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#### PRACTICE STAFF

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#### 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

## YOUR DOCTOR

FEBRUARY 2024



EXPLAINING  
INFLAMMATION



BEWARE OF  
THE MOZZIES



THE POWER OF  
WHOLEGRAINS



NURTURING  
HEALTHY KIDS

*Compliments of your GP*

## Understanding scabies: a guide to prevention and care

Let's talk about something that affects people from all walks of life, something that might make you itch just by thinking about it – scabies. This skin condition might be common, but it can be problematic. With the right knowledge, we can keep it at bay and protect ourselves and our loved ones.

### What is scabies?

Scabies is caused by microscopic mites that burrow under the top layer of your skin to live and lay eggs. They make your skin react, causing a very itchy rash. Scabies is highly contagious, and spreads by direct skin contact, and touching infested clothes and bedding.

Scabies can be found all across Australia, but it does tend to occur more in the warm and humid climates in regions like Northern Queensland where the mites usually flourish.

### What does scabies rash look like?

Scabies appears as an itchy, red rash, often with small bumps or blisters. It can occur on various parts of your body, such as between fingers, wrists, elbows, armpits, and even on the soles of your feet.

### Who is likely to get scabies?

Scabies can affect anyone, regardless of their background, location, age, or gender. However, scabies can be more common in communities facing challenges such as overcrowded housing, limited healthcare access, and inadequate sanitation facilities.

Any crowded places like schools, nursing homes, and day care centres are hotspots for spreading scabies, so it's essential to be cautious in these settings.

### Treatment and complications

Scabies won't go away on its own so it's crucial to consult a healthcare professional for treatment.

If left untreated, scabies can lead to serious illness. Scratching the rash can break the skin, creating an entry for harmful bacteria

and causing infections such as impetigo, or school sores.

Once bacteria enters your body, infection can spread and lead to conditions like cellulitis, a painful skin infection that can spread rapidly, or sepsis, a life-threatening response to infection. People with weakened immune systems, the elderly, babies, and young children are especially vulnerable to complications.

### How to prevent scabies:

Preventing scabies is as crucial as treating it. Regular handwashing, good personal hygiene, and avoiding skin contact with infected people are key preventive measures. If someone in your household has scabies, it's essential to wash their clothes, bedding, and towels in very hot water to kill the mites.

By staying informed and following these preventive tips, we can keep scabies at bay and ensure the well-being of our community. Remember, knowledge is power – let's spread the word and stay itch-free!



Scabies is highly contagious, and anyone can catch it. Getting treatment is essential to prevent infection and further health problems.

*Our newsletter is free! Please take a copy with you*



## Beware of the biting mozzies: common mosquito-borne diseases

Australia, with its diverse climates, is home to a variety of mosquito species. Though many are harmless, some can transmit viruses to humans. It's important to be aware of these diseases and prevent mosquito bites.

Mosquitoes thrive during the warmer months, especially after heavy rainfall and in places near stagnant water.

In Australia the Barmah Forest Virus and Ross River Virus are the most common, particularly in the tropical areas of Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

These viruses can cause flu-like symptoms such as joint pain, fever, fatigue, and rash. Although rarely life-threatening, the effects can make you uncomfortable and miserable.

Symptoms may emerge any time between three days to three weeks after a mosquito bite. Recovery usually takes weeks, but in some cases, symptoms persist for months.

There's no cure or vaccines for these viruses, but pain relieving medicines can help. It's also important to rest, eat a healthy diet and get regular exercise. Visit your doctor if you're concerned or need relief from symptoms.



### Notifiable diseases: why they matter

Mosquito-borne viruses are notifiable diseases, meaning healthcare providers are required to report confirmed cases to health authorities. This is essential for tracking the spread of the diseases and making preventive measures.

There are other mosquito-borne viruses in Australia that, although rare, have the potential to cause severe illness. Ask at your health clinic, or check for more details at: [www.healthdirect.gov.au/mosquito-borne-diseases](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/mosquito-borne-diseases)

Stay informed, stay safe, and enjoy the beauty of Australia without the worry of mosquito-borne illnesses.

