

APRIL-MAY 2015

Your next appointment:

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> Shin splints



> Memory Loss



> Asbestos Exposure



> Puberty – Normal or Not?



Enjoy this free newsletter

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)

● PRACTICE DOCTORS

- Dr Peter Drake
- Dr Michael Stagg
- Dr Vincent Griffith
- Dr Lidia Grossman
- Dr Elizabeth Orbach
- Dr Maryallan Girolami
- Dr Emily McMullin
- Dr Catherine Stackpole

● PSYCHOLOGIST

Mr John Boyle

● PRACTICE STAFF

**Practice Manager:** Jill Franklin

**Practice Nurses:** Kay, Gail & Vivian

**Reception Staff:** Colleen, Leeanda, Fiona, Sue, Sushila, Jarret & Anthea

If you have any feedback – positive or negative that you would like to bring to our attention, please approach either your Doctor or Practice Manager.

If you prefer to make your concerns known outside the surgery, you can call the Office of the Health Services Commissioner on 8601 5200.

● SURGERY HOURS

Monday to Thursday ..... 8.30am – 7pm  
 Friday..... 8.30am – 6pm  
 Saturday ..... 9am – 12noon

● EMERGENCY

Phone ambulance service – **000**.  
 Monash Medical Centre  
 246 Clayton Rd, Clayton  
**9594 6666**

● AFTERHOURS

For non-emergency after hours home visits, please ring the normal surgery number (**9563 9411**) and you will be put through to the JFMP Locum Service.

Health brochures on various topics are available on request.

● APPOINTMENTS

Our doctors see patients by appointment. You can make an appointment with your doctor by telephoning the surgery or at our front reception desk.

At the time of making your appointment, please advise the reception staff if you feel you may require an extended appointment (eg. Pap smears, medical report, to discuss multiple issues, surgical procedures etc).

Appointments are normally made at 15 minute intervals, this is the time you can normally expect to spend with your doctor. This may change if there has been an emergency or if the surgery is very busy.

In rare circumstances delays may be encountered leading to prolonged waiting times. Our reception staff will advise you if this is the case. We apologise for the inconvenience this may cause.

Unfortunately, your doctor may be delayed by emergencies, arrangement of urgent admissions to hospital and essential longer consultations which are often unpredictable.

We are aware that your time is valuable and always endeavour to minimise waiting times.

**Online Appointments.** Book your next appointment online. Just go to our website “[www.jasperfamilymedical.com.au](http://www.jasperfamilymedical.com.au)” click the BOOK NOW tab and follow the prompts OR download the FREE “App” for your smartphone or tablet to make it even easier to book online.

● SPECIAL PRACTICE INFORMATION

**Announcing:** We would like to welcome Dr Catherine Stackpole who will be joining our practice February, 2015.

**Repeat prescriptions.** If you find it necessary to request a prescription prior to consulting your doctor, a minimum of 48 hours is needed. To avoid any errors, we also require a written request with your name, address, name and dose of medication clearly indicated.

**Telephoning your doctor.** Although most problems are best dealt with in consultation, a doctor will always be available during normal surgery hours for emergency advice.

**Home Visits.** Requests for house calls are best made before 10am. Please remember however that house visits should only be requested if the patient is too unwell to attend the surgery for consultation.

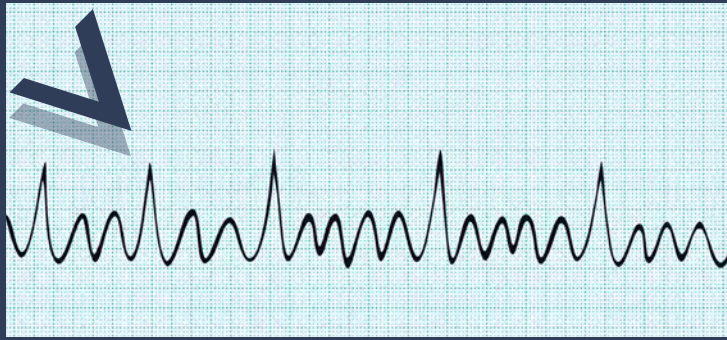
Visits can also be arranged for patients in Residential Aged Care Facilities.

**Fees.** We have displayed at Reception a list of current Private billing fees.

**Patient Test Results.** If your doctor orders any tests for you, please remember that it is your responsibility to follow-up these results, particularly when practice staff or your doctor requests you to do so. Please ask reception staff about the best way for you to do this.



▷ **Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.**



## Atrial Fibrillation

Our hearts beat over 100,000 times a day, mostly in a regular fashion, because the heart's electrical pacemaker sends an amazing electric signal each beat for the heart muscles to contract and pump blood.

During arrhythmias the heart beats irregularly. In atrial fibrillation (AF), the top two heart chambers can beat very fast in an un-coordinated way, which distorts the electrical message to the rest of the heart. The contractions of the heart become less efficient and the body knows it.

Typical symptoms include palpitations, shortness of breath, fluttering of the heart, dizziness and sometimes fainting. The fast and irregular heart beat of AF affects about 2% of people overall and 10% of those over age 75. Contributing factors include high blood pressure, established heart disease, trauma to the chest and certain drugs such as caffeine and alcohol.

