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**CLINIC STAFF**

**Nursing:** Sinead, Karen, Fiona, Roz, Halina and Anna

**Reception:** Ellen, Janet, Virginia, Kirsten, Sue, Julie, Michele, Rachel

**Practice Manager:** Maria

**SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES**

Consultations are by appointment.

**Monday to Thursday**

8.00am-1pm 2pm-6pm

**Friday**

8.00am-1pm 2pm-5pm

**Saturday**

8.30am-11.30am

**GP After Hours – Mount Lawley**

Ph 9370 4200

Monday to Friday 7pm-11pm

Saturday 2pm-10pm

Sunday 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 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 2021

FREE!

## This month we talk about...



**HEARTBURN /  
ACID REFLUX**



**MUSHROOM  
HAIR DYE?**



**IMPETIGO: AKA  
SCHOOL SORES**



**DEMYSIFYING  
INFLAMMATION**

## Walnuts – health in a nutshell

Walnuts are wrinkled, brain-shaped brown nuts – actually, a botanist might tell you they're technically seeds – which grow on trees and come in hard shells. They're versatile, tasty, can be eaten raw or toasted, and are widely used in both sweet and savoury recipes.

### WHAT'S IN A WALNUT?

Like other nuts, most of the kilojoules in walnuts come from fat, but these are considered 'good' fats – high in omega fatty acids and polyunsaturated fats. They contain little saturated fat and no cholesterol. This fat profile helps to increase HDL ('good') cholesterol and lower LDL ('bad') cholesterol.

Don't be deceived by their unassuming appearance; they're also incredibly dense in many essential minerals and vitamins, and have strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties which can help reduce risk and improve symptoms for a range of chronic and acute conditions.

Walnuts are around 15% protein and high in dietary fibre. In short, they're very good for you.

### LATEST RESEARCH ON HEALTH BENEFITS OF WALNUTS

Heart disease, stroke and cancer consistently give us the highest global death rate of any diseases. This also means that these diseases are at the forefront of research into prevention and treatment.

Recent research into the potential health benefits of walnuts had exciting results. Researchers expected that walnuts would help to reduce people's cholesterol levels, directly reducing their risk of cardiovascular disease. In fact, the people who consumed higher amounts of walnuts were found to have dramatically reduced inflammatory markers in the blood, indicating that walnuts can help to reduce chronic inflammation.

This could have beneficial implications for the wide range of conditions associated with chronic inflammation, such as cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, arthritis and more.

We know that many diseases are often preventable and that there are simple – though not always easy – steps to take to reduce our risk through a healthy lifestyle. The nutrient profile and research on walnuts suggest that they are one of the healthiest foods to add to a balanced diet. In addition, they're readily available and relatively inexpensive in most places around the world.

There's no reason not to eat more walnuts!

### 100g OF SHELLED WALNUTS CONTAINS

**Manganese: 171%**

**Folate: 25%**

**Phosphorus: 35%**

**Copper: 79%**

**Thiamine: 23%**

**Magnesium: 40%**

**B6: 27%**

of your RDI (recommended dietary intake).



# Explaining inflammation

Inflammation is a word we hear often, but what does it actually mean? Is it good or bad? People often think they need to get rid of inflammation at all times, but it's a natural, essential part of our body's healing and defence processes.

When an injury or infection occurs, your body releases chemicals that trigger a response from your immune system. Fluids leak from the cells and blood delivers clotting factors and white blood cells to help stop bleeding and fight any bacteria that might enter the body. Localised inflammation such as redness, pain, warmth and swelling is normal, and should improve after a few days.

## WHEN DOES INFLAMMATION BECOME A PROBLEM?

Short-term (acute) inflammation as a response to an injury or irritant is normal. However when it doesn't resolve appropriately – chronic inflammation – it can begin to harm healthy tissues in the body and cause serious health conditions and long-term damage.

Chronic inflammation may be hard to diagnose, as the symptoms can be vague, such as fatigue, fever, muscle and joint pain. These symptoms can range from mild to severe and last for several months or years.

Inflammation can also become a problem as part of an autoimmune disease – a condition where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks its own cells. Psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, and inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease are all fairly common autoimmune conditions.

