

JUNE - JULY 2021 EDITION

FREE TO TAKE HOME!



COVID vaccination



Medicinal Cannabis



Haemorrhoids



Tonsillitis

● **PRACTICE DOCTORS**

Dr Amanda Brooks

BHealthSci, BMed, FRACGP, GradDipRur, FARGP
Palliative Care & Geriatrics

Dr Stephan Pluschke

BSc (Hons), MBBS, FRACGP
Paediatrics & Geriatrics

Dr Phil Rayson

BMed, DRANZCOG, FRACGP, PGCertAME
Obstetrics

Dr Bruce Stewart

MBChB, FRACGP, DRACOG
Travel Medicine & Paediatrics

Dr Trisha Fowler

BMed, BMedSci, FRACGP

Dr Fatima Sadia

MBBS, MRCGP(INT)

Dr Nicole Jackson

B Physiotherapy Grad Dip Sports PT, BMed

● **PRACTICE STAFF**

Practice Managers:

Donna & Carol

Reception Supervisor:

Cindy

Reception Staff:

Courtney, Hannah (casual),
Erin, Lauren (casual) & Chloe
(Trainee)

Nursing Staff:

Karen, Julianne, Deb & Anne

● **SURGERY HOURS**

Monday to Friday

8.30am – 5pm*

*Closed 12.30pm to 1.30pm for
lunch.

● **AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY**

If you need to contact a doctor
outside of office hours weeknights
& weekends please ring
0427 534 811.

In the event that the phone is
unanswered and you feel you have
an emergency, please dial **000**.

Otherwise leave a message and the
on call Doctor will return your call.
After hours consultations are not
bulk-billed.

The nearest emergency centre
is Manning River Rural Referral
Hospital in Taree.

We provide a comprehensive family medical service – quality care in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

● **BILLING ARRANGEMENTS**

Please ask at reception for specific consultation fees.

Please pay at the time of the consult by cash, cheque, credit card or EFTPOS.
If you have any difficulty paying our fee at any time, please do not hesitate to
discuss it with us.

A charge may be incurred (at the doctor's discretion) for missed appointments.

● **APPOINTMENTS**

The surgery will now be closing from 12.30pm to
1.30pm each day for lunch.

Existing patients can make an **online booking**
through our website or using the Hot Doc app on
google play or the app store.

Please ring **6553 4811** for an appointment.

If you need more than 15 minutes with the doctor,
please tell the receptionist when you make the
booking. Urgent medical problems will be dealt with promptly.

If you need to cancel an appointment please phone or email us at: **reception@
winghamfamilyhealthclinic.com.au**. This email address is for cancellations only.

● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

Communication Policy. The practice nurse is happy to assist with telephone
enquiries. If necessary the nurse will ask your doctor to return your phone call
at their earliest convenience. This may take a few days. The practice encourages
patients to call the practice as our email is not used to book appointments and
provide advice, emails are also seldom checked and we do not guarantee them
to be replied to.

House Calls. We are happy to visit you at home if you are too sick to come to
the surgery. Please ring 6553 4811 in the morning if you require a house call so
it can be arranged with your doctor.

Your medical record is a confidential document. Our practice ensures that
important elements of our patients' health information are recorded in their
health record consistently, regardless of the provider they see.

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.

Reminder Systems. This practice is committed to preventive care.

We may issue you with a reminder notice from time to time. This may come
from the National Pap Smear Register, the Childhood Immunisation Register,
the Bowel Screening Register or from our own records. If you do not wish to be
part of this system, kindly advise the reception staff.

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 Health Care Complaints Commission on 1800 043 159.

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.

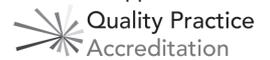
**Further information can be found on the updated practice website:
www.winghamfamilyhealthclinic.com.au**

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

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





COVID vaccination

As you read this, the covid vaccination roll out will be well under way.

Phase 1a started first and included aged care residents and staff, quarantine and border force workers and certain frontline healthcare workers. This was estimated to be 1.4 million doses.

Phase 1b is roughly ten times as many doses. The people in this group are those over the age of 70, ATSI people over the age of 55, younger adults with a medical condition or disability and other higher-risk workers (e.g. healthcare, defence force, police).

