

50 Radovick Street
Korumburra 3950

P: 5655 1355
F: 5655 1537

Dr Peter Lewis

MBBS Dip.RACOG

Dr Mark Bensley

MBBS Dip.RACOG FRACGP

Dr Clare Stainsby

MBBS Dip.RACOG FRACGP FACRRM

Dr David Selvanayagam

MBBS FRACGP

Dr Yan Lu

MBBS FRACGP

Dr Shi Han Wong

MBBS

Dr Satheesh Kumar Cheella Reddy

MD, MPH, MHP, BAMS

PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Lakshmi Jayalath

PRACTICE STAFF

Lissa Bain (Practice Manager)

Cheryl Nicholas (Office Manager)

PRACTICE NURSES

Jenny Edwards, Laura Nicholas,
Sharon Goad, Michelle Bensley, Marie
Tremblay, Megan Schipper,
and Tessa Zuidema

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Debbie Paterson, Maddie Smith,
Julie Patterson, Cheryl Nicholas,
Kerry Bennington, Lisa Pemberton and
Nicole Bennett

SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS can be arranged by
phoning. 5655 1355

Monday to Friday 9.00am–5.30pm

Saturday 9.00am–12.00noon
(phone lines open at 8.30am)

The practice prefers to see patients by
appointment in order to minimise people's
waiting time.

Home visits can be arranged when
necessary. If you need a home visit, please
contact the surgery as soon as possible after
8.30am.

For After hours emergency medical attention
– at night, weekends or public holidays
please call 03 56542753 where a nurse will
triage your needs and contact the doctor on
call.

YOUR DOCTOR



PROTECT YOUR
LOWER BACK



MANAGING
HOLIDAY STRESS



MEDICINE
MYTHS & TRUTHS



PROTECTING
VISION AT RISK

Compliments of your GP

Is breakfast truly important for your health?

For years we were told that breakfast was “the most important meal of the day.” However, newer research shows that although it can be helpful for many people, it’s not essential for everyone. What matters most is how you feel and what you’re eating across the whole day.

For many of us, a wholesome morning meal is a great start; it can lift energy, improve concentration, and reduce the urge to reach for unhealthy snacks before lunch. Let’s look at who benefits from eating breakfast, and clear up some common assumptions.

Breakfast beliefs — true or false?

It’s commonly thought that skipping breakfast leads to overeating later. This is not always the case, but evidence suggests it may influence overall diet habits, which could have long-term effects on weight and overall health. The total daily food intake is generally similar whether you have it or not. Another misconception is that eating first thing in the morning boosts metabolism. There is no clear evidence that it “switches on” metabolism or burns more calories. The real benefits of breakfast tend to be steadier energy, clearer thinking, and better appetite control.

Who benefits from eating breakfast?

Children and teenagers usually do better when they start the day with a nutritious meal. Their brains and bodies are still developing, and they need steady fuel to stay alert and active. Skipping breakfast at

this stage is sometimes associated with a poorer diet quality, which may increase the risk of excess weight gain. Foods that provide steady energy and essential nutrients can support a balanced daily routine.

For people with diabetes or insulin resistance, eating a nutrient-rich breakfast may help stabilise blood sugar levels and support consistent, balanced eating patterns. It can also contribute to overall heart health by helping keep cholesterol within a healthy range.

Make every meal count

If you feel well, are not overweight, and have energy throughout the day, you can still have a healthy diet if you skip breakfast. The key is ensuring your other meals provide a variety of nutrients.

For example, meals that include some protein, fibre, wholegrains, vegetables and fruit and can help you stay fuller for longer and maintain good energy. These foods also support gut health, heart health, and steady blood sugar levels.

You don’t need anything fancy. A bowl of oats with fruit, eggs or tomatoes on wholegrain toast, or yoghurt with berries and nuts all provide a balanced, nutritious mix. A smoothie made with milk or yoghurt, fruit or vegetables, and nut butter is a quick, healthy option for busy mornings.

A healthy approach

If breakfast helps you feel your best, enjoy it. If you prefer eating later, that’s fine too. What matters most is choosing foods that keep you nourished and energised throughout the day. Consult your doctor if you’re unsure or have concerns about your health or diet.



Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

JANUARY 2026

Finding calm after the holidays: simple ways to manage stress

The holiday season can be wonderful, but it can also leave us feeling rushed, tired, and a little frazzled. Between family gatherings, social events, and New Year plans, stress can creep in.

While stress is a natural reaction, it shouldn't be constant. Managing it well can protect both your mind and body. Here are some simple, practical strategies to help you feel calmer and more in control.

Breathe your way to calmness

Mindful breathing is an easy way to reduce stress. Even a few minutes of slow, even, deep breaths can make a difference. You can do this anywhere — at your desk, on the phone, or waiting in traffic or queues. Regular practice can ease muscle tension, lower your heart rate, and bring a sense of calm.

Take mini breaks

During busy days, it can be tempting to work non-stop. Regular brief breaks, however, can refresh your mind, reduce stress and improve focus. Step outside for a short walk, stretch, or simply pause to notice your surroundings.

