



FREE TO TAKE HOME!

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Online appointment bookings are available on our website: www.topendmedicalcentre.com.au



Connecting with teenagers



Children at the beach



Tips for travellers



Chlamydia the hidden STI

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT:

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

● **PRACTICE DOCTORS**

Dr Marilou Capati

Dr Nolasco Capati

Dr Satbir Aulakh

Dr Kris Piyadasa

Dr Emad Rizkalla

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Dr Edna Gadil

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Dr Josie Bourne

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● **PRACTICE STAFF**

General Manager:

Jackie Brandner

Office Manager:

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Nursing Staff:

Sandra, Rhea & Paris

Reception Staff:

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Health Assistant:

Amanda

● **SURGERY HOURS**

Monday to Friday8am - 9pm

Saturday and Sunday.....9am - 6pm

Public Holiday.....10am - 4pm

● **AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY**

After hours please call: **0432 965 671** and you will be put directly through to our on-call doctor. In a medical emergency call **000** and ask for an ambulance.

● **PRACTICE SERVICES**

- Antenatal Management With Gp Shared Care
- Minor Surgery
- Onsite Pathology Centre For Your Convenience
- Travel Advice
- Fitness To Drive Assessments
- Men's Health Clinics
- Corporate Health Checks
- Vaccinations
- Asthma Management
- Health Clinic
- Women's Health Clinics
- Audiometry
- Minor Surgical Procedures – Suturing Of Lacerations & Removal Of Cysts
- Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Health Management & Care Plans
- Chronic Disease Management & Care Plans
- Workers Compensation Medical Management
- Mental Health Management & Care Plans

● **BILLING ARRANGEMENTS**

We direct-bill Medicare. Please bring your Medicare card to your appointment. A small fee may be charged for procedures, dressings and vaccines, to cover costs. Payment can be made by cash, credit card or EFTPOS.

● **APPOINTMENTS**

Consultation is by appointment. Urgent cases are seen on the day.

Booking a long appointment is important for more complex problems – insurance medical, health review, counselling, a second opinion, etc. This may involve a longer wait. Please bring all relevant information.

Please notify us if you are unable to attend an appointment, well in advance.

If more than one person from your family wishes to see the doctor at the same time, please ensure a separate appointment is made for each family member.

Time is valuable to all of us. If you fail to attend appointments without adequate explanation, we cannot guarantee your future booked appointments.



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

Connecting with your teenager

The teenage stereotype of a monosyllabic adolescent behind a slammed-shut bedroom door has some validity but it is far from the whole story. Adolescence is a time of change, physically, mentally emotionally and socially. The transition from child to adult is not always easy. In this era of social media and smart phones, there are additional pressures.

Parents often lament that their teenagers do not listen, and they may be right. However, communication is a two-way street. This means listening is as important (possibly more so) than talking to your teens. We know that teenagers (despite what they may say) still want guidance and parental support. While outwardly they may claim to know it all, deep down there is still insecurity.

Seek out common interests. Talk about topics they raise. Be prepared to talk when they are ready to open up about a situation (even if you are doing something else). Be opportunistic. When driving to school or other places, you have a captive audience. This can be a good time to talk. Aim to sit down for dinner with your teen at least a few times a week. Talk around the dinner table can be revealing. No matter how many times the answer is nothing much, ask about their day, every day.

Communication is the key to connecting. Ask your own parents how they coped with you. Talk to your doctor about any concerns you have about your teenager. ■



Children at the beach

The summer holiday is the perfect opportunity to get children away from electronic devices and into the outdoors. While we want children to play safely and avoid injury, we need to recognise that a grazed knee is not a major drama.

Compared to previous generations, most public playgrounds are remarkably safe. The modern synthetic surfaces cushion falls and equipment is designed with safety in mind. However, there is no substitute for watching your children.

Older children can be left more to play independently but younger children need a watchful eye. There is much to be said for parents and carers playing with them, which gives the adults some exercise too.

Trampolines are fun but children need instruction on how to use them safely. Once more, design is far better than in the past. Bicycles are a popular Christmas present and learning to ride a bike is still a childhood joy. While falling off when starting is impossible to avoid, wearing a bike helmet and offering physical support can minimise major damage.

Running and ball games are fun in summer. It is important for children to wear appropriate footwear and, where applicable, safety equipment.

Injury risk can be minimised but not eliminated. Fortunately, most play-related injuries will be minor. Talk to your doctor about any concerns you have. ■



Tips for travellers

Travel vaccinations are important considerations before travelling, but most of the health issues people face on their travels can't be vaccinated against. Insurance claim statistics suggest that people experience similar health issues travelling as they do at home – chest or sinus infections, viruses, gastro, cuts and bruises and more serious ones like heart attack and broken bones from trauma.

Talk with your doctor before travelling. Your own medical circumstances may make certain itineraries problematic. Make sure you take adequate supply of any regular medications you have been prescribed. A letter from your doctor listing them can be helpful at airport security.

You don't need a suitcase full of first aid supplies but a kit of location-relevant basics can be helpful. Having a simple pain killer, anti-diarrhoeal and antihistamine in your kit can cover many issues that may arise. Simple band aids and antiseptic may save a trip to a medical facility.

In many countries, you should only drink bottled water. Beware for salads and fruits that might be washed in local water. Eat mainly cooked vegetables and fruits which are peeled (e.g. banana).

Be aware of local customs and laws. Ask if there are areas to avoid. If you are driving make sure you have insurance. This may be separate to travel insurance, which is also a must, and less expensive than you might think.

