



GLEN FORREST MEDICAL CENTRE

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MBBS(Hons), DRANZCOG

CLINIC STAFF

Nursing: Sinead, Roz, Halina, Anna and Anne

Reception: Janet, Virginia, Kirsten, Sue, Julie, Lisa, Stephanie

Practice Manager: Maria

SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

Consultations are by appointment.

Monday to Thursday

8.00am-1pm 2.00pm-6.00pm

Friday

8.00am-1.00pm 2.00pm-5.00pm

Saturday

8.30am-11.30am

GP After Hours – Mount Lawley

Ph 9370 4200

Monday to Friday 7.00pm–11.00pm

Saturday 2.00pm–10.00pm

Sunday and Pub Hols 10.00am–10.00pm

For all emergencies please present to St John of God Midland Public Hospital, 1 Clayton St, Midland Ph 9462 4000.

Urgent medical problems are always seen on the same day.

For Home Visits, please telephone the surgery as early as possible after 8.15am.

For After Hours emergency medical problems Monday–Saturday, please call 9298 8555 up until 11pm for the practice duty doctor.

YOUR DOCTOR

FEBRUARY 2023



'NO GO' FOR GONORRHOEA



FOOD CRAVINGS EXPLAINED



THE TINNITUS MYSTERY



ARTERIES: YOUR HEALTH LIFELINE

Compliments of your GP

A healthy start for school



LIGHTEN UP! SCHOOL BACKPACK TIPS

As school heads back for another year it's the ideal time to check that your child's backpack meets the following basic requirements:

1. Is appropriately sized for your child.
2. Has a padded back and shoulder straps.
3. Sits at the top of their hips with hip belts to distribute the load.
4. Weighs no more than 10% of your child's body weight (including contents).

The new school term seems to come around quickly for children after the holidays. For the little ones who are just beginning their schooling it's an exciting time. For parents and carers, there are a number of things to consider to give them the best start possible.

Keeping up-to-date with the more common health issues that can be encountered in a school setting is a good start.

SPREAD OF INFECTION

Children often don't have any idea of personal space... and even less of social distancing! That's why some common infections can spread quickly in a school environment. Teaching children good hygiene practices can help limit some infections.

Head lice are easy to catch, as when kids put their heads together they can crawl quickly from one hair to the next. Look out for itchy, red scalps, little insects and tiny eggs clinging to hairs. They're usually easy to treat – lotions designed to kill off an infestation work well when used as directed. Remember to check the whole household!

Threadworm is an intestinal worm commonly found in preschool and school-aged children.

BACKPACKS

Many schools no longer supply personal lockers, so children may have to keep all their gear, books, and food in their bag, especially older children who move from room to room for their lessons. Ill-fitting, oversized and heavy bags can cause strain on developing bodies.

This type of worm is not usually serious, but causes a very itchy bottom, which usually worsens at night. Threadworm can be treated easily with medication; however the whole family must also have treatment.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common, easy-to-catch condition causing sores and blisters, particularly around the mouth and fingers. It clears up pretty quickly but you should keep your child off school to avoid further spread.

Coughs and colds are usually going around and are difficult to avoid – but general good health supports the immune system, and they usually clear up with a few days of standard home treatment.

Some illnesses which used to be common in childhood – measles, mumps, and chicken pox – are now rare due to effective vaccination programmes.

Keeping children well isn't a quick fix or a one-size-fits-all. Make sure that your child has a healthy diet, time to play – and rest – and is up to date with recommended health checks and vaccinations. If you're worried about your child's health, consult your GP and keep the school in the loop about any concerns.

Ask us about a Healthy Kids Check for your child before they begin school

Our newsletter is free! You can take a copy with you.

HEALTHY LUNCHBOX WEEK 5-11 February

Inspiring Australians to create healthy and enjoyable lunchboxes.

To find out more scan the QR code or visit www.healthylunchboxweek.org.au.



Chicken and avocado wrap

This is an easy and healthy lunch that children can 'design' to suit their tastes.

