

**FREE!!**  
PLEASE TAKE ONE



# YOUR DOCTOR



**APRIL 2016**

## GLEN FORREST MEDICAL CENTRE



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Glen Forrest 6071  
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MBBS FRACGP FARGP DCH Grad Dip FM

**Dr Alina Harriss**  
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**Dr Mark Daykin**  
MB ChB(UK) MRCGP (UK) FRACGP

### CLINIC STAFF:

**Nursing:** Sinead, Karen, Lisa, Cheryl, Fiona and Ros

**Reception:** Colleen, Ellen, Janet, Virginia, Kirsten, Sue and Debbie

**Practice Manager:** Maria

### SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES:

Consultations are by appointment.

**Monday to Thursday**  
8.30am-1pm 2pm-6pm

**Friday**  
8.30am-1pm 2pm-5pm

**Saturday**  
8.30am-12.00noon

GP After Hours Clinic – Midland available at St John of God Midland Public Hospital Ph 1300 706 922

6pm to 10pm Mon-Fri, Sat noon-10pm Sun & Pub Hols 10am – 10pm

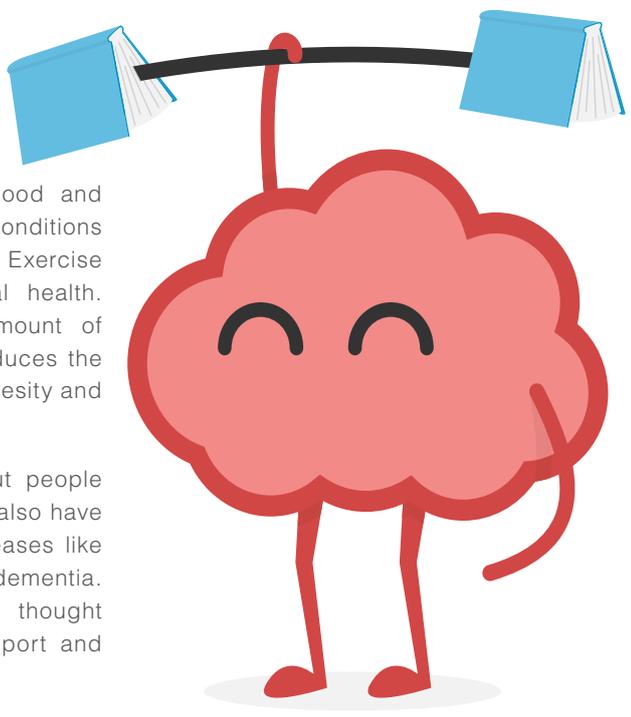
GP After Hours – Mount Lawley Ph 9370 4200 Mon-Fri 7pm - 11pm, Sat 2pm – 10pm, Sun and Pub Hols 10am – 10pm

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 surgey as early as possible after 8.15am. For After Hours emergency medical problems Monday-Saturday, please call 92988 555 up until 9.00pm for the practice duty doctor.

## THE BRAIN NEEDS A WORKOUT TOO

**Research has found that exercise is important for mental wellbeing.**



Exercise can improve your mood and reduce the risk of mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. Exercise is also important for physical health. Getting the recommended amount of physical activity each week reduces the risk of becoming overweight, obesity and a number of diseases.

It's not entirely known why but people who remain active into old age also have a lower risk of developing diseases like Alzheimer's and vascular dementia. Following on from this it's thought that exercise may help to support and preserve normal brain function.

Researchers in the US looked at the effect of exercise on brain health in 30 inactive adults aged between 61 – 88 years. Nearly half of the participants were showing some signs of mild cognitive impairment at the beginning of the study.

The group was given an exercise program to follow that involved moderate intensity walking on a treadmill four times a week for 12 weeks. Participants' fitness levels were measured and scans were taken of their brain before and after the program.

Predictably, at the end of the 12 weeks, fitness levels had increased with improvements in heart and lung health. Brain scans showed an increase in the thickness of the cortex compared to before the program commenced.

The cortex is the outer layer of the brain that typically shrinks in people with Alzheimer's disease. The greatest increase

in cortical size was seen in those with the greatest improvements in physical fitness. The thickening of the cortex was seen in healthy people and in people with mild cognitive impairment.

This was a small study and can't prove that exercise leads to improvements in brain health. Nevertheless it adds to a growing body of evidence indicating that exercise promotes good mental and brain health and may slow the mental decline that can come with ageing. It's never too late to start exercising and it's important to maintain the recommended levels of physical activity as you get older.

**For reference:** Reiter, K et al. Improved cardiorespiratory fitness is associated with increased cortical thickness in mild cognitive impairment. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society* 2015; 757 – 767.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY FATS

Saturated fat is the 'bad' kind of fat and often comes from processed foods like biscuits, pastries, hamburgers, pizza and hot chips.