### QUICK TIPS

#### Prevention is the best defence

Here are some practical tips to help prevent mosquito bites:

- Use mosquito repellents, and stay indoors during peak mosquito activity times.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and closed shoes.
- Avoid mosquito-prone areas: especially near water where mosquitoes breed.
- Eliminate breeding sites: remove or cover containers that store or collect water.
- Mosquito-proof your home: install screens and use mosquito nets while sleeping, especially for infants and children.

## Toasted nutty muesli

*This crunchy muesli is filled with nutrients to boost your energy and nourish your body.*

### Ingredients:

- 3½ cups wholegrain oats
- ½ cup wheat bran
- 1 cup shredded coconut, or flakes
- 1 cup dates or a mix of dried fruits of your choice, chopped
- ½ cup cashews
- ½ cup hazelnuts or almonds
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup flax seed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Honey or maple syrup for sweetness
- ¼ cup coconut oil or any neutral oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Instructions:

In a large mixing bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients.

Melt oil and mix it with the sweetener of choice. Add vanilla extract.

Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients and mix well.

Spread the muesli mixture evenly onto one or two baking trays lined with baking paper.

Bake muesli mixture at 180°C for 20-25 minutes, or until it turns golden brown. Stir every 5-10 minutes to ensure it toasts evenly and doesn't burn.

Remove muesli from oven and let it cool.

Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to two weeks, or in the fridge for longer freshness.

## The power of wholegrains for better health

Whole grains are usually mentioned as being an integral part of a balanced diet, so let's take a closer look at what these are and why they're essential to your health.

Wholegrains are plant foods that use the whole grain – or all three parts: the bran, germ, and endosperm. Each part has essential nutrients. The bran is rich in fibre, B vitamins, and minerals. The germ contains healthy fats, vitamin E, antioxidants, and phytonutrients. The endosperm contains carbohydrates, protein, and smaller amounts of vitamins and minerals.

### What does this mean for our health?

Wholegrain foods, which are minimally processed, provide more nutrients and health benefits compared to refined grains, where the bran and germ are removed during processing. Wholegrains are rich in fibre, vitamins, minerals, and energy; and can improve digestion, increase fullness, and lower the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

### What are some common wholegrains?

Choosing these common grains in their less processed forms ensures you get maximum nutritional benefits:

**Wheat:** Products made from whole wheat, such as whole wheat bread and pasta, preserve all parts of the grain.

**Barley:** Whole (or hulled) barley is considered a whole grain, as it's minimally processed.

**Rye:** Rye is closely related to both wheat and barley. Products made from whole rye grain (such as pumpernickel bread) are nutrient-dense.

**Rice:** Brown rice, unlike white rice, retains the bran and germ layers during processing, offering higher fibre and nutrients.

**Oats:** While all oats are nutritious, whole and steel-cut oats are less processed than instant oats.

**Quinoa:** Quinoa is a complete protein with a range of essential nutrients.

**Buckwheat:** Despite its name, buckwheat isn't wheat; it's a wholegrain often used in baking and cereals.

**Corn:** Whole corn, including popcorn, is a popular wholegrain with natural goodness.

**Take it one step at a time. If you usually eat white bread or pasta, start by switching to whole-grain options for a healthier choice.**



## HIDDEN WORDS

ANAEMIA  
 APPETITE  
 BACTERIA  
 BARLEY  
 BRAN  
 CELLULITIS  
 CHRONIC  
 CONTAGIOUS  
 DEFICIENCY  
 ENERGY  
 FATIGUE  
 FEVER  
 FIBRE  
 HEALING  
 IMMUNE  
 IMPETIGO  
 INFLAMMATION  
 IRON  
 ITCHY  
 MINERALS  
 MITES  
 MOSQUITO  
 PSORIASIS  
 RASH  
 RYE  
 SCABIES  
 SEPSIS  
 VIRUS  
 VITAMINS  
 WHOLEGRAIN