Holidays should be fun, and with some simple precautions they can remain so. ■

Getting on top of Impetigo

Impetigo is a skin infection caused by common bacteria (staphylococcus and streptococcus).

It is more common in children, as the name school sores suggests, but it can also affect adults. The bacteria can live quietly on the skin but minor grazes or other disruptions of the skin's surface can allow infection to set in. It is not a reflection of poor hygiene.

The condition is not serious but is unsightly and very contagious. It often starts with redness which quickly develops into sore blisters which may weep or develop crusts. It can spread from point to point around the body.

Diagnosis is generally on the appearance. Sometimes your doctor may suggest a swab test to confirm the type of bacteria.

Treatment is topical antiseptic and often an antibiotic. It is important to keep your child away from other children. Wash the child's clothes, bedding and towels in hot water and a germicidal washing agent. Avoid sharing towels.

Encourage hand washing but discourage scratching the sores and cover them if necessary. The sores will heal in a few days without permanent scarring. ■



 **Weblink:** <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/impetigo-school-sores>



Chlamydia the hidden STI

The commonest sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Australia is Chlamydia with the number of cases rising over the past 20 years, particularly in the 15-25 age group. Both sexes are equally affected and it is very treatable.

Common symptoms are burning with passing urine and a discharge from the genitals. Women may experience lower abdomen or pelvic pain. Often the symptoms are mild which emerge between one and three weeks after exposure. Many people don't have any symptoms at all.

Diagnosis is by urine or swab testing and, generally, a full STI check will be done which involves a urine and blood test.

Treatment is with antibiotics. If chlamydia is confirmed then a repeat test will be needed about three weeks later to ensure the infection has cleared up. It is a notifiable infectious disease, so cases are reported to the WA Health Department.

The other critical part of treatment is contact tracing. If you have been diagnosed with Chlamydia, you need to notify sexual partners as they will also need treatment.

Left untreated Chlamydia can lead to infertility, which is why screening is recommended if you are sexually active. Prevention is relatively simple although not 100%. Always practise safe sex and use protection to reduce the chances of getting chlamydia and other STIs.

Don't be scared of raising concerns with your doctor. They will have dealt with this issue often. And, remember, it is a common condition, you may have no symptoms and it is treatable. ■

 **Weblink:** <https://www.sexualhealthaustralia.com.au/chlamydia1.html>



Jellyfish

While shark attacks make headlines, there are other creatures in the water that can cause us problems when swimming. These are many and varied and influenced by season and where on the coastline you are.

Most jellyfish stings are not serious but can be itchy or painful. However, tropical marine stingers found across Northern Australia can cause swimmers serious reactions and even death.

There are ways to minimise the chances of getting stung: Always swim between the red and yellow flags and inside stinger nets (where provided). Don't enter the water if beaches are closed. Look for and obey safety signs.

If a person is stung by a marine stinger they will need first aid. Apply vinegar to the sting area. Call for the lifeguard and seek urgent medical attention.

Stings by less toxic jellyfish can be treated firstly by removing the sting. You can use simple analgesia for pain, antihistamine for itching and soothing creams. ■

 **Weblink:** <https://beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety/tropical-stingers>



Ingredients:

- Smoked salmon
- Salted capers
- Fresh dill
- Red onion, thinly sliced in half rings
- Horseradish relish
- Dijon mustard
- Egg mayonnaise

For Blinis:

- (makes 30+)
- 2 cups SR flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 egg, beaten
- Pinch of salt
- ½ cup finely grated parmesan
- 1 tblspn finely grated parsley
- Milk as needed

Method:

To make horseradish cream: add 1 tblspn horseradish relish, 1 tspn

Dijon mustard to 1 cup of egg mayo (homemade or quality shop-bought). Adjust quantities to your own taste.

To make blinis: Sift flour and baking soda together. Add salt. Make a well and add egg. Mix to combine then add milk to create a thick batter. Add parmesan. Let stand until bubbles start appearing on the surface of the batter.

Heat a frypan or griddle to about 170C, spray with cooking oil and add heaped teaspoons of batter leaving room for a little spread. When bubbles appear on the top of the blini, turn and cook other side.

Continue until all the mixture is used (leftovers can freeze)

To assemble: Spread horseradish cream on blini, add a portion of smoked salmon and top with a caper and a sprig of dill.

CHRISTMAS COLOUR FUN!



● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

Referrals. Doctors in this practice are competent at handling common health problems. When necessary, they can use opinions from Specialists. You can discuss this openly with your doctor, including potential out of pocket expenses.

Patient Feedback. We welcome your comments or suggestions. Please feel free to talk to your GP or the Practice Manager regarding any issues. If you prefer, you can contact Health and Community Services Complaints Commission. T: (08) 8999 1969 Toll Free: 1800 004 474

Despite our best intentions, we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected urgent attention. Thank you for your consideration.

Communication. A doctor is available during normal surgery hours for emergency advice. Our staff are experienced in deciding the appropriate response to any phone request.

Test Results. Results are reviewed by the doctors and acted on in a timely manner, with your health in mind. We will contact you if necessary.

Patient Privacy. This practice protects your personal health information to ensure it is only available to authorised staff members for the intended purposes and to comply with the Privacy Act. To obtain a copy of our Privacy Statement or your medical records, please ask.

Reminder system. Because our practice is committed to preventive care, we may send you an occasional reminder regarding health services appropriate to your care. If you wish to opt out of this, please let us know.