The current recommendation for saturated fat intake in Australia for reasonable heart health is 7% of the total daily energy intake. Currently it's estimated that Australians consume about 12% of their total energy as saturated fat. Too much saturated fat in the diet can increase blood pressure, increase the amount of bad cholesterol in the blood (LDL cholesterol) and increase the risk of heart disease.

Many people rightly try to avoid saturated fat in their diet to avoid bad health outcomes and while this is a good measure to take, some of us go a step too far to exclude all dietary fats. That's usually because the different types of fats are not well understood. Avoiding all dietary fats can be detrimental to your health, as good fat actually contains properties that are important for good health.

Polyunsaturated fats, for instance, are healthy fats. A recently published analysis of international trends in health and dietary fat intake looked at the implications of not consuming enough polyunsaturated fats in the diet. The data showed that reducing saturated fat intake was associated with a 4% reduction in the rate of deaths from heart disease but they also showed that not eating enough polyunsaturated fat increased the risk of heart disease by 8%. This research highlights the importance of getting enough healthy fat in your

diet. Healthy fat should not be excluded from the diet or cast in the same mould as saturated fat. Polyunsaturated fat can be found in a variety of tasty and nourishing foods including nuts, seeds, fish and leafy greens and plays an important role in balancing your diet. It may also help to reduce risk of heart disease.

The research also corroborates what is already known about saturated fat – it's important to keep saturated fat intake to a minimum by avoiding foods like processed meat, take-aways like pizza and hamburgers and sweet treats like ice-cream and biscuits. If you're unsure about the different types of fats and foods that contain them, visit the Victorian Government's Better Health website for a good explanation: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/fats-and-oils>



**For reference:** Wany, Q et al. Impact of nonoptimal intake of saturated, polyunsaturated, and trans fat on global burdens of coronary heart disease. *Journal of the American Heart Association* 2016; DOI: 10.1161/JAHA.115.002891

# TRIM DOWN WITH FLAVONOIDS

Different foods are known to be positively or negatively associated with weight change.

Foods high in saturated fat are known to increase the risk of weight gain and some chronic diseases (see the story on the importance of healthy fats for information on what type of fat you should be getting in your diet).

On the other hand, foods like blueberries, apples, pears and celery are thought to positively influence body weight. All of these 'positive' foods have something in common – they are rich sources of flavonoids.

Flavonoids are naturally occurring compounds found in a number of fruits and vegetables. The exact mechanism responsible for the weight loss effects of flavonoid rich food is not entirely known.

Researchers looked into this further, investigating the relationship between flavonoids and weight change in more than 100,000 people over nearly a quarter of a century. The people involved were free of chronic diseases, including obesity, at the beginning of the study. Their personal data were collected over 24 years. This included their weight and lifestyle habits recorded every two years and their food intake reported every four years.

Consumption of most of the flavonoids was associated with small but significant weight loss benefits. This was strongest for anthocyanins (found in foods such as blueberries and strawberries) and flavonols (also found in berries and other foods like onions). The research reiterates the importance of fruits and vegetables being part of a healthy diet.

For people who struggle to lose weight, choosing specific types of fruits and vegetables might aid weight loss efforts. It's important to try to get the recommended two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables in your diet each day and perhaps try for an extra hit of flavonoid rich food if you're having trouble shifting those extra kilograms.



**For reference:** Bertoia, M et al. Dietary flavonoid intake and weight maintenance: three prospective cohorts of 124,086 US men and women followed for up to 24 years. *BMJ* 2016; 352: i17 <http://dx.doi.org/10/1136/bmj.i17>

## Good Health on the Menu

### BLUEBERRY AND BANANA MUFFINS

*A delicious snack packed with flavonoid filled blueberries.*

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups self raising flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 150g Greek natural yoghurt
- 80g (lite) margarine, melted
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- ½ cup honey
- 1 cup fresh blueberries

## Good Health on the Menu

#### Method

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius
2. Line 12 non-stick muffin spaces with paper muffin cases
3. Sift flour and cinnamon in a bowl, stir in rolled oats and make a hole in the centre of the mixture
4. Add eggs, yoghurt, margarine, banana and honey and combine well
5. Fold in blueberries and stir lightly
6. Spoon mixture into a muffin pan
7. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown
8. Remove muffins and allow to cool before serving