Ingredients

- 1 wholegrain wrap
- Tbsp. hummus (any flavour)
- 50g cooked chicken breast (grilled, baked or poached)
- ¼ avocado, sliced
- 2-3 slices of tomato
- ¼ cup grated cheese
- ½ cup mixed lettuce or coleslaw

Method

- Spread hummus evenly over the wrap.
- Add chicken, avocado, tomato, cheese and lettuce.
- Roll tightly and cut into halves or quarters.



WORD SEARCH

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

ANGINA
 ANTIBIOTICS
 ANUS
 ARTERY
 ASYMPTOMATIC
 BACTERIA
 CHOLESTEROL
 CONDOM
 CORONARY
 DISEASE

ENERGY
 GONORRHOEA
 HEARING
 HEART
 HYGIENE
 INFERTILITY
 ISCHAEMIC
 LUNGS
 MEASLES
 METABOLIC

MINDFULNESS
 MUCOUS
 MUMPS
 MUSCLES
 OBESITY
 OXYGEN
 RESISTANT
 THREADWORM
 TINNITUS
 VACCINATION

Why hasn't gonorrhoea gone?

Gonorrhoea is an infection which is passed on through sexual contact, or transmitted from an infected mother to baby during pregnancy. It's sometimes referred to as "the clap."

It's a bacterial infection which affects mucous membranes, particularly of the genitals and anus, and sometimes the throat and eyes. There can often be a thick discharge from the penis or vagina, bleeding between periods, and pain when peeing; however some people with gonorrhoea don't have any symptoms at all. It can cause serious problems, including infertility and blindness.

During the Covid-19 lockdowns, rates of gonorrhoea infection reduced – this is probably because of people's reduced ability to meet new sexual partners; but limited access to healthcare services may also have played a part in lower numbers of people being diagnosed. However, since lockdown ended, rates of gonorrhoea infection have sharply risen.

Why is gonorrhoea on the rise?

There may be some natural, understandable reasons why infection rates increased sharply after lockdown, when people had been without human contact for long periods! The real concern is that we're now seeing gonorrhoea infections that don't clear up with the usual antibiotics.

Some bacteria can grow and multiply very quickly, which means they have a high chance of changing (mutating); and over time strains of bacteria develop which are resistant to the antibiotics we have. This is particularly worrying because new strains of gonorrhoea are increasingly resistant to all antibiotics.

Preventing gonorrhoea

Practising safer sexual behaviour is the best way to avoid catching an STI – that means always using a condom or dental dam for any sexual activity, and having regular check-ups, especially if you're at increased risk.

If you suspect that you may have a sexually transmitted infection, access your GP or sexual health clinic. It's a good idea to get checked out whenever you have a new sexual partner or new risk of transmission, even if you don't have symptoms. Some STIs are asymptomatic but can have serious consequences if left untreated.



A growing number of infections are becoming harder to treat as the antibiotics commonly used to treat them are less effective.

Arteries: your lifelines to health

Arteries are the vessels that carry blood from your heart to the rest of your body. They carry oxygenated blood to provide nutrients and energy to all of your body's cells.

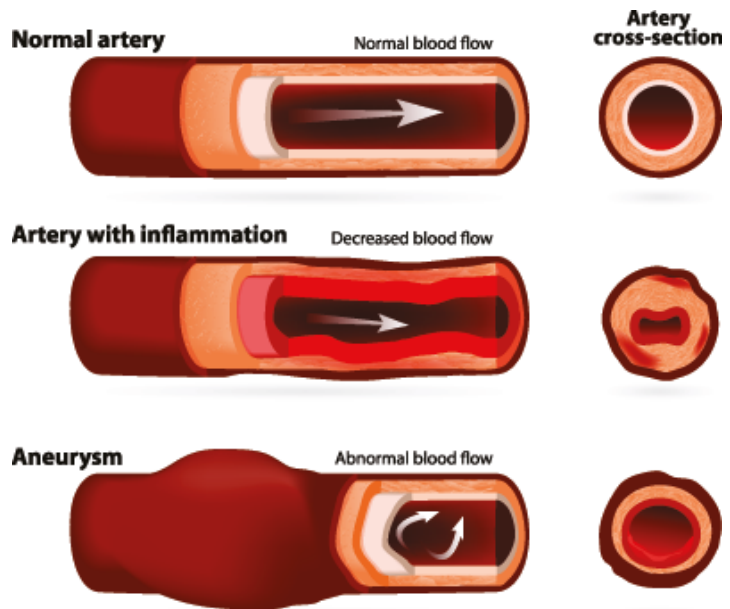
When your heart beats, it pumps with enough force to push blood through your arteries and into the network of blood vessels that supplies every part of your body. The arteries must be tough enough to withstand this pressure with every single heartbeat, for your whole life.