S	L	A	Z	B	G	N	B	I	T	I	T	F	U	O	R	L	S	C	G	F	Y	S	F
K	Q	L	P	C	U	K	E	Z	A	L	L	A	S	U	K	M	Z	M	O	P	E	M	O
W	Q	J	F	P	M	V	F	U	Y	H	P	T	F	U	N	O	J	W	V	D	Z	A	L
D	F	P	B	S	E	L	L	Q	G	U	A	G	P	S	O	R	I	A	S	I	S	V	I
D	Y	V	A	T	J	T	H	A	W	I	Z	P	C	V	M	D	S	Y	N	N	A	E	M
Y	D	I	R	E	G	G	I	K	S	U	T	H	N	O	F	Y	C	L	P	Z	A	H	M
Q	F	T	L	Y	X	L	H	T	N	S	U	A	D	K	B	N	S	P	K	S	C	V	U
T	J	A	E	R	C	U	P	S	E	B	N	O	F	P	E	N	B	P	L	Q	B	N	N
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M	B	S	E	L	S	G	B	A	V	V	F	C	P	D	I	B	R	D	C	S	S	B	G
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S	Y	X	G	R	F	I	N	V	D	R	K	W	H	V	E	A	I	E	U	X	R	S	A
Q	M	V	Y	E	A	L	U	I	P	M	V	S	C	L	I	W	I	O	Z	J	K	F	C
U	X	T	E	N	M	A	U	R	Q	L	A	Z	O	M	J	B	I	Z	N	K	J	O	T
I	I	Y	J	I	B	E	L	U	K	R	F	H	E	W	A	G	U	P	J	J	V	C	E
T	E	J	R	M	X	H	M	S	V	O	W	A	D	C	A	N	E	K	K	W	H	X	R
O	M	O	G	I	T	E	P	M	I	O	N	X	S	T	V	O	X	N	H	R	O	E	I
F	I	H	S	M	M	Y	H	Q	D	A	X	D	N	J	M	G	Y	X	O	X	C	C	A
Y	T	F	K	W	D	I	R	O	N	T	Q	O	Y	A	E	W	L	N	D	B	X	D	I
K	E	L	R	I	A	M	V	U	Z	N	C	V	Q	X	S	S	I	Q	G	C	R	Y	F
O	S	K	M	E	K	K	T	V	O	P	P	E	A	J	M	C	M	K	J	W	G	A	W
F	L	P	D	N	F	T	I	I	N	F	L	A	M	M	A	T	I	O	N	Q	L	J	N

## Nurturing healthy kids: a guide to iron nutrition for children

Iron, often overlooked in the hustle and bustle of parenting, is a mineral that plays a crucial role in the development and well-being of children. It's responsible for carrying oxygen throughout the body, enabling it to function optimally.

In Australia, around 75% of infants aged six to 12 months and 25% of toddlers aged one to two years don't get enough iron in their diets. This deficiency can lead to serious health issues, including iron deficiency anaemia, fatigue, and developmental setbacks.

### The surprising needs of tiny tots

Surprisingly, even though they're small, infants and young children need about as much iron as adults do. That's because iron is vital in supporting their rapid growth in blood and muscles, immune system, and brain development.

### Spotting iron deficiency

Iron deficiency in children can be challenging to spot, as their symptoms are often vague, especially before progressing to anaemia. Look out for signs such as fatigue, difficulty concentrating, poor

behaviour, frequent infections, or low appetite. If any of these sound familiar, get your child checked by your doctor.

### Solutions for iron woes

If it turns out your child's iron levels are low, don't worry. There are solutions. The first step is to adjust their diet. Focus on foods like meat, fish, eggs, leafy greens, and legumes. But here's an important tip: limit their intake of cow's milk as it can hinder iron absorption, however be sure they get vital nutrients from other sources for balanced development.

In some cases, doctors may recommend oral iron supplements. Just remember, these should be taken as prescribed and kept safely out of reach of your child, as too much iron can be a serious health risk.

### Iron-boosting ideas

So, how do we make sure our little explorers get the iron they need to grow strong and healthy? It starts with introducing iron-rich foods as soon as they start on solid foods, which is typically around six months of age. Think of it as laying the foundation for their future well-being.

The key to ensuring your child gets enough iron is variety. Encourage them to eat a diverse range of iron-rich foods daily. Options include iron-fortified breakfast cereals, toast with peanut butter or hummus, soups with dried peas, beans, or lentils, and choosing wholegrain bread over white.

If your child is a picky eater, seek out iron-fortified foods. Additionally, incorporate vitamin C-rich fruits and vegetables into their diet, as these enhance iron absorption. Be creative with meal and snack options, exploring various ways to serve vegetables to make mealtimes enjoyable and nutritious.

If your child does end up with an iron deficiency, remember that every path to recovery is unique. Consult with your GP or dietitian to find the best solution for their specific needs.