Around Australia, 4500 practices have registered to be vaccination centres. It is, rightly, felt that the best place to have your vaccination is where your medical history is known. Before having the vaccine, there is a questionnaire you need to complete. Blood clotting is a rare side effect. However, a history

of blood clots or being on a blood thinner medication does not of itself mean you cannot have the vaccine.

You will be required to wait for at least 15 minutes after having the shot before leaving and also to report any adverse effects that you feel. Some do report headache or being a bit "off colour" the following day. Soreness at the vaccine site can occur.

The two doses of the Covid vaccine should be 12 weeks apart, so you will be encouraged to book your second one at your initial vaccine visit. It is also important to separate the Covid vaccination from the flu vaccination by at least 14 days.

EDITORS NOTE: This information was current at the time of print

Haemorrhoids

One of the most common health issues searched about on the internet is haemorrhoids.

It is estimated to affect 300,000 Australians each year. These are essentially a "varicose vein" at the anus and can be internal (inside the rectum) or external. Risk factors related to pressure such as constipation or heavy lifting and sitting on hard surfaces for prolonged periods. There may be a genetic tendency.

Symptoms include itching or pain at the anus, discomfort when opening the bowels, bleeding at the anus and a "dragging sensation". The severity ranges from mild to severe.

Diagnosis is based on the history and examination. There is no need for tests to diagnose haemorrhoids. However, bleeding from the bowel in the absence of haemorrhoids will need investigation. If you experience this, always consult your GP.

Treatment is about relieving symptoms whilst waiting for resolution, generally taking a few days. There are numerous ointments and suppositories, most of which do not require a prescription. Sitting in a



lukewarm bath may help. Drink adequate water and eat enough fibre so as the stools are not hard. Stool softeners may help. Rarely the haemorrhoid may need lancing and, if infected, antibiotics.

If recurrent and troublesome, haemorrhoids can be treated surgically. Today this is usually by injection or banding rather than formal removal. Prevention measures include avoiding constipation by drinking enough fluid and having plenty of fibre in the diet. Be careful with heavy lifting.



Medicinal Cannabis

Since legalisation there have now been well in excess of 100,000 approvals granted to prescribe Medicinal Cannabis in Australia.

Since legalisation, there have now been well in excess of 100,000 approvals granted to prescribe Medicinal Cannabis in Australia. Like all medications, it does not work for everyone. It is also not a cure for any medical condition. The largest number of approvals to prescribe have been for chronic pain. Other more common reasons include cancer symptoms, (e.g. pain, nausea and cachexia), insomnia, and Parkinson's.

The use of medicinal cannabis remains an area where opinions differ in medicine. In March, the faculty of pain medicine stated publicly that it should not be prescribed for pain as there was no evidence to support its use. Many patients who have found improvement in their pain levels would dispute that, as would doctors who have followed the research.

Medicinal cannabis can only be prescribed in Australia with relevant approvals. It can only be used in conditions where the TGA accepts evidence of benefit and where other treatments have either failed to help or have caused unacceptable side effects. There is no PBS subsidy.

Currently, there are a number of trials being done in Australia to learn more about the role of Medicinal cannabis. Some of these are recruiting patients interested to volunteer to be part of trials.

Not all doctors are familiar with the role and use of Medicinal Cannabis, but an increasing number are. As always, talk to your doctor about what the options are for you in your specific circumstances.



Diagnosing & Treating Hypertension

High blood pressure (hypertension) is estimated to affect nearly one-third of Australian adults.

Risk factors include a positive family history, being male, older age, being overweight, consuming excess salt and insufficient exercise.

Hypertension can be due to a secondary cause like kidney disease, but most commonly is essential hypertension without other underlying cause. Hypertension is a risk factor for heart attack, stroke and kidney disease.

Some people may experience headaches or tiredness, but most have no symptoms. Diagnosis is by measurement of blood pressure. Normal blood pressure is generally regarded as being below 140/90. The upper (systolic) pressure is when the heart contracts whilst the lower (diastolic) is in between beats when the heart rests. Pressure can increase with age. Blood pressure is variable, so one reading is not diagnostic. If your pressure is elevated, your doctor will recommend

further visits to re-check the level. Today many people have home monitors, and 24-hour monitoring can be arranged (this is not covered by Medicare). Your doctor may recommend other tests too.