The walls of an artery are thick, slightly elastic, and have their own muscles to support a healthy flow of blood. Healthy arteries maintain the blood and oxygen supply around your body, and without that oxygen supply you can develop serious health problems.

What can go wrong with your arteries?

Arteries that are narrowed or where the walls are thickened can restrict blood flow. This can be caused by build-ups of fatty cholesterol deposits, problems with clotting, and hardened arteries. Narrowed or blocked arteries can cause serious problems like:

- **Heart attack** – the coronary arteries are the vessels that feed your heart. If there is a narrowing or blockage in one of these arteries, reduced blood supply to the cells causes damage to your heart muscle. Chest pain caused by insufficient blood flow to the heart is called angina, and when this restricted flow starts to cause death of muscle tissue, this is a heart attack.
- **Stroke** – an ischaemic stroke happens when the arteries that supply blood to your brain are narrowed and restrict oxygen supply to the cells. This causes areas of tissue death which can have serious effects on your brain function.



- **Ischaemic** (this means that there are areas of tissue without enough blood supply to keep them healthy) changes to other internal organs like the bowel, liver, and kidneys, seriously affecting their function.

Keeping your arteries healthy

Your lifestyle is an important part of assessing your risk of heart disease. There are lots of things you can do to keep your arteries healthy and they're pretty much common sense!

One Australian has a heart attack or stroke every four minutes . Getting a Heart Health Check can be the first step towards lowering your risk. Find out more at www.heartfoundation.org.au.



- Watch your cholesterol – diet and exercise can improve cholesterol levels, but some people may need medication – especially people with a family history of high cholesterol.
- Maintain a healthy weight and follow a wholesome diet high in plant foods, especially wholegrains, fruit and vegetables. Eat lean proteins and oily fish like salmon, and limit high fat animal products.
- Exercise – it's great for your cardiovascular health, improving blood pressure and heart rate.
- Stop smoking – it affects more than just your lungs, and significantly contributes to cardiovascular disease.
- Get a check-up – a heart health check can help assess your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

Why do we have food cravings?

Our brains are complicated... but our needs are simple. We respond to fatty, sugary, salty foods with immediate, short-term feelings of pleasure, and this can present itself as cravings and a desire for unhealthy foods. Unfortunately this can have a serious impact on our health.

A food craving usually means a desire for a certain food which is unrelated to any nutritional need or hunger. Food cravings are more tied in with habits, pleasure and emotions, than with nourishment. We don't crave vitamin tablets... we crave donuts!

A recent study on animals at Zuckerman Institute in Columbia produced an interesting result: that craving fatty food is not just about taste; it appears that the gut can 'tell' the brain what the body wants or needs. The connection between the gut and brain is complex and further research is needed. While we have some control over the way we think about food, we have

little control over our gut's influence on the pathways that lead to cravings.

It isn't yet clear how this research will help the fight against obesity and related metabolic disorders, but improving our understanding of the mechanisms behind cravings may lead to breakthroughs in weight management and disease prevention.

Until we have those answers, there are some practical ways food cravings can be controlled:

- **Distraction** – if you occupy your mind with another task or purpose, your desire to snack can reduce.
- **Find alternatives** – there may be more healthy options that satisfy your cravings – a piece of fruit or yoghurt.
- **Stay hydrated** – sometimes your food cravings might actually be masking thirst, so staying hydrated can stave off overeating.