Some other diseases have an inflammatory component, such as cardiovascular disease and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Managing inflammation can both reduce the risk of developing certain diseases and help lessen the symptoms of existing conditions.

## MANAGING CHRONIC INFLAMMATION THROUGH LIFESTYLE

There is some evidence that certain chronic inflammatory conditions can be improved

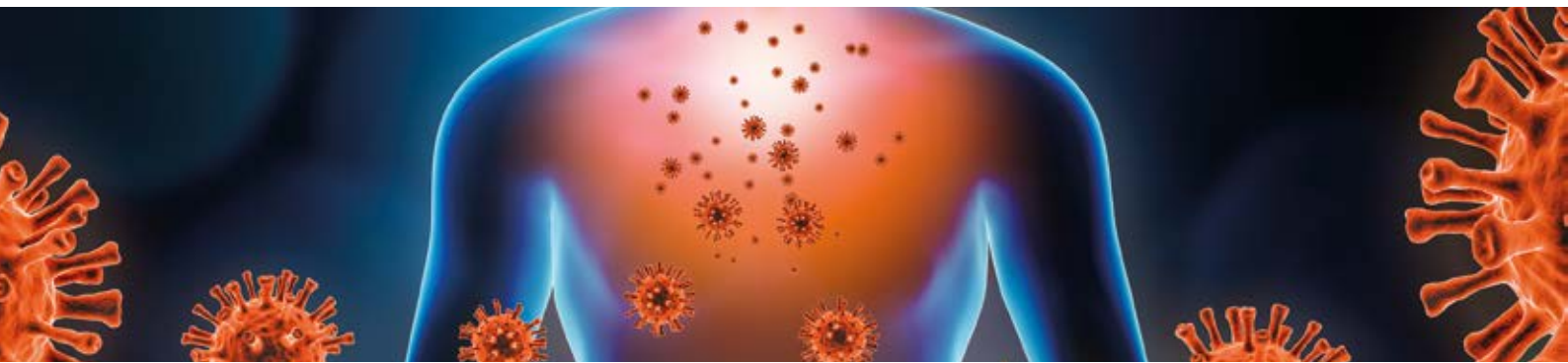
with healthy food, and a Mediterranean style diet is particularly recommended. This kind of diet includes:

- healthy fats, such as those from olive oil, nuts, seeds, and oily fish
- a variety of fruit and vegetables
- complex carbohydrates such as wholegrain, high fibre options.

Foods that can worsen inflammatory conditions include:

- fatty meats and processed meats such as bacon
- highly processed foods high in saturated and trans fat like margarines and junk food
- refined carbohydrates, particularly sugars like those in fizzy drinks, cakes and pastries.

Eating the right kinds of foods, maintaining a healthy weight and getting regular exercise can help to improve chronic inflammatory conditions. Any long-lasting problems should be professionally assessed and may need medical management.



## Do you suffer from heartburn?



Heartburn, which is also referred to as acid reflux, is the way we describe a kind of burning sensation in the chest and throat. Despite its name heartburn has nothing to do with the heart – it's actually a digestive system problem.

### CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS

The oesophagus is the tube that carries food and drink from your mouth to your stomach. It has a muscle where it opens into the stomach – called the oesophageal sphincter. This muscle normally closes tightly after food has entered the stomach, however, if it becomes weak and doesn't fully close, stomach acid can flow back up the oesophagus (acid reflux).

The stomach acid irritates the oesophagus lining and produces the painful burning sensation, and can even cause damage. Other symptoms of heartburn can include a sour or sick taste in your mouth, hoarseness and cough. Symptoms can worsen when lying down or bending over.

### CAN YOU PREVENT HEARTBURN?

Some people find certain factors bring on heartburn or make it worse. These can include: acidic, fatty or spicy food, alcohol, coffee, being overweight, smoking, and

certain medications which irritate the stomach – such as aspirin. Keeping a record of your diet and any activities that make your symptoms worse, may be useful in finding out what triggers your heartburn. Eating smaller, more frequent meals may also help.

Painful heartburn often occurs in the third trimester of pregnancy. It's particularly important to get medical advice on which treatments are safe during pregnancy.