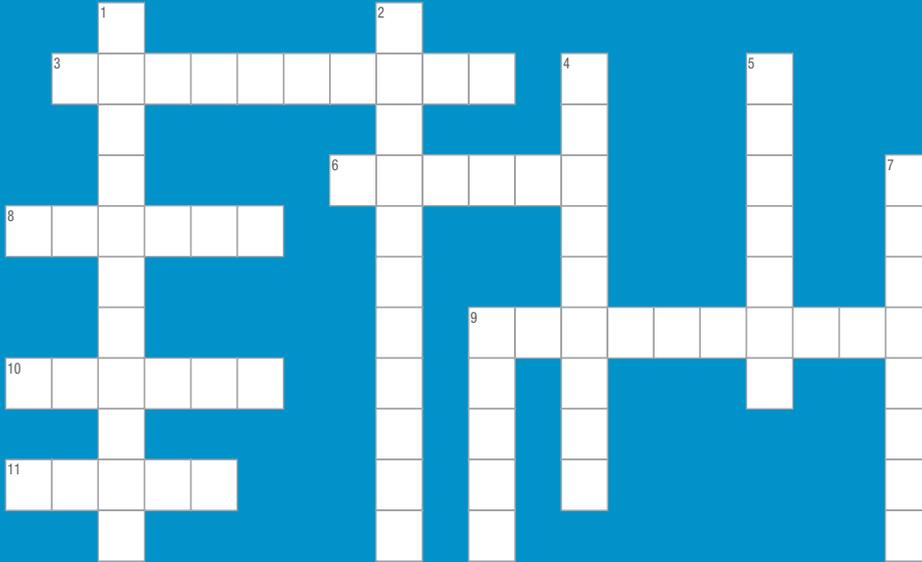
# Clever CROSSWORD

## Down

1. We develop more of this as we age (2 words).
2. The ingredient for our muffins that are filled with flavonoids.
4. What type of fat is the bad kind?
5. What should you control as the key to weight maintenance?
7. Exercise is important for mental health. What other type of health is it important for?
9. Use this to help rid your mouth of food debris after meals.

## Across

3. Five serves of these are recommended in your daily diet.
6. Nuts could potentially assist with control of this.
8. Avoiding all dietary fats can be detrimental to this.
9. What are foods such as pears and celery a rich source of?
10. Nuts have varying degrees of this available content.
11. Which body organ produces the neuropeptide, AGRP?



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF YOUR DOCTOR.  
ANSWERS ARE ON THE BACK PAGE.

## HUNGER FEEDS A BAD MOOD

Eating is a pleasurable experience bringing about feelings of happiness and comfort and creating an occasion to socialise with friends and family.

The gratification that repeatedly arises from enjoying food can create reward pathways in the brain that link eating food to feelings of happiness and pleasure. The neural pathway circuits in the brain that link food with good times are reinforced with every meal. Another potential explanation for the enjoyment associated with food is that eating may suppress negative pathways in the brain, minimising bad feelings.

Researchers in the US have been following the activities of small subsets of nerves (neurons) in the brains of mice that produce agouti-related protein (AGRP). AGRP is a neuropeptide produced by the brain and is one of the most potent appetite stimulators. These neurons fire in humans (and mice) when we're hungry.

Scientists were able to switch these neurons on and off using highly selective chemicals implanted in the brains of the mice and then analyse the effect that this had on their disposition. When the neurons were activated the mice appeared unhappy, avoiding social interaction and retreating to the corner. The opposite occurred when the neurons

were switched off. In this instance, the mice socialised with other mice, explored new places and engaged with unfamiliar objects.

Being hungry triggers the AGRP neurons in our brain. The results of this study suggest that this trigger may elicit negative emotions. This may explain why people can get moody and irritable when they are hungry and why eating can alleviate this and promote feelings of happiness and satisfaction. This research also illustrates why it may be hard for some people to restrict how much they eat.

Portion control is key to weight maintenance. It's important to be aware of your mood and how food intake may be affecting this and develop strategies to manage the negative feelings that arise from being hungry. Eating foods that promote satiety (the feeling of fullness) is a good way to avoid the irritability that accompanies an empty stomach.

It's also important to remember that most people in developed countries have not actually experienced true hunger and are probably rather used to consistent periods of overeating and eating a lot of energy dense food so are feeling withdrawals from these states.

Foods high in fibre promote feelings of fullness for longer as do foods with a low glycemic index.

**For reference:** Betley, JN et al. Neurons for hunger and thirst transmit a negative-valence teaching signal. *Nature* 2016; 521: 180 – 185.

## == DID YOU KNOW? == A TREAT OF A SPORTS SUPPLEMENT



There's a lot of interest in the potential health benefits of dark chocolate, particularly for those of us with a sweet tooth. Dark chocolate contains large quantities of cocoa, which is the seed portion of the cocoa tree. Cocoa is rich in a compound called flavanols. Flavanols are found in some fruits like apples and berries, vegetables, tea and grape wine.

Flavanols are thought to have many health benefits including antioxidant properties and increasing the bioavailability and bioactivity of nitric oxide. Nitric oxide production is important to many athletes who are looking to improve their performance.