Your doctor will take a history and physical examination. Diagnosis can be made with plain ECG test or if the AF is intermittent, a holter monitor (a 24-hour ECG).

Treatment with medication slows the heart rate and makes the beat more effective and regular. Prescribed blood thinners may decrease the risk of stroke from AF. Cardioversion (electric shock therapy) can jolt the heart out of AF and back to normal. In severe cases surgery (ablation) is an option.

Lifestyle changes like quitting smoking, reducing alcohol and caffeine, attaining a health weight and regular exercise all help to prevent and manage AF.



Web link [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) search 'atrial fibrillation'

## Memory Loss

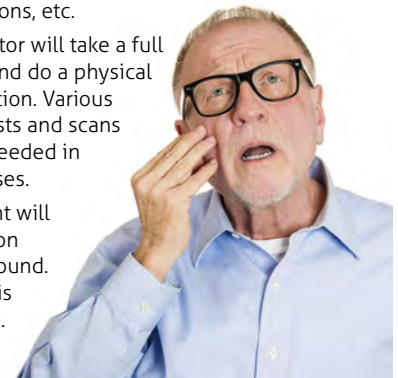
Potential loss of memory scares a lot of ageing people. We rely on memories, but have limited understand about how memory is maintained or lost. Memory may be short or long term. We may remember a phone number for a few minutes while other things we remember for a lifetime, often triggered by emotions, music or scents.

Memory loss may be temporary or permanent, limited in time, and limited to particular things or generalised. Some memory loss comes with ageing so it is normal for us to take longer to remember certain things. The brain is thought to "prioritise" memory so some memories we regard as less important or needed less often are "archived". There are many websites that encourage people to use their brains more ('use it or lose it!').

Memory loss together with loss of other brain (cognitive) functions is more serious. Doctors can test for dementia like Alzheimer's but remember there are some other treatable causes of memory loss – low vitamin B 12, under active thyroid, depression or anxiety, some medications, etc.

Your doctor will take a full history and do a physical examination. Various blood tests and scans will be needed in many cases.

Treatment will depend on what is found. Support is available.



Web link <https://fightdementia.org.au>



## Shin Splints

'Shin splints' are common in runners and those who play sports involving running and rapid acceleration. The exact cause is not known but is thought to be due to repeated stress on the shinbone and its attaching connective tissue. It is more common in females and in those with a previous leg injury and also more likely in those running often on hard or uneven surfaces.

The typical symptom is pain in the shin with running. There may be swelling too. At first, the pain starts at the beginning of a run and eases after warm up but then pain persists for longer and can even continue after ceasing exercise.

Diagnosis is from the story as there is no diagnostic test. X-rays (or rarely an MRI scan) may be done to rule out other causes such as a stress fracture.

Treatment aims to relieve symptoms – ice

packs and simple painkillers, along with rest and avoiding activity that worsens the pain. However you don't need to stop all exercise. Swimming or walking in water are two options to maintain fitness.

Attention to training techniques is helpful in some cases. Use of orthotics or insoles may also help as can change of shoes. For the more serious athlete, having a biomechanical assessment of their running style may lead to technique changes that are beneficial.



Web link [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

# Asbestos – the 3rd Wave of Exposure

Asbestos importation and use in Australia has been banned for some years. Before this, hundreds of occupations including manufacturing, construction, ship building and mining were affected. Asbestos was included in many construction products that home renovators can now be exposed to. It is how we disturb asbestos products that can create the tiny fibres that when inhaled can cause cancer (mesothelioma) 20 or 30 years later.

From carpet underlay to fencing, asbestos products can create risk. Houses built before 1988 are most likely to contain asbestos materials. Undisturbed asbestos cement materials are not a problem while the fibres are bound together.

Chest x-ray has led to a greater understanding of the conditions associated with asbestos, such as mesothelioma, lung cancer, asbestosis and pleural plaques, and how they progress.

Asbestosis causes lung damage, is not a cancer, and can be managed medically.

Asbestos exposure at least doubles the risk of developing lung cancer, independent of risk from smoking. Work in the USA showed that annual screening with low dose CT scanning reduced lung cancer



mortality in high risk cigarette smokers. This has led to a trial of this screening method for mesothelioma, in place of a plain x-ray, knowing that 0.7% of those with prior asbestos exposure may have an early stage lung tumour, without warning symptoms. The hope is that early detection will improve cancer survival.

If you think you have had prior exposure to asbestos, discuss what to do with your doctor.



## Puberty – Normal or Not?

We think of puberty as the start of children becoming adults but technically it is the development of the capacity to reproduce (sexual maturation). Some 95% of children start puberty between the ages of eight and 14 (girls) or nine and 14 (boys) and it goes on for about three or four years. What actually starts it, nobody knows.

Rapid growth often accompanies changes in the appearance of sexual organs. Emotional changes are common too. Parents often worry about their daughters' first periods, which usually start about two years before breasts develop. In boys, they may worry about a late puberty and short stature before the usual growth spurt. Knowing what is normal, helps.