Tinnitus: still a mystery to science

Tinnitus is the perception of sound when there's no external noise reaching the ear. It might be referred to as 'ringing in the ears,' and can sound like buzzing, ringing, or whistling. Some people also hear whooshing or clicking sounds.

Tinnitus is often related to hearing loss, but also occurs without any long term impact on your hearing. There are lots of different potential causes, including head or neck injury, damage to your ear drum, or exposure to loud noise. Some diseases and infections and certain medications may cause tinnitus, or make it worse. Although some of the causes can be pinpointed, scientists still don't know why it happens.

TREATMENTS FOR TINNITUS

As tinnitus is so personal and complex, there isn't any 'one size fits all' treatment or cure; however there are a few remedies many people have found helpful.

- **Sound therapy** – there are specially designed 'soundscapes' and apps which aim to improve people's perception of their tinnitus, but some people find that just having some gentle background noise also helps. Listening to music, podcasts or audiobooks can be helpful for some people – but make sure you're listening at a sensible volume that won't damage your ears!
- **Hearing aids** – tinnitus that's related to hearing loss may be improved with treatments to improve the hearing loss.

TINNITUS AWARENESS WEEK 6-12 February

Public education about tinnitus and how it affects people.

- **Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** – there's evidence to support CBT as treatment for various physical conditions as it can help you change the way you perceive and respond to problems. CBT can be a way of developing coping strategies for tinnitus.
- **Natural remedies and general good health** – a healthy diet, fresh air and exercise can actually improve tinnitus symptoms and your response to the condition. There are lots of reasons to follow a healthy lifestyle; staying well makes you able to cope better with other health problems too.

Tinnitus is very common, which is one of the reasons why there's ongoing research into developing new treatments. Recent clinical trials include using specific sounds and mild electrical stimulation to treat tinnitus.

LIVING WITH TINNITUS

Although tinnitus is annoying and may have a negative impact on your health and everyday life, it's important to remember that tinnitus itself isn't dangerous or damaging, and isn't always long lasting. It's possible to find ways of living with tinnitus, and your GP can help you explore underlying causes and treatment options.

REPEAT SCRIPTS

Repeat prescriptions will not be issued without a prior consultation. Patients seeking repeat prescriptions must see their doctor. This is to ensure proper management.

REFERRALS

A re-referral may be requested by phone. New referrals require that the patient be seen by the doctor. Referrals cannot be back-dated. Referrals are current for 12 months, please check with your specialist to see if your referral is still current.

ETHICS

This practice abides by the AMA Code of Ethics at all times. A copy of the code is available on request.

LONG CONSULTATIONS

Long consultations are available on request for all Doctors if required. **Dr F Kotai** requires 60 mins for an Aviation medical. All Health Assessments require 30 mins. Failure to attend appointments will attract a fee of \$32.00 for a standard consultation or \$54.00 for a long consultation.

ONLINE APPOINTMENTS

Online appointments can be made any time of the day at www.gfmc.com.au click on "Make a booking".

BILLING

We are a private practice and payment is made on the day. A discount of \$5.00 is given for payment on the day. We can claim your rebate immediately from Medicare using Easyclaim onto your cheque or savings card or Online Claiming where Medicare deposits direct to your bank account within 48 hrs. Questions related to fees can be dealt with by the receptionist. If you have difficulty paying your account, please feel free to discuss this matter with your doctor.

FEEDBACK

We would like to know of any concerns you may have about the care you receive. Please feel free to talk to the doctor or our Practice Manager. However, if you feel there is a matter you wish to take up outside, you can contact the Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO): GPO Box B61, Perth WA 6838. Tel: 9323 0600.

PHONE CALLS

Doctors in this practice may be contacted by phone during surgery hours. A message will be taken if the doctor is with another patient.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

If you miss an appointment and fail to advise us at least 2 hours beforehand, you will be charged a Failure to Attend Fee. This fee applies to everyone and cannot be claimed back at Medicare.

Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of this practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff.

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.

Our newsletter is free! Take a copy with you.