Researchers looked at the potential benefits of dark chocolate as a sports supplement for athletes who want to improve their performance.

Nine male participants took a series of tests to measure their maximal oxygen uptake (VO<sub>2</sub>max) and lung gas exchange. They also took two-minute exercise bike time trials. They did each trial two weeks apart consuming either 40g of dark chocolate or white chocolate each day leading up to the trial.

The results showed that dark chocolate improved participants' time trial performance compared to both no supplement and white chocolate. Improvements in VO<sub>2</sub>max were also observed in those who'd consumed dark chocolate compared to when no supplement was taken.

This was a small study so further research is needed to tease out the link between dark chocolate and improved athletic performance. In the meantime, however, this may be a safe and delicious way for athletes to get an extra kick out of their workout. So long as it's not consumed in large quantities too often.

**For reference:** Patel, RK et al. Dark chocolate supplementation reduces the oxygen cost of moderate intensity cycling. *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* 2015; 12:47



Dr Norman Swan

# A MATTER OF HEALTH

## GET YOUR TEETH INTO HEALTH

For some reason, in this age of holistic health, we tend to ignore the fact that our teeth are part of the rest of our body.

Most dentists have little to do with the rest of the healthcare system, so dental care can be expensive and hard to access if you're not privately insured. But the health of our teeth and gums is tightly linked to our health in general.

As we age, we develop more and more dental decay. Three out of four Australian toddlers have no decay but by the time we're over 65, the vast majority of people have fillings

## MYTH VS FACT: MORE NUTS = LESS CALORIES

Nuts are a nutritious snack and a valuable addition to a healthy diet.

Nuts are low in saturated fat and high in a number of good nutrients including 'healthy' fats like monosaturated and polyunsaturated fats, phytochemicals like flavonoids, dietary fibre, plant protein, vitamin E and minerals like magnesium, zinc, iron, calcium and potassium. Some nuts are also associated with reducing the risk of chronic diseases like coronary heart disease due to their positive effect on lowering LDL cholesterol and maintaining healthy blood vessels.

Despite their healthy properties many people think nuts are a fattening food due to the perception that they have a high available energy content. Research has shown, however, that the available energy from some nuts is actually much lower than people might predict. Almonds, for example, have been measured as having 20% less available energy than what people perceive.

Researchers have now tested this theory in walnuts. Eighteen healthy adults followed a diet plan on two different occasions for three weeks at a time. One of the plans included the addition of 42 grams of walnuts each day. The energy content of the foods consumed was measured and urine and faecal samples were analysed to see how much of the potential energy from the food was lost from the body.

and many have lost teeth. Gum disease is associated with increased inflammation in the body, which can damage the heart. Unsightly teeth are a turn off and reduce people's employment chances.

Poor oral health means poorer nutrition and that can mean shorter lives.

## TOP TEETH TIPS

- When you're pregnant make sure your teeth are in good shape and you brush regularly with a fluoridated toothpaste – it makes a difference.
- Avoid sugar – it fuels the decay causing germs in your mouth.
- Floss and make sure no food debris is left in your mouth after meals and overnight.
- Don't clean a baby's dummy by sucking on it as you'll transmit your decay germs to the baby.
- No sugar or fruit drinks for babies.
- Never leave a baby to suck on a bottle no matter what's in it.
- Start brushing teeth as soon as teeth are showing with a tiny smear of toothpaste.



The results showed that there was 21% less available energy in walnuts than predicted. The reason given by the researchers for this is that fat is trapped inside the plant cell wall in the nut limiting the potential of it being digested. They also flagged that this result might be more pronounced if the nuts are not chewed completely.

More research is needed in this area however these results suggest that some nuts are likely to have less available energy than people perceive and therefore potentially assist with weight control. These results apply to nuts consumed in the whole form so unfortunately it does not extend to highly homogenised spreads like peanut butter, which can be high in salt and saturated fat.

**For reference:** Baer, DJ et al. Walnuts consumed by healthy adults provide less available energy than predicted by the Alwater factors. *Journal of Nutrition* 2016; 146: 9 – 13.

- No smoking (deadly for gums and oral health).
- In childhood, if there is tooth decay, talk to a dentist about fissure sealing and fluoride applications to prevent further damage.
- In adulthood keep up the basics of dental hygiene and visit your dentist regularly.



## PRACTICE UPDATE

### 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 telephone. New referrals require that the patient be seen by the doctor. Referrals cannot be back-dated. Referrals have a currency of twelve 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. We recommend the following, **Dr C McGrath** requires 30 mins for a "Well Woman's Check" **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 \$30.00.

### ONLINE APPOINTMENTS

Online appointments can be made any time of the day at [www.gfmc.com.au](http://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.

### PHONES 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.