The appearance of pubic hair does not indicate the onset of puberty. It comes from an increase in androgens (male sex hormones) by the adrenal gland – a separate process that may happen up to two years before puberty.

Precocious (or abnormally early) puberty is signalled by breast development (girls) and enlarged testes (boys) before the age of eight or nine, respectively. It warrants a medical check. So does puberty delayed to age 14.

Many of the problems of puberty are about changes in the adolescent's life than about puberty itself. Have a chat with your doctor about supporting your child or about any concerns you have. An x-ray for bone age and blood tests may be required.



## Menstrual Problems in Female Athletes

Three things to watch out for in female athletes are low energy, minor menstrual problems and low bone density. Without early intervention, the periods can stop (amenorrhoea), anorexia develop (an eating disorder) and serious thinning of the bones occur (osteoporosis).

Menstrual irregularities are common in female athletes – almost all elite gymnasts, ballet dancers and light weight rowers, and less so in team sports, swimming and cycling.

Factors include diet (inadequate or weight loss diets), "excessive" exercise, altered hormone levels and psychological stress, all of which can affect the brain's regulation of periods. And being biologically prone can make things worse.

We know that reducing energy intake (food) by just 30%, while continuing exercise, can alter periods within five days!

Because about 70-80% of a woman's final bone density is formed during adolescence and peaks in their 20's, preventing thinning of the bones in athletes is important to prevent later stress fractures and premature osteoporosis.

Is further investigation necessary? Ask your doctor. Periods that don't develop by age 16 or stop for six months, are strong warnings. Taking the combined oral contraceptive pill can help as can the assistance from others such as a psychologist or dietician.



## LAUGHTER the Best Medicine

- A mate of mine recently admitted to being addicted to brake fluid. When I quizzed him on it he reckoned he could stop any time....
- I was at an ATM yesterday when a little old lady asked if I could check her balance, so I pushed her over.
- The wife was counting all the 5c's and 10c's out on the kitchen table when she suddenly got very angry and started shouting and crying for no reason. I thought to myself, "She's going through the change."

### SUDOKU Solution

9	6	8	2	7	1	3	4	9
9	2	7	4	8	6	1	9	5
4	1	6	9	6	7	8	7	2
3	8	3	1	2	2	1	2	8
8	4	7	6	7	6	5	4	9
1	7	2	2	2	2	1	4	7
6	9	6	3	8	9	1	4	7
3	6	5	9	1	4	7	2	2
4	9	8	3	2	7	5	6	1
7	2	1	6	4	5	3	8	8

# SUDOKU

				4	5	9	3	
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	3		2	5			4	
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9			7				8	
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6		3					9	

## Questions to Ask Others...

What are "shin splints"?

How old are homes that present most risk to home renovators?

What happens when the heart beats irregularly?

Memory decline may not mean dementia. How can your doctor help?

## Jasper Family Medical Practice

### ● ALLIED HEALTH ON CENTRE

Website address:  
www.alliedhealthoncentre.com.au

- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Psychology
- Massage Therapy
- Exercise Physiology
- Dietetics
- Traditional Chinese Medicine/ Acupuncture. NOW available at 443 Centre Road, Bentleigh. Phone: 9557 1700 for appointments.
- Melbourne Pathology available at 443 Centre Road, Bentleigh

### ● OTHER SERVICES OFFERED

- Travel Immunisations (including Yellow Fever)
- Minor Surgery
- Immunisations
- Child Health
- Women's Health
- Men's Health
- Accidents & urgent conditions

### ● BULK BILLING AVAILABLE FOR:

- CURRENT HCC holders
- Pensioners
- DVA card holders
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders
- Children Under 16

### ● SPECIAL PRACTICE INFORMATION

**Medical Records.** 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.

**Reminder Systems.** Our practice participates in national/state reminder systems/registers, in conjunction with internal reminder systems.

## WINTER VEGETABLE SOUP

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 brown onions or 1 leek, trimmed, halved, washed & thinly sliced
- 1 red capsicum, finely chopped
- 4 shortcut rindless bacon rashers, chopped
- 1 medium zucchini, halved lengthways & chopped
- 1 medium carrot, peeled & finely chopped
- 1 Desiree potato (about 250gms), peeled & finely chopped
- 3 celery stalks, finely chopped
- ½ cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 400gm can diced tomatoes
- 1 litre vegetable or beef stock
- 1 cup dried mini penne pasta or risoni
- ¼ chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 cup canned red kidney beans, rinsed
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 cups water
- Salt & freshly ground pepper
- Grated parmesan

### METHOD

Saute the onions, capsicum & add bacon. Cook bacon until golden brown.

## Recipe for health



Add diced vegetables. Cook until vegetables start to brown, stirring occasionally.

Add tomato, stock and water. Cover & bring to boil.

Reduce heat and simmer for approx 30 mins – until vegies are just tender.

Add risoni or pasta and kidney beans. Season. Simmer uncovered until risoni/pasta is tender.

Sprinkle with grated parmesan & chopped basil and serve with crusty bread.

