

FREE TO TAKE HOME!

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2020 EDITION



Covid update



Bell's Palsy



Asthma in children



Children's Night terrors

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 Marc Herington
- Dr Kirsten Scott
- Dr Damien Polioudakis
- Dr Bree Latta
- Dr Leah Watts
- Dr Christopher Kearney
- Dr Jane Karmouche
- Dr Gillian Porter
- Dr Timothy Johnston
- Dr Tina Ling
- Dr Charles Aitken

● REGISTERED PRACTICE NURSE

- Lorianna Marchese
- ON SITE PROFESSIONALS
- Dr Rebecca Johnson.....Podiatrist
- Jennifer Donnelly Dietitian

● OTHER SERVICES

- Docklands Cosmetic Clinic
- For all appointments phone:
0419 22 44 91
- Dorevitch Pathology
- Monday – Friday..... 8am – 4.30pm
(No appointment required)

● SURGERY HOURS

- Monday – Friday
8am – 6pm
(by appointment)
- Saturday
9am – 12 midday
(by appointment)

● AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY

If you require medical attention outside of normal surgery hours, Victoria Harbour Medical Centre provides out-of-hours care via the National Home Doctor Service. They can be contacted on:
13 SICK (13 7425) or call **9629 1414** for a recorded message.
If an extreme emergency dial: **000 (triple zero)**

▷ Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.

● BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

Fees are payable at the time of consultation by cash or credit card. The AMA fee structure forms the basis of our billing policy and is displayed in the reception area of the surgery. Repatriation patients will be bulk billed.

● RECALL SYSTEM

Our practice is now using a secure mobile phone messaging service via HealthEngine recalls. Instead of receiving a letter in the mail, you will now receive a SMS recall or reminder notification on your mobile device. Please contact the practice for more information.

● APPOINTMENTS

We run by appointments, but emergencies will always be given priority. We request that all come to the reception desk on arrival. If you have a complex problem or are new to the practice, please request a double appointment. Unfortunately at times your doctor may be delayed due to emergencies or complicated medical problems. We realize your time is valuable and always endeavour to minimize waiting times.

● ON-LINE APPOINTMENT BOOKING

For existing and new patients our practice offers on-line appointments. **This service is available via our website, app and HealthEngine.**

● HOME VISITS

Victoria Harbour Medical Centre home visits can be arranged within normal opening hours if a patient is too ill to attend the Medical Centre and where it is safe and reasonable. The patient must be a regular patient of the practice and live within a 5km radius of the practice. All home visits will only be booked at the discretion of the doctor, whose decision will be final.

● TELEPHONE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Doctors in this practice may be contacted during normal surgery hours. If the doctor is with a patient, a message will be taken. Your call will always be put through in the event of an emergency. Communication via email is kept to a minimal and is conducted with appropriate regard to the privacy and confidentiality of the patient's health information. The GP will determine that this is clinically safe and that a face-to-face consultation is unnecessary for that patient.

● PATHOLOGY TESTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Test results are generally available within 2-3 days of the test being performed. Some blood tests can take considerably longer. Results are downloaded electronically to our doctors by our preferred pathology and imaging providers. Attending other pathology or imaging providers can cause further delays. Urgent results will be notified to you by your doctor as soon as possible. Other results are available by arrangement with the ordering doctor. Each of our doctors have their own preferred methods for notifying results. If you urgently require results it is advised to make an appointment with the ordering doctor.

● PATIENT FEEDBACK

Your satisfaction is important to us. If you feel you have an idea of areas where we can improve, please complete our patient feedback form and place it in the suggestion box which is located at reception. If you have a complaint, please discuss this with your Doctor or Practice Manager. If your complaint was not resolved please take the matter to the Health Complaints Commissioner: Phone: 1300 582 113 or email: hsc@health.vic.gov.au

Covid update

Many have become almost punch drunk from the relentless media coverage of Covid19. This can make it hard to see any positives and that Australia has done remarkably well- notwithstanding that the response has also created difficulties for many – especially in Victoria.