**Did you know that infants and young children need about as much iron as adults do?**



## Explaining chronic inflammation: could diet be the solution?

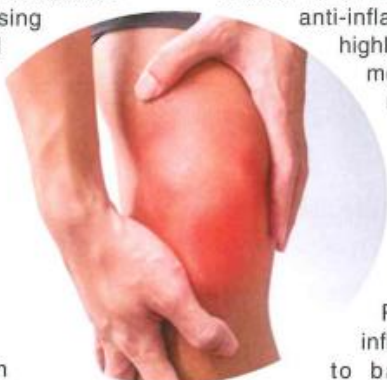
We often hear about inflammation, but its real purpose is often misunderstood. Contrary to popular belief, inflammation is not bad, but a natural part of your body's healing process and defence system. However, it can become a concern if it doesn't go away. In this article we explain the downside of inflammation and how diet can play a crucial role in managing it effectively.

### What is chronic inflammation?

When injury or infection occurs, your body releases chemicals that activate your immune system - causing redness, pain, warmth, and swelling. This short-term inflammation is normal for healing and should last a few days; however it becomes a concern when this response persists, or becomes chronic, lasting for months or even years.

Chronic inflammation can harm healthy tissues, causing various health problems and diseases. It can be hard to diagnose as the signs can be vague, such as fatigue, fever, and muscle and joint pain - ranging from mild to severe.

Chronic inflammation is directly linked to autoimmune diseases, where the immune system mistakenly attacks the body's own cells. Examples of this harmful immune response are psoriasis, type 1 diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis. It's also believed that inflammation contributes to chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.



### Managing chronic inflammation

The Mediterranean diet is often referred to as the 'anti-inflammatory diet' because it mainly consists of foods that are rich in anti-inflammatory properties. These foods are high in antioxidants, polyphenols, and omega-3 fatty acids, which can help to reduce inflammation in the body.

These foods include: seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and healthy fats from sources like olive oil and fatty fish. Additionally, an anti-inflammatory diet restricts highly processed foods, red meat, saturated fats, and refined carbohydrates, particularly sugars like those in fizzy drinks and cakes. Consuming these items in excess can worsen existing chronic inflammation.

Prioritising anti-inflammatory foods helps to balance your body's inflammatory responses. This balance leads to improved overall health and lowers the risk of chronic diseases associated with inflammation.

Maintaining a healthy weight, managing stress, engaging in regular exercise, and having a balanced diet are all essential healthy factors that work together to help prevent and alleviate chronic inflammation.

It's important to note that while these healthy choices are effective for many people, some individuals may also require expert evaluation and medical intervention.

## Questions to ask at your next doctor's visit

Asking questions is key to good communication with your doctor. To get the most out of your next visit, use the area below to note what you'd like to know and take this list with you to your next appointment so you don't forget what it was 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.

## WE REGISTERED FOR MYMEDICARE - NOW YOU CAN TOO

We have joined thousands of healthcare providers across Australia in registering in MyMedicare, a new voluntary registration system that will help us formalise the relationship between us and our patients.

MyMedicare allows you to nominate a general practice and general practitioner as your regular healthcare provider. When you register in MyMedicare, extra funding from the Australian Government becomes available to support our practice to provide more of the targeted care you need.

Patients who register with our practice in MyMedicare may benefit from:

- longer MBS-funded telephone consultations, from 1 November 2023
- longer bulk billed telehealth consultations for children under 16 and Commonwealth concession card holders at the new triple bulk billing rate, from 1 November 2023
- more regular visits from their GP and better care planning for people living in a Residential Aged Care Home, from August 2024
- connections to more appropriate care in general practice for people with chronic conditions who visit hospital frequently, from mid-2024.

Formalising the patient-practice relationship, like with MyMedicare, has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, and that is why we are inviting all of our regular patients to register in MyMedicare.

If you have a valid Medicare card or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Veteran card and have had two face-to-face consultations with us in the last 24 months, you are eligible for MyMedicare.

Registration is easy. To register as a MyMedicare patient, you can:

- fill out a paper registration form at our practice
- complete the registration process in your Medicare Online Account
- ask our team to start the registration process - you can then complete registration in your Medicare Online Account.

Ask about MyMedicare next time you talk to us. For more information visit: