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#### SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS can be arranged by  
phoning. PH: 5655 1355

**Monday to Friday** 8.30am–6.00pm

**Saturday** 8.30am–12.00noon

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



**FREE!!  
TAKE ME  
HOME**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

## Ovarian cancer – are you at risk?

February is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, which is held each year to raise awareness of this serious disease.

Ovarian cancer is sometimes called one of the silent cancers, because its symptoms are easy to overlook or ignore. Each year over 1,600 women in Australia are diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Although survival rates are improving, there is still only around a 46 percent chance of survival five years after diagnosis.

#### What is ovarian cancer?

Ovarian cancer develops when abnormal cells grow in or on the ovaries in an uncontrolled way. These cells can spread and develop into secondary cancer throughout the body. The ovaries are a pair of small organs in the female reproductive system that produce and store the ova, or eggs, during a woman's reproductive years.

*The earlier the disease  
is identified, the higher  
the chances of treatment  
being successful*

#### Who's at risk?

The exact cause of ovarian cancer is unknown, but the likelihood of developing the disease may be higher if a woman has one or more risk factors.

The biggest factor is age, with the incidence of the disease becoming higher after menopause. Although ovarian cancer can occur in younger women, the average age of diagnosis is 64. Hereditary risk factors include the inheritance of a mutated gene, or having a strong family history of ovarian, breast, or bowel cancer. Ovarian cancer is less likely in women who have had more breaks in their cycle of ovulation, such as pregnancies, breastfeeding, and using certain contraceptives.

#### Symptoms

One of the reasons that ovarian cancer has such a low survival rate is because in most cases it is not diagnosed until it has progressed to an advanced stage.

Typically, this is because the early signs of ovarian cancer may be confused with the symptoms of some common stomach and digestive issues.

Symptoms may include:

- abdominal bloating and increased abdomen size
- indigestion or nausea
- feeling full quickly after eating a small amount
- pressure or pain in the pelvis or lower back
- frequent or urgent urination
- changes in bowel movements
- bleeding after menopause or in-between periods
- pain during sexual intercourse

Other more general symptoms include feeling fatigued, unexplained weight fluctuations, or generally just feeling unwell.

Currently there is no screening test for ovarian cancer. The chances of successful treatment are higher the earlier the disease is identified, so knowing the signs and seeking advice promptly are important.

#### Treatment

As there are many different forms and stages of ovarian cancer, the treatment will be an individualised plan based on the results of scans and examinations.

#### What can I do?

The best way to improve survival rates from ovarian cancer is through supporting research and education. Getting involved with Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month this February is a great start.

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms, or concerned about your risk factors, contact your doctor as soon as possible.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- Mental health & the workplace
- Tinnitus
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Mouth-watering melon
- Word Search
- Minty melon and feta salad

**Take me home to complete our PUZZLE – check inside!**

## Minty melon and feta salad

Cool and refreshing, this salad is the perfect balance of sweet and tart flavours.

### INGREDIENTS

3 cups seedless, cubed watermelon  
1 medium thin-skinned cucumber, chopped  
2 Tbsp finely chopped fresh mint leaves  
80g goat feta cheese, crumbled

### FOR THE DRESSING

¼ cup fresh lime juice  
2 Tbsp runny honey  
3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
1 tsp grated ginger  
½ tsp sea salt  
Freshly ground black pepper to taste

### METHOD

Whisk the dressing ingredients together. Gently combine melon, cucumber, mint and dressing. Serve sprinkled with feta cheese.



## Taking control of tinnitus

Tinnitus is the word for hearing a sound that doesn't come from an external source, sometimes described as a ringing in the ear. It can affect one or both ears, and can vary in pitch from a very low rumble to a very high squeal. Some people describe it as a hissing, whooshing, throbbing, or singing. Tinnitus can be continuous, or it may come and go.

### What causes tinnitus?

Tinnitus is commonly linked to hearing loss, especially long-term or short-term damage to the ears due to loud noise – it's very common after a loud concert or listening to loud music through earphones. Loud noise can damage the tiny hair-like cells which receive and convey sound. This sort of short-term damage usually resolves itself, but can cause long-term problems if it happens too often.

A number of health conditions can cause or worsen tinnitus; these include other ear problems, chronic health conditions, head and neck injuries, certain medications, and extreme stress. In many cases, an exact cause may not be found.

### What can I do about tinnitus?

Some people find their tinnitus gets worse after a cold or nasal congestion. This will usually resolve itself, but if the tinnitus

continues for more than a week after the cold has gone, check with your doctor for signs of an ear infection.

It's a good idea to have a healthcare professional check your ears for excessive wax build-up or damage to the eardrum if tinnitus is continuous or frequent. They can also refer you for further tests if you have other symptoms such as dizziness, which may point to different issues.