Move and energise

Physical activity is a powerful stress reliever. It doesn't need to be complicated — gentle walks, yoga, playing a game with the kids, or a dance around the living room all count. Moving your body releases natural "feel-good" chemicals called endorphins and can also improve sleep, which often suffers during stressful periods.

Nourish mind and body

After the indulgences of festive food, eating well can help you feel more balanced. Try adding more whole foods — fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins — and limit alcohol and sugar. Staying hydrated and regular meals can support steady energy and a more stable mood.

Connect and share

Talking to friends, family, or your GP about how you're feeling can help you feel supported and less alone. Social connection is a simple yet powerful way to reduce worry and stress.

Build simple routines

Even small routines — a morning walk, reading, or a bedtime wind-down — can provide stability and calm. These habits don't need much time but can give you a sense of structure in a busy world.

Stress is a normal part of life, but it doesn't have to take over. By using simple, everyday strategies, you can help your mind and body recover after the holiday rush, and start the year feeling more balanced and resilient.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

ANTIBIOTICS

METABOLISM

APPETITE

MINDFUL

BONES

MUSCLES

BREAKFAST

PILATES

CHOLESTEROL

RETINA

COCCYX

SACRUM

DIABETES

SPINE

ENDORPHINS

STRENGTH

ENERGY

STRESS

EXERCISE

SWIMMING

EYES

VERTEBRAE

FASCIA

VISION

LIGAMENTS

VITAMINS

LUMBAR

WALKING

MEDICINE

YOGA

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F	G	I	L	J	N	U	E	C	V	E	E	I	N
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Understand your vision risk: protect your sight

Many people see the New Year as a chance to focus on their health with a check-up. This usually includes blood tests, blood pressure and lifestyle advice — but eyesight is often left until later. However, some chronic health conditions can quietly affect vision, so it's important to keep this in mind.

Diabetes and vision

Healthy vision matters for everyone, but people living with diabetes can face a higher risk of complications that can affect eyesight. Because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience higher rates of diabetes, regular eye care is especially important in these communities.



Protecting your eyesight is essential — and often simple.

Regular eye checks, managing diabetes well, and staying informed can reduce the risk of vision problems and help you begin the year with a clear view ahead.

Medication myths: Common misunderstandings explained

Many of us take medicines from time to time — from simple pain relievers to antibiotics or long-term prescriptions. Despite how common they are, there are still some myths about how medicines work and how to use them safely. Let's clear up a few of the most common ones.

"I can stop antibiotics once I feel better"

It's tempting to stop taking antibiotics early, especially when symptoms improve after a few days. However, stopping too early can allow the infection to return and increase the risk of antibiotic resistance, where bacteria survive and become harder to treat. It's important to finish the full course unless your doctor advises otherwise.

"Natural means safe"

It's easy to assume that herbal remedies, vitamins, or other "natural" products are risk-free. That's not always true. Some can interact with prescription medicines, or affect how your body processes them.

For example, St John's Wort, often used for mood, may reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills.

Diabetes can affect vision, sometimes without noticeable symptoms. High blood sugar may damage the tiny blood vessels in the retina, a condition known as diabetic retinopathy. Left unchecked, it can lead to vision loss — making early detection essential.

The good news is that with regular eye exams and proper diabetes management, most vision problems can be prevented or slowed.

Steps to protect your vision:

- **Get regular eye checks:** Most people with diabetes should have an eye exam every 1–2 years, or as recommended by their health provider. Early signs of diabetic retinopathy are often invisible, so professional checks are essential.
- **Manage your health:** Keeping blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol under control reduces the risk of eye damage.
- **Ask about accessible services:** Many communities offer mobile or local eye-screening programs for people living in remote areas. Clinics that provide culturally respectful care make it easier and more comfortable for everyone to access checks.



NUTTY BANANA OAT PANCAKES

These thick oaty, banana pancakes are a tasty, healthy way to begin the morning. With a balance of protein, fibre, healthy fats, and antioxidants, they provide steady energy and essential nutrients.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 medium ripe bananas, mashed
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tbsp chopped walnuts
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 50 g fresh or frozen berries
- 1/4 cup milk (or enough to make batter pourable)
- 1 tsp baking powder (optional, for fluffier pancakes)

METHOD:

1. Blend the rolled oats in a blender or food processor until they form coarse flour.
2. In a bowl, combine oat flour, mashed bananas, eggs, milk, cinnamon, and baking powder (if using) until smooth. Aim for a batter that is thicker than a standard pancake mix, but still pourable.
3. Stir in the chopped walnuts, flaxseeds, and berries.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan and lightly grease it. Pour 1/4 cup of batter per oatcake into the pan. Cook 2–3 minutes on each side, until golden and cooked through.
5. Top with yoghurt, a drizzle of honey, extra nuts, banana or berries if desired..



Looking after your lower back

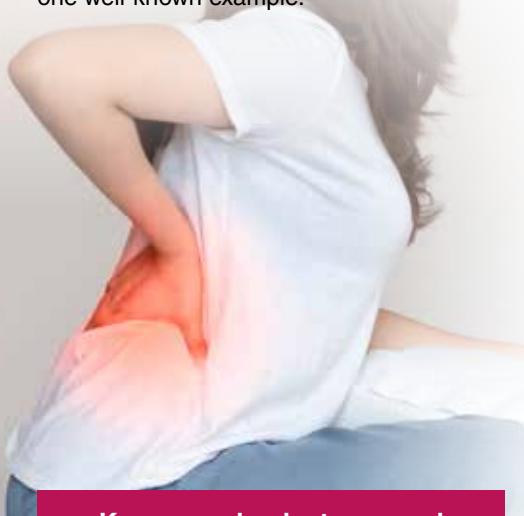
Lower back pain is one of the most common reasons people see their healthcare provider. But why is this area so vulnerable? The answer lies in its structure, function, and the demands we place on it every day.

Your lower back, or lumbar spine, carries the weight of your upper body while still allowing movement. It connects your upper and lower body, helping you bend, twist, and lift. Because it works so hard, it's more prone to strain and irritation than the upper back.

The anatomy of your lower back

Your lower back is made up of five lumbar vertebrae, the sacrum, coccyx, and the surrounding pelvic bones. Together, they form a stable yet flexible base supported by muscles, ligaments, and fascia.

Nerve roots from the lumbar and sacral spine travel down into your hips, legs, and feet. Because the spinal discs sit close to these nerves, disc injuries — such as a herniated disc — can sometimes cause irritation or compression. This may lead to pain, numbness, or weakness. Sciatica is one well-known example.



Keep your back strong and healthy with simple daily habits.

Many factors can contribute to lower back discomfort, including:

- poor posture and long periods of sitting or staying still
- lifting heavy objects incorrectly
- insufficient core and back strength
- sudden movements, falls, or high-impact activities
- workplace strain
- natural age-related changes that make discs less flexible

How to protect your lower back

Many cases of lower back pain can be managed or prevented with simple habits:

- Strengthen: exercises like planks and bridges help support your spine by strengthening back and core muscles.
- Use proper lifting techniques: squat down, keep your back straight, hold the load close, and avoid twisting.
- Maintain good posture: keep your spine and head aligned whether sitting, sleeping, or standing.
- Keep active: low impact activities such as walking, swimming, Pilates and yoga help improve strength, flexibility, and overall spine health.
- Avoid prolonged sitting: stand, stretch, or walk for a few minutes every 30–60 minutes. Ensure your workstation is set up correctly for your body.
- Stretch regularly: gentle stretches for the lower back, hamstrings, and hip flexors can ease tension.
- Support your general health: excess weight, smoking, poor diet, and ongoing stress can affect back health.
- Listen to your body: early attention to stiffness or discomfort can help prevent it from worsening.

If you have ongoing back discomfort, see your GP to discuss the best course of action.

Questions to ask at your doctor's visit

Asking questions helps you get the care you need. To make the most of your visit, jot down anything you'd like to know about in the space below. Take this list with you so it's easy to remember what you wanted to ask.

DOCTOR'S NAME	DATE	TIME
1.		
2.		
3.		
NOTES:		

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Decisions relating to your health should always be made in consultation with your health care provider. Talk to your doctor first.



ABOUT LUNG CANCER SCREENING

Eligible Australians aged 50 to 70 can screen for signs of lung cancer every two years through the new National Lung Cancer Screening Program (NLCSP).

The NLCSP uses low-dose computed tomography (CT) scans to look for lung cancer in eligible people without any symptoms who are at a higher risk of lung cancer due to their age and smoking history.

Eligibility checks and referrals for low-dose CT scans will be overseen by your doctor, your smoking history and age.

The National Cancer Screening Register (NCSR) will support delivery of the NLCSP by maintaining a national database of lung cancer screening records. The NCSR will also generate screening reminders and notify people and healthcare providers of their results following a low-dose CT scan.

Two new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items have been created to provide free low-dose CT scans under the NLCSP. These will be mandatory bulk billing items and will have mandatory reporting requirements.

Program eligibility

Eligible people invited to participate in the NLCSP must:

- be aged 50 to 70, and
- have no signs or symptoms suggestive of lung cancer (e.g. persistent cough, coughing up blood, shortness of breath), and
- smoke cigarettes or have quit within the last 10 years, and
- have a smoking history of at least 30 pack years (e.g. a pack a day for 30 years or 2 packs a day for 15 years).

When determining program eligibility, you will need to work with your doctor to estimate the average number of cigarettes smoked per day and over how many years. For example: if you smoked 20 cigarettes per day (one pack) for 30 years, this is the equivalent of 30 pack years.

You do not have to quit smoking to participate in the NLCSP.

More information

For more information for healthcare providers about the NLCSP, please visit the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's dedicated website.

This website also houses a toolkit for healthcare providers with information, education and resources to support you to prepare for the NLCSP.