

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2015

Your next appointment:



> Swimmer's Ear (otitis externa)



> Pet Infections



> Domestic Abuse



> Managing Sun Damaged Skin



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 Russell Wiseman

Asthma & Respiratory Medicine

Dr Joe de Jager

All aspects of General Practice

Dr Greg Beak

Geriatrics, Skin Diseases, Travel Medicine & Cardiovascular Medicine

Dr Karen Sander

Sport, Sexual Health and Emergency Medicine

Dr Mason Stevenson

Mens Health, Skin Cancers & Musculoskeletal Medicine

Practice doctors are experienced in the broad range of health problems affecting all age groups.

● PRACTICE MANAGER

Heather

● PRACTICE NURSES

Jennine, Lyn & Lizzy

● RECEPTION STAFF

Leona, Anne & Gwen

● SURGERY HOURS

Monday – Friday8.00am – 5.30pm

Saturday8.30am – 11.30pm

● AFTERHOURS & EMERGENCY

Family Care Medical Services Ph 137425 or via 5446 5999 phone diversion.

● OTHER SERVICES

- General Medicine
- Mental Health
- Skin/Mole checks
- Women's Health
- Men's Health
- Travel Vaccinations
- Asthma Management
- Infant Health
- Musculoskeletal medicine
- Holistic Health
- Employment Medicals
- Cryotherapy
- Minor Surgery



Suncoast Medical Suncoast Medical Centre would like to announce that **Dr Rose Iron** joined our practice on Thursday the 22nd January.

● BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

We are a private billing practice. Information about our fees and services are available at reception.

Payment at the time of consultation is required.

A small fee may be charged for procedures, dressings, vaccines, plaster and resin casts, to cover costs.

Payment can be made by cash, credit card or EFTPOS.

Children under 16 years of age, pensioners and HCC holders are Bulk Billed. Gold Card holders are billed to DVA. Standard fee is \$70.00 and can be paid via Eftpos or Credit Card. We can access immediate refund from medicare providing patient has a debit card and pin number.

● SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

These notes are provided to help you during your visit to our practice. Suncoast Medical Centre would like to announce that **Dr Rose Iron** joined our practice on Thursday the 22nd January. Dr Iron is interested in all aspects of General Practice.

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 the Office of the Health Ombudsman on 133 OHO (133 646).

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

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.

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.

Test results are usually discussed at a follow up appointment. It is the policy of this Practice NOT to give results over the phone. You will be notified if your Doctor requests that you make an appointment to discuss your results.

● 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.

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

Hepatitis C Facts

An estimated 233,000 people live with Hepatitis C in Australia and the good news is that new cases appear to be on a small decline. The virus is spread through unsafe contact with blood products. In 2011, 60% of new cases were related to unsafe injecting drug use. Other causes were unsterile tattooing or body piercing, needle stick injuries or other blood to blood contact.

Hepatitis C virus can cause a chronic active infection in the liver with only vague symptoms such as fatigue. Symptoms can take years to develop. Complications from hepatitis C infection include cirrhosis (liver scarring), liver cancer and liver failure. Cirrhosis happens in up to 20% of cases.

Hepatitis C is the leading reason behind liver transplantation in Australia.

With newer treatments a 75% cure rate for Hepatitis C is possible.

Needle and syringe exchange programs have helped confine the spread of the virus.

All people at risk (ask your doctor) can be screened for the virus with a simple blood test.

With no Hepatitis C vaccine, those with chronic hepatitis C may benefit from immunisation against hepatitis A and B.

Those who 'injected' in their 'misspent youth' should have a test for chronic active hepatitis which can quietly lead to liver failure.



www.hepatitisaustralia.com/

Swimmer's Ear (otitis externa)

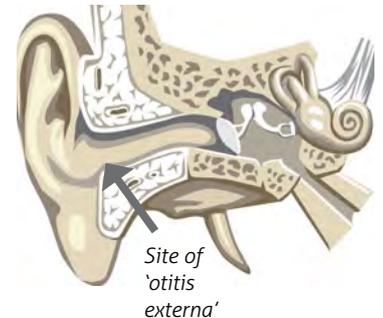
The outer ear is a canal or tunnel, normally closed at the eardrum and open at the ear hole (see diagram). The skin lining the outer ear can become infected, causing redness, swelling and pain. This is otitis externa.

If moisture gets trapped in the canal, infection occurs more easily – by bacteria, fungi or both. We know that infection happens more often in water lovers ('swimmer's ear'), when there is sweating and/or high humidity ('tropical ear'), if the skin lining of the external ear canal is affected by dermatitis or eczema, or soap or shampoo isn't properly rinsed from the ear.

Other symptoms of infection can include discharge from the ear, itching and sometimes reduced hearing. It is particularly painful if you pull down on the ear. Swelling of the face around the ear means infection has spread to the surrounding skin.

Your doctor must first make sure the eardrum does not have a hole in it. Most cases of otitis externa are mild and respond quickly to antibiotic eardrops and painkillers. There are ways to keep the ear dry that you can discuss with your doctor.

Occasionally, to clear up infection, your doctor will need to clean the ear canal by washing it out or cleaning with a fine probe or suction, or perhaps carefully insert a cotton



wick coated with the antibiotic and antifungal cream. If infection returns often you may need to see an ENT specialist.

Tips for preventing otitis externa:

- Avoid getting water in your ear and if water enters, shake it out.
- Regular swimmers should consider using drying drops (from pharmacies) afterwards.
- Use moulded earplugs or a bathing/shower cap when swimming or showering.
- Do not clean with cotton buds—the ear usually cleans itself naturally.
- If you have symptoms of infection see your doctor.

Pet Infections

Australians have one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world. Pets provide much joy and there are many health benefits associated with pet ownership, including better mental health and lower rates of high blood pressure and heart disease (especially in dog owners). However, pets can also be the source of infections.

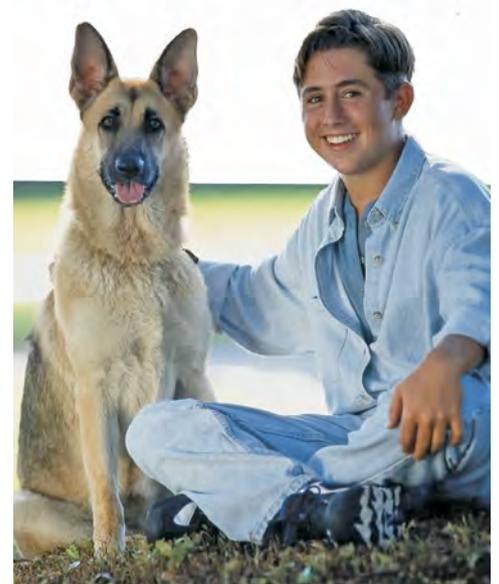
The main way this happens is if you are bitten or scratched by a pet. Dog bites can easily be infected because there are so many bugs in the mouth. See your GP if you are concerned. Bites are commonest in young boys, most often from pets than stray dogs. Cat bites are commonest in older women and most often on the hand.

Superficial wounds can be managed with cleaning and local antiseptic. Deeper or larger wounds may need a course of antibiotics as deep spread of infection can be painfully damaging.

In rare cases, if the tendon or muscles are involved, then referral to a hospital may be needed.

Other infections that may be transmitted by pets are worms. This affects children most often and is generally easily treated with worm medicine from the chemist. Fungal skin infections such as ringworm can also be caught from pets. This can be treated with an antifungal cream.

After you have handled a pet make sure you wash your hands. This minimizes the chances of getting an infection.



www.australianprescriber.com/magazine/29/1/6/8/



Domestic Abuse

Around 95% of domestic assaults are men against women. It can take many forms, including physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, intimidation, economic deprivation or threats of violence. Abusing men tend to hold rigid views of how males and females should interact; that men have the right to dominate and control relationships. Despite cultural differences, this is slowly changing, rather than support the view that "real men" show strength and aggression.

A high percentage of abusers come from homes where they saw or were victims of physical, sexual or other abuse themselves. Hence breaking the cycle of domestic violence between generations is very important. Attitudes can get passed down so that men who were abused are six times more likely to become abusers themselves.

Sadly many women feel trapped in violent relationships. They stay there, silent, for different reasons—financial insecurity, to keep a roof over their children's head, a hope they can change their man for the better, fear of reprisal and lack of support.

We know that domestic violence is unacceptable. Community awareness programs have helped so that

women in violent relationships seek help from the many services, such as helplines.

Once domestic violence is in the open, effective policing with priority response is available. Anger management programs can be offered to offenders (even by the courts, as an alternative to jail).

Of course, for these programs to work and people to stay together, there must be desire to change.

Hopefully, stronger women will encourage their men to face their shame, take responsibility for their behaviour, and stop destroying family relationships.

The domestic violence helpline 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732). Interpreter services are available as well on 131 450.



www.1800respect.org.au/



Managing Sun Damaged Skin

Australians generally enjoy the great outdoors. But skin sun damage is a problem leading to the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. A step before some skin cancers is solar keratoses, commonly known as 'sunspots', areas of redness and roughness in sun damaged skin. Due to the potential for cancerous change, solar keratoses are usually treated.

The commonest treatment is cryotherapy, better known as freezing. This is applying liquid nitrogen (or dry ice) on the area in a "freeze thaw" sequence. It can cause redness and some loss of pigment. It is usually successful, and most people have no complications. It can be used on most keratoses and is particularly good for scattered individual spots.

There are also creams that treat solar keratosis, available on prescription. Which one, and the duration of treatment depend on the individual case. They are most suited to areas on the skin where there are multiple spots.

Salicylic acid applied topically can reduce roughness and retinoid creams can help with skin rejuvenation.

Laser resurfacing and photodynamic (light) therapy are newer options but are less widely available and are more expensive.

The key remains prevention. As you enjoy the summer sun, remember to always slip on a shirt, slap on a hat and slop on sunscreen. See your doctor about any skin spots of concern and ask your doctor about an annual skin check, particularly if skin cancer runs in your family.



Head Lice

Common in school age children but potentially affecting anyone, lice are annoying but not serious. The head louse is a tiny wingless insect. It can only live on humans (lice die within 24 hours if not on the body) and feeds on miniscule amounts of blood drawn from the scalp. They cannot jump or fly but only crawl – hence spread is by direct hair to hair contact.

The typical symptom is an itchy scalp. A note from school saying head lice have been found and requesting all parents to check the hair of their children will often first alert parents.

Adult lice are grey or tan insects the size of a sesame seed on the scalp. Nits (lice eggs) are tiny white or brown dots usually attached to hair near the scalp. They can look like dandruff but cannot be "shaken" off.

To find them, comb hair with any conditioner and then comb with a fine tooth comb. Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel. Look for eggs or lice. Do this through all the hair a few times.

Treatment is to remove lice and nits from the hair. You can use the conditioner method (described above) every other day till none have been found for ten days. There are also specific head lice treatments (both synthetic and organic) that can be used. Follow the directions on the pack. Wash the pillowcase in hot (60C) water. Family members need only be treated if lice or nits are found on them.



<http://health.vic.gov.au/headlice/>

Kids activity!



LAUGHTER the Best Medicine

- Why does Snoop Dogg carry an umbrella? FO DRIZZLE!
- Why can't you hear a pterodactyl in the bathroom? Because it has a silent pee.
- What did the Zen Buddhist say to the hotdog vendor? Make me one with everything.
- I never make mistakes...I thought I did once; but I was wrong.

Thought Provokers...

- What steps do you take to prevent 'swimmer's ear'?
- Solar keratosis in sun damaged skin can lead to what?
- Animal bites can quickly infect deeper tissue. Why?
- An abusive relationship isn't necessarily violent.

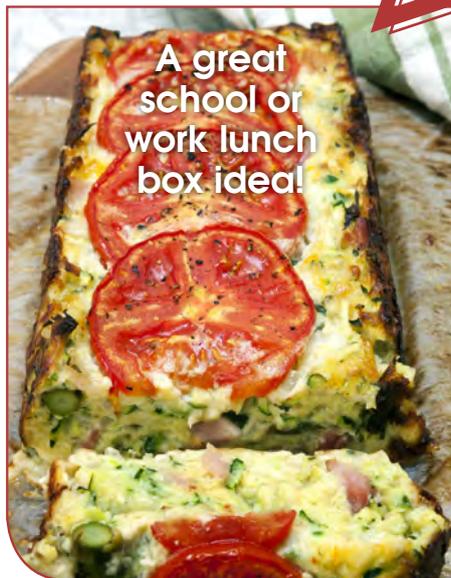
SWEET POTATO, CORN & ZUCCHINI SLICE

INGREDIENTS

- 350g coarsely grated sweet potato
- 300g grated zucchini (moisture removed)
- 125g tin sweet corn (drained)
- 2-3 cloves crushed garlic
- 1 large finely chopped brown onion or 2 medium onions
- 2 tblspns chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tblspns chopped fresh chives
- 2 tspns olive oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 egg whites
- ½ cup plain flour
- ½ cup fresh ricotta
- Season with salt and pepper if desired
- Slice tomatoes and arrange on top of slice.

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 180°. Grease lamington tin.
- Heat the oil and add onion and sweet potato and cook until soft. Stir in garlic and cook for approx 1 minute.
- Whisk eggs, egg whites and flour until smooth.
- Add ricotta. Stir in onion, sweet potato, zucchini, corn, chives & parsley.
- Pour into tin and bake for approx 30 minutes or



A great school or work lunch box idea!

until golden brown and cooked through. Slice tomatoes and arrange on top of slice. Remove from oven and allow to sit to set. Delicious served warm with a cherry tomato & Rocket salad.

Suncoast Medical Centre would like to announce that **Dr Rose Iron** joined our practice on Thursday the 22nd January. Dr Iron is interested in all aspects of General Practice.

"I have recently been awarded Fellowship of the College of general practitioners having passed the exams in early 2014. My family and I look forward to relocating to the Sunshine Coast seeking a healthy and relaxed lifestyle. I was born and grew up in Brisbane and also completed my tertiary studies and hospital training here. I lived and worked on the Sunshine Coast in 2010 and look forward to establishing myself as a GP in the area." **Dr Rose Iron**

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS FOR SUMMER

Everyone loves summer vacation with its picnics, swimming, biking, visits to the beach, and more. A few simple reminders can make your summer a safe one.

The Sun and Safety. Kids and adults are at greater risk for sunburns during the summer months, and besides being painful, sunburns can lead to skin cancer down the road. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), only 58% of adults practice proper sun safety procedures, such as applying sunscreen and seeking shade. Teaching sun safety to kids can help them have better behaviors as adults.

Summer Heat Safety. In addition to its burning potential, the sun can also cause people to overheat, particularly in the long, hot summer days. Teaching summer heat safety tips can help prevent heatstroke and dehydration during fun activities or outside work.

Water Safety. Water is another source of summer fun and another hazard. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, drowning is the leading cause of death for children under four years. Additionally, 390 children die each year on average from water-related accidents. As you address summer safety topics, be sure to include water safety games, coloring pages, and other activities to help children and adults understand how to deal with this hazard.