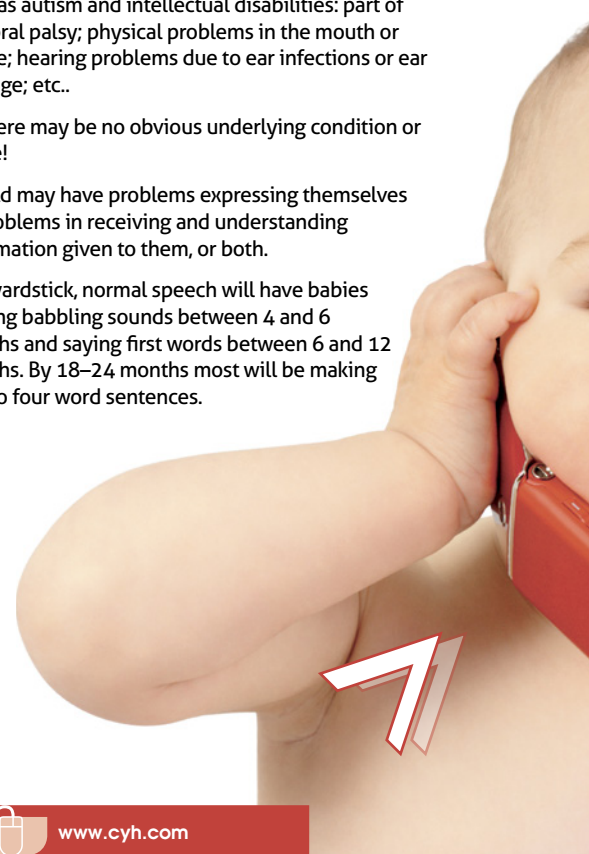
Symptoms may be of bleeding from the rectum, a change in bowel habit, abdominal pain or bloating, weight loss or tiredness. These symptoms are not unique to bowel cancer, so if you have any see your doctor to have it checked out.

Diagnosis is usually by colonoscopy – a flexible tube is inserted into the bowel whilst you are sedated and the whole of the large bowel is inspected. Any suspicious growths can be biopsied. Leading up to colonoscopy, your doctor may do an internal examination, blood test or specialised x-ray.

Colonoscopy should start at age 40 if you have a family history of bowel cancer and is best repeated every 3 to 5 years, depending on whether polyps are found. Testing for blood in the stools can be done at home (faecal occult blood test) and is recommended for others, when they reach 50. A positive test is a useful pointer to the need for a colonoscopy.

Treatment will depend on the cancer cell type and stage of growth. It will generally involve surgery and for some, chemotherapy as well. The good news is that between 1982 and 2010 mortality nearly halved (taking into account age) and 90% of bowel cancers can be treated if caught in time.

Prevention is not clear cut, but having plenty of fibre in the diet and moderating alcohol and red meat intake lowers the risks of bowel cancer.





# Men's Health – Neglect Not

Being male can be unhealthy because men like to fix things they understand. Health problems are poorly understood and often ignored in the hope they will fix themselves. Men are more interested in what is going on around them than what is happening with their bodies. Seeking help and admitting stress can be seen as a weakness or failure. These old notions can land men in trouble.

Having a 'well-man' check is appropriate, a bit like servicing the car to keep things running smoothly. Some models of car are prone to particular problems; some families too. 'Going over the pits' for a check-up and having a talk with your 'mechanic' (doctor) will likely cover most of these things:

- Stress. Blokes feel it when relationships or work are failing and they need help to find the solution often. To suffer silently from stress and depression is no answer. Talking to your family doctor can really help (it's confidential).
- Blood pressure. Check every 2 years.
- Cholesterol and blood fats. A blood test every 2-5 years.
- Diet & Weight. If you need to, losing a few kilos can reduce your risk of serious problems, especially the gut. Too much alcohol catches up with you in many ways.



*Self-maintenance for men!*

- Smoking. If you are ready to quit, your doctor can help, and you will have more fuel in the tank.
- Bowel cancer. Yearly tests are now recommended from age 50.
- Blood sugar. Never miss this if you are overweight, over 40 or there is diabetes in your family.
- Prostate. If you have waterworks trouble.
- Problems with sex. Impotence often has a physical cause and doctors think of it being part of heart disease, blood pressure or diabetes, so they look at the 'big picture'. No need to be embarrassed.

**d** concerns about your child's development with your doctor. In many instances, children are developing at their own pace and there is no problem. For others, assistance may be needed. It is important to get one to confirm things are abnormal and identify any underlying causes.

If a problem is confirmed, early intervention is key. Getting a paediatrician and speech therapist involved is a good idea. Most problems are resolved.