Initial predictions of shortages of hospital beds and ventilators have not come to pass. Actual fatalities have been far lower than first feared. The average age of death from the virus is 82, which is the average life expectancy in Australia. The vast majority of those with Covid19 have recovered fully. Many had minimal or no symptoms.

On the plus side, influenza cases were down by 80-90% compared to usual winters and with this a big drop in fatalities from this.

As we look towards 2021 and the likelihood of having to live with the virus, we can learn from countries like France which have had far more cases than Australia but figured out ways to open up. We have learned the importance of staying home when not well and the importance of good hygiene such as hand washing and physical distancing.

Separation from loved ones has reminded us about the importance of family, friends and connection. We will appreciate more than ever family who we have not seen for months.

Times have been and remain challenging, and the end may not be obvious yet. An old Buddhist saying "this too shall pass" is apt.



Hot flushes in menopause

Menopause literally means cessation of periods. It is not a "disease" but a normal part of life, however it can be distressing.

For most women, it occurs around the age of 50 give or take a few years. Some may have early menopause (younger than 40) and menopause also starts if the ovaries are removed surgically for any reason. Symptoms range from mild to severe. They include tiredness, sleep disturbances, loss of libido, vaginal dryness, irregular periods, hot flushes and night sweats. These symptoms may persist for weeks to a few years (occasionally longer). In the years leading up to 2002, most women were treated with hormone replacement (HRT) upon reaching menopause. This changed when a major study showed that the risks of cancer and heart disease were increased with HRT, and the benefits did not justify its use.

Generally, the diagnosis can be made

on symptoms. Testing of hormone levels can be confirmatory.

Treatment is not necessarily needed and depends on symptoms. Lifestyle measures of regular exercise, adequate sleep, managing stress, not smoking and eating a sensible diet all help with a feeling of wellbeing.

Hot flushes can be helped by dressing in layers, avoiding triggers if known (alcohol, caffeine and stress are three common ones) and drinking cold water. Herbal remedies such as red clover, primrose oil and St Johns wort help some women. Low dose antidepressants and clonidine (a blood pressure medication) can be used.

Hormone replacement can be prescribed but is now recommended at lower doses and for a shorter period of time.



<https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-information/menopause-information/managing-menopause/>



Bell's Palsy

This causes weakness of the facial muscles. It can occur at any age but is rare in children.

Your smile becomes one sided, and it can be hard to close your eye or wrinkle the forehead on the affected side. It can be "full" whereby the muscles are fully paralysed or partial where limited movement remains.

The cause is unknown but thought to be due to inflammation of the facial nerve, which controls movements of facial muscles. It can be related to a viral illness.

The onset is fairly sudden. The weakness can develop over a few hours up to a day or so.

There are other causes of facial weakness, so see your doctor promptly.

Diagnosis is by examination of the facial muscles by your doctor. No specific tests are needed.

There is no specific treatment. Sometimes courses of steroids are prescribed, but they are not a cure and can have side effects. Discuss this with your doctor.

In the vast majority of cases, recovery is full within three to six months and starts within days of onset. Regaining muscle function can be helped by massage and "exercising" of the facial muscles. If you can't close your eye then protecting it with a pad is important, especially at night. The eye can dry out, so use lubricating eye drops. Generally, Bells Palsy is not painful, but simple analgesics can be used if it is.

Recurrence is possible but uncommon.



Asthma in children

It is estimated that one in five children may be diagnosed with asthma. It can range from very mild through to severe.

Some children have symptoms all year round while others only in certain circumstances (e.g. a viral illness or when exposed to irritants like dust or grass). Uncontrolled asthma can be fatal, but it can be very successfully managed and controlled with medication. Children with asthma can live a completely normal life and do not need to be restricted in their sporting or other activities.

Typical symptoms include a wheeze and cough. In more severe cases, there may be chest tightness and shortness of breath. Diagnosis is by the history of symptoms and examination of the lungs. Lung function testing is helpful but can be normal when asthma is quiescent.

Asthma is generally treated with

inhalers. Preventers are used on a regular basis to treat the underlying inflammation in the airways and the symptom relievers as needed. In severe cases, oral steroids may be used in short bursts.

The rationale of treatment is to use the lowest dose necessary to control the condition. Thus the doses used are not constant throughout the year.

For parents, the keys are recognising the pattern of your child's asthma, the usual triggers and the symptoms. As part of this, it is important to have an asthma plan (available from the National Asthma Council).

Have your child checked regularly by your GP and seek urgent medical attention if there is any worsening of the condition.



<https://www.nationalasthma.org.au/health-professionals/asthma-action-plans>



<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/asthma-in-children>

Children's Nightmares & Night terrors

We have no control over dreams. Coming from our subconscious, they can be pleasant, neutral or frightening.

On awakening, adults instantly realise they were having a dream. For young children, the lines can be blurred, and dreams can seem very real.

A night terror is a nightmare for a child. Although sound asleep, the child may roll around, cry or scream out in distress. This can start literally from one minute to the next. In turn, it is distressing for parents.

There is no known cause. Foods are not thought to play a part. In school-age children, stress or worry may be a factor but not necessarily. A virus (especially with fever) may make them more likely.

Night terrors usually last 5-15 minutes. They may occur multiple times at night and may persist for some weeks or be occasional.

There is no specific treatment. As it is just a dream, it cannot cause any harm, either physical or mental. Once awake, the child tends to forget they ever had the dream. Do not wake the child. If they do wake provide comfort and reassurance.

Having a regular night-time routine and ensuring adequate sleep can reduce the chances of night terrors. As children age, they effectively disappear. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about any aspect of your child's sleep.



http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/night_terrors.html



● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

Victoria Harbour Medical Centre is located at 850 Collins Street with the entrance via Merchant Street next to Victoria Harbour Pharmacy and opposite Woolworths.

Providing a full range of General Practice services, the Victoria Harbour Medical Centre is committed to providing Melbourne's waterfront community with quality and friendly medical care.

Victoria Harbour Medical Centre offers a range of services to our wider community including:

- General Medicine
- Women's Health
- Men's Health
- Chronic Disease Management
- Mental Health
- Minor Surgery
- Travel Medicine

Our doctors are fully qualified Gps and fellows of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. The practice also serves an important teaching function, as a placement for Registrars in their final year of Specialists and General Practice training.

● **ANTENATAL SHARED CARE**

Dr Kirsten Scott, Dr Jane Karmouche, Dr Gillian Porter & Dr Tina Ling are accredited Maternity Care Affiliates who work in collaboration with The Royal women's Hospital for Antenatal Shared Care.

For more information on this service, please visit our website or contact the practice.

● **PRACTICE PRIVACY POLICY**

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 staff.



CHICKEN AND PRAWN PAD THAI

Ingredients

- 125g dried rice stick noodles, broken in half
- 1 tbs sunflower oil
- 200g chicken thigh fillets, cut into 2cm pieces
- 8 large green prawns, peeled, deveined
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 100g bean sprouts
- 1/2 bunch garlic chives (substitute chives), cut into 3cm pieces
- Chopped roasted peanuts and lime wedges, to serve

Pad Thai Sauce

- 2 tsp sunflower oil
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 small red chillies, thinly sliced
- 1 tbs finely grated palm sugar or brown sugar
- 2 1/2 tbs tamarind puree (from Asian food shops and selected supermarkets)
- 1 tbs fish sauce
- 1 tsp light soy sauce

Recipe Preparation

1. Cook noodles according to packet instructions. Drain and rinse under cold water. Set aside.
2. For the pad Thai sauce, heat oil in a wok over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and chilli, and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the sugar, tamarind, fish sauce, soy sauce and 2 tbs water, and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer and cook for 2-3 minutes or until reduced slightly. Transfer to a small heatproof bowl and set aside.
3. Wipe wok clean and add oil. Add chicken and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5-6 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Push chicken to one side of wok and add prawn to empty side. Cook, turning halfway, for 2-3 minutes or until pink and just cooked through. Push prawn to one side with chicken and add egg to empty side. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until just set.
4. Add bean sprouts, garlic chives, cooked noodles and pad Thai sauce, and cook, tossing together, for 2-3 minutes or until heated through.
5. Divide between bowls and serve immediately, sprinkled with roasted peanuts and with lime wedges on side.

SUDOKU

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