Regular checks of blood pressure are recommended for people 40 and older and starting younger if need be.

The first line of treatment is lifestyle measures (weight loss, reducing salt intake, doing more exercise, managing stress, eating more vegetables). Medication may be needed, and there are many alternatives. You may need to trial a few to get the right one for you, and more than one may be needed. Treatment is generally long-term, but some people can reduce or come off medications after a certain time. Ongoing monitoring of blood pressure is lifelong.

 <http://www.hbprca.com.au/high-blood-pressure/>

Tonsillitis

The tonsils sit half way to the back of the throat and are part of the immune system, helping "trap" infections. They are particularly important in young children with less developed immune systems. Unless enlarged or infected we generally don't even know they are there.

Tonsillitis is an infection of the tonsils caused by a virus (80%) or bacteria. The symptoms are a sore throat, fever, headache, tiredness, feeling generally unwell, pain on swallowing and loss of appetite. The tonsils may enlarge and have white or yellow spots on them. They may have a "coated" appearance. It can occur at any age but is more common in children.

Preventative measures include washing hands, not sharing eating utensils with those who are unwell and coughing/sneezing into tissues.

If you suspect tonsillitis see your GP. Treatment for the viral form is bed rest, fluids, gargling (if possible), or lozenges to ease pain and paracetamol or ibuprofen for fever and pain. Bacterial tonsillitis (usually streptococcus) will be treated with antibiotics. Penicillin is the first choice, but there are other options for those allergic to it.

Some people get recurrent tonsillitis, and the question of having tonsils removed arises. Tonsillectomy is far less commonly done today than previously. The rule of thumb is four or more episodes per year for two or more consecutive years. Severity, response to treatment and time off school or work also are factors. You may be referred to an ENT surgeon. Talk to your GP.

 <http://www.mydr.com.au/respiratory-health/tonsillitis>





THAI CHICKEN RISOTTO

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp peanut oil
- 500g skinless chicken thigh fillets, trimmed, cut into 2cm pieces
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 long red chilli, seeds removed, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 4 kaffir lime leaves, stems removed, finely shredded
- 1 1/2 cups (330g) arborio rice
- 1/4 cup (75g) Thai red curry paste
- 2 cups (500ml) chicken style liquid stock
- 1 cup (250ml) coconut cream
- 2 tbsp fish sauce
- 200g green beans (or peas), trimmed, chopped
- Coriander, to serve
- Fried Asian shallots, to serve
- Lime halves (optional), to serve

Steps

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Heat the oil in a flameproof casserole over medium-high heat. In batches, add the chicken and cook, turning, for 2-3 minutes until browned. Remove the chicken from the casserole and set aside.
3. Reduce heat to medium and add the onion, chilli, garlic and half the kaffir lime leaves. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes until the onion is soft, then add the rice and curry paste and cook, stirring to coat the grains, for a further 1 minute.
4. Return the chicken to the casserole with the stock and 1/2 cup (125ml) water. Bring to a simmer, then cover with a lid and cook in the oven for 25 minutes or until most of the liquid has been absorbed. Remove from the oven and stir in the coconut cream, fish sauce and beans, then cover and stand for 10 minutes.

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● OTHER SERVICES OFFERED

Practice doctors are experienced in the broad range of general practice problems and the treatment of all age groups.

As well as routine consultations, the following services are available:

- Home visits
- Check-ups
- Liquid Nitrogen
- Spirometry: Lung Test
- Nutrition Advice
- Sports Medicine
- Dermatology
- Pregnancy tests
- Antenatal Care
- ECG: Heart Check
- Family Planning: including Implanon
- Vaccination: Children
- Vaccination: travel, including Yellow Fever
- Minor surgery: stitching cuts, removing moles
- Blood Tests and recalls for clinically significant results
- Access to Preventative Health Information Brochures
- Health Assessments
- 24hr holter monitors

Please note the closest Hospital is Manning Base Rural Hospital
26 York Street, Taree NSW 2430
The doctor on call can be contacted on **0427 534 811** if you are a regular patient here at the surgery