*Childhood babbling usually turns into talk*

# Early Menopause in Women

Menopause or "cessation of periods" typically occurs around age 50 but this age varies considerably. It usually happens when oestrogen and progesterone production by the ovaries drops, often described as the ovaries "running out of eggs". From experience, we call it premature menopause before age 40 and may be prompted to look for a reason.

There may be genetic factors. Of course, surgical removal of the ovaries, chemotherapy or radiation treatment can all bring on premature menopause.

Symptoms are the same, regardless of age. These can include irregular periods (until they stop altogether), hot flushes, sweats, vaginal dryness, lower libido, fatigue and disturbed sleep. Some women get very mild symptoms, others more severe.

Attitudes to early menopause vary with some women being happy at not having periods and others disappointed at the end of reproductive life. Treatment depends on how severe symptoms are and most women require no treatment. After all, menopause is not a disease on its own.

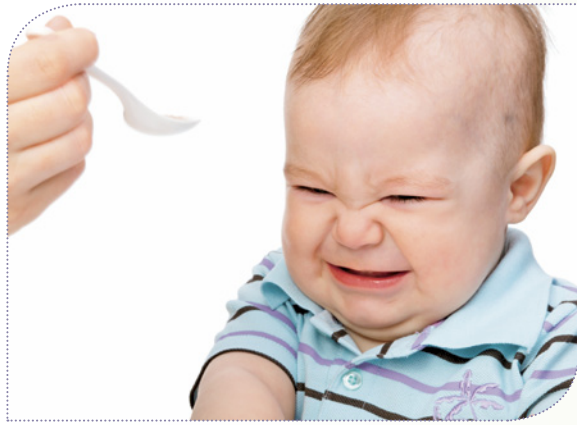
In previous decades hormone replacement was widely used. Today this would only be used if the symptoms warranted it and the benefits outweighed the risks.

Supplements of red clover, primrose oil and other herbs help some women, as does acupuncture or meditation. It is important to keep up with lifestyle measures such as regular exercise, drinking adequate water, and a sensible diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables and not too much sugary food.

Menopausal symptoms may last for some months or some years but will ultimately resolve.



*Do symptoms warrant intervention?*



Getting infants used to new tastes needs persistence

## Toddler Feeding & Nutrition

Like the rest of us, toddlers develop likes and dislikes with foods. They will be getting most of their nutrition from solids and much less from milk. By 12 months many can put food from their hands to their mouth, and by 15 months many can drink from a cup or use a straw.

True medical problems with feeding are rare. The time for concern is if a toddler is not steadily gaining weight (they do gain it more slowly than babies to age one), or if there is ongoing diarrhoea. True food allergies are not that common.

Most 'battles' over feeding are to do with tastes. It is important to offer toddlers a variety of foods and not 'give in' to refusal. You will quickly get a feel for his or her preferences. Use your judgment to guide food choices without having battles at mealtime. If a toddler is not hungry sometimes, you do not need to stress about mealtimes.



### Recipe for health



### ROAST CAPSICUM SOUP

#### INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 1 tablespoon extra light virgin olive oil
- 1 large brown onion, peeled, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
- 500g potatoes, peeled, roughly chopped
- 270g jar chargrilled capsicum, drained, chopped
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 3 cups chicken stock
- Pepper to season
- 1/4 cup fresh coriander leaves, finely sliced.
- Sprinkle of Parmesan cheese

#### METHOD

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring for 3 minutes or until onion has softened. Add capsicum, tomato and potato. Cook, stirring for 5 minutes. Add chicken stock. Season with pepper. Cover and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until potato is tender. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly. Add coriander and blend with either a hand blender or potato masher, in batches, until smooth. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Serve with slightly roasted Turkish bread.

### WORD SEARCH



Alcohol	Doctor	Illness	Prostate
Autism	Ear	Iron	Rash
Bowel	Fatigue	Meningitis	Sleep
Caffeine	Fluent	Menopause	Stress
Cancer	Foot	Mouth	Taste
Communicate	Genetic	Noise	Thyroid
Cough	Gland	Ovary	Toddler
Diarrhoea	Hand	Pelvic	Viral
Disability	Hormone	Polyp	Weight



## Laughter the Best Medicine

### Some fun one-liners...

- When a woman says, "What?", it's not because she didn't hear you. She's giving you a chance to change what you said.
- I know a bloke who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.

- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I can't put it down.
- They told me I had type A blood, but it was a Type O.
- A dyslexic man walks into a bra.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- What does a clock do when it's hungry? It goes back four seconds.