Prevention is better than cure, and it's never too late to start protecting your ears from further damage.

If you work in an environment with a lot of loud noise, such as a music venue, or with loud machinery, make sure you have ear protection.

Tinnitus affects everyone differently; for some it can significantly affect their quality of life and they may experience fatigue, stress, anxiety, sleep problems and depression. Treating these conditions may not help your tinnitus but can make you feel better. Regular exercise can improve wellbeing and may help reduce or mask the noise, making tinnitus less noticeable.

Tinnitus is common, and doesn't normally cause a problem. Very occasionally however, tinnitus can be a symptom of something else, and should be investigated by a doctor.

## Is your workplace affecting your mental health?

Now is the time when many people head back to work after the summer holidays; do you look forward to it, or feel anxious about returning?

Work-related stress is a growing problem that affects productivity, health and well-being. It can cause an increase in absenteeism, a drop in work performance, and loss of earnings – all factors that increase the risk of mental illness.

High job demands, shift work, and bad relationships in the workplace can all contribute to poor mental health. Lack of support structure, feeling unable to speak out about problems in the workplace, and organisational change can have an impact as well.

### Symptoms

'Mental illness' encompasses a huge range of different conditions, but some of the most common work-related problems have recognisable features, including:

- losing interest and enjoyment in normal activities
- feeling anxious, overwhelmed, worried or frightened
- experiencing fatigue or sleep disturbances
- suffering heart palpitations, chest pain, headaches, and stomach upsets

Sometimes these are indicators of other health problems, so it's important to see your doctor if you're experiencing any of these symptoms.

### Management

It's important for employers to recognise work-related stress as a significant health issue, and provide a safe and supportive environment for their employees.

Unfortunately, mental health can still be one of the hardest topics to broach, but there has been progress in recent years to fight the stigma surrounding mental illness and to encourage an open and judgement-free culture.

Recognising that there's a problem is the first positive step when tackling mental illness. Realising you're not alone and asking for help is the second. A number of organisations specialise in helping people with mental health problems and there are many treatment options. See your doctor to discuss your concerns and find out what help is available.

**It's ok to  
ask for  
help**

# WORD SEARCH

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

- ANXIETY
- AUTISM
- CANCER
- CELL
- COPPER
- DEPRESSION
- DISORDER
- DIZZINESS
- EARDRUM
- EARWAX
- ELECTROLYTES
- FIBRE
- HEARING
- HYDRATE
- INSOMNIA
- MELONS
- MENOPAUSE
- MORTALITY
- NASAL
- OVA
- POTASSIUM
- ROCKMELON
- SAD
- SODIUM
- SPECTRUM
- SUGAR
- TINNITUS
- URINARY

## Mouth-watering melons

Eating more fruit and vegetables is always high on the agenda for healthy eating. When it comes to making a healthy choice, melons are loved around the world. They're hydrating, delicious, and are relatively low in calories – perfect for a sweet yet healthy snack.

Melons contain a range of essential nutrients, while containing no cholesterol, almost no fat, and a relatively small amount of natural sodium. They also contain two types of fibre: soluble fibre helps to reduce cholesterol and regulate blood sugar, and insoluble fibre helps to support a healthy bowel.

Melons are rich in various health-giving compounds, even containing nutrients known to help prevent or fight heart disease, stroke and digestive disorders. Melons also contain complex antioxidants, those

chemicals known to combat cell damage and reduce cancer risk. Watermelons, with their rich red colour, are the best melon for sourcing antioxidants, though they're lower in other nutrients than other melons.

Different types of melon can have very different vitamin and mineral content. A single serving of 130g of honeydew melon provides 45 % of your recommended daily allowance (RDA) of vitamin C; the same amount of cantaloupe, or rockmelon, contains a whopping 80% of your RDA! Vitamin C is associated with healthy immune systems, clear skin, and general good health.

Melons are also high in:

- potassium – essential for a healthy heart and good blood pressure
- beta-carotene – helps produce vitamin A, necessary for healthy eyes
- copper – helps with the production and function of red and white blood cells

Melons – especially watermelons as the name suggests – have extremely high water content. Not only that, but the levels of sodium, potassium, and other essential electrolytes makes them a perfect source of hydration – like a natural sports drink, in its own eco-friendly packaging!



The best news of all is that melons are healthy, delicious, and easy to add to your diet, try them:

- whizzed up in smoothies
- sliced in vegetable or fruit salads
- pureed and frozen into delicious ice blocks

Whatever way you like them; melons are a great addition to a healthy diet.



# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

**Autism is a condition which affects the way people understand and interact with others and their environment.**

It's considered a 'spectrum' disorder, which means that the severity of the condition varies from person to person. Some people have very mild ASD, perhaps only noticeable from the outside as a slight variance in the way that person communicates, to very severe ASD, which can be profound, and sometimes debilitating.

People with autism may also have other difficulties such as mental health problems and learning disabilities, or they may have no noticeable disorders. They can often be highly intelligent and may not require any extra assistance with daily life.

In short, people with autism are as varied and individual as anyone else. Many people do not see autism as a disorder, but a way to recognise the unique differences, abilities, and strengths individuals with autism have.

Autism can sometimes be identified in very early childhood, and is noticed when a child doesn't appear to move through the normal stages of development in the same way as their peers.

Young children with ASD may present with traits such as:

- being unresponsive to facial expressions, such as not smiling back when smiled at
- avoiding eye contact
- repeating movements or phrases often

Older children and adults may have other signs of ASD such as:

- feeling socially anxious or not understanding social cues, for example 'personal space'
- finding it difficult to understand how others are feeling
- taking things very literally or not understanding metaphors
- needing a strict routine and feeling anxious about changes, or needing to plan changes very carefully
- noticing details or patterns that other people don't, or being very single-minded about interests

Almost four times as many boys as girls have a diagnosis of autism. The reason for this is unclear but there seems to be a difference in the way the traits of ASD present themselves – in girls. Girls with ASD tend to be quieter than boys with ASD; therefore the condition might not be noticed as early.

If you, your child, or loved one has unusual difficulties with social or environmental interaction, a healthcare professional, developmental specialist or autism awareness charity will listen to your concerns and offer helpful advice.

A diagnosis of autism can be met with mixed responses; often people feel relief that there's a tangible reason for something they've always felt wasn't quite right. Having a diagnosis can help ensure that extra needs can be understood and met, especially at school or in the workplace.

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*- People with autism are as varied and individual as anyone else -*

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**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only, and is not intended as a substitute for sound health care advice. We are not liable for any adverse effects or consequences resulting from the use of any information, suggestions, or procedures presented. Always consult a qualified health care professional in all matters pertaining to your physical, emotional and mental health.

## TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY OVER THE HOLIDAYS

1. **Don't binge for the whole holidays, try to keep a healthy eating routine through the holiday period as much as possible.** Remember, Christmas is only one day! If you stock up on too much food for the holidays and new years, you're setting yourself up for at least a month of overeating.
2. **Whilst chocolate and biscuits are yum, try to have healthy, fresh foods available,** like stone fruits, berries, salad and seafood as long as it's not battered and deep-fried. Grilling and barbecuing are the healthiest cooking options.
3. **Limit portion size.** Have smaller helpings of favourite foods and eat slowly. Don't eat the whole pavlova now ...because there will always be pavlovas in the world! Our plate sizes are 25 % bigger now than they used to be.
4. **Stay hydrated,** with the warmer weather it's important to drink plenty of fluids with water being the best choice. Try to limit the amount of soft drinks and alcohol. Did you know that 1 in 5 adults exceed Australia's lifetime alcohol risk guidelines? Try to space alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic alternatives like soda or mineral water with fresh fruit. A beer or wine is equivalent to 600 kilojoules which takes a 20 run or 30 minute walk to burn off.
5. **Maintain some regular exercise.** Summer holidays can provide a great opportunity for some fun activity to help burn off those extra kilojoules – a walk around the streets to see the neighbourhood Christmas displays, backyard cricket, a swim. The longer daylight hours make it easier, it's important to be careful in the heat. It is not recommend to exercise too much in the heat, alternatively you could go for a walk in the early morning or late evening when it's cooler.
6. **Make smart food choices.** If you're going out for dinner, then have a lighter lunch or plan to do some extra exercise that day – or have a healthy snack to take the edge off hunger. If you arrive at the party hungry you are far more inclined over indulge. At the party, stand a little away from the food table. Reach for a soda and fresh lime to drink and rather than trying all the foods on offer at a party, choose a few favourites.
7. **Reduce Stress** – Shopping, preparing and cleaning for Christmas with lots of people and extended family can lead to undue pressure and tension. Try to relax where possible and enjoy the day, maybe try going for a walk.
8. **Be sun smart** – remember your sunscreen and hat when enjoying the sunshine. Avoid the middle of the day as this usually is the hottest.
9. **What if we do over-indulge? (as we invariably will!) Enjoy it! Try to avoid it becoming a whole week or all of December and January.** A few extra biscuits don't need to become the whole packet! It's not the couple of biscuits that does the damage, it's the attitude that it's 'bad' and you may as well give up and eat the lot! So, have a biscuit or two and enjoy them, rather than letting a few turn into the whole packet that you end up not enjoying at all.
10. **Most importantly Have fun!** The holidays are a time for catching up with our loved ones, time to make special memories so try not to be too hard on yourself and try to remember everything in moderation.

**We would like to wish you all safe and happy holidays from everyone here at the clinic.**

**To try the latest RECIPE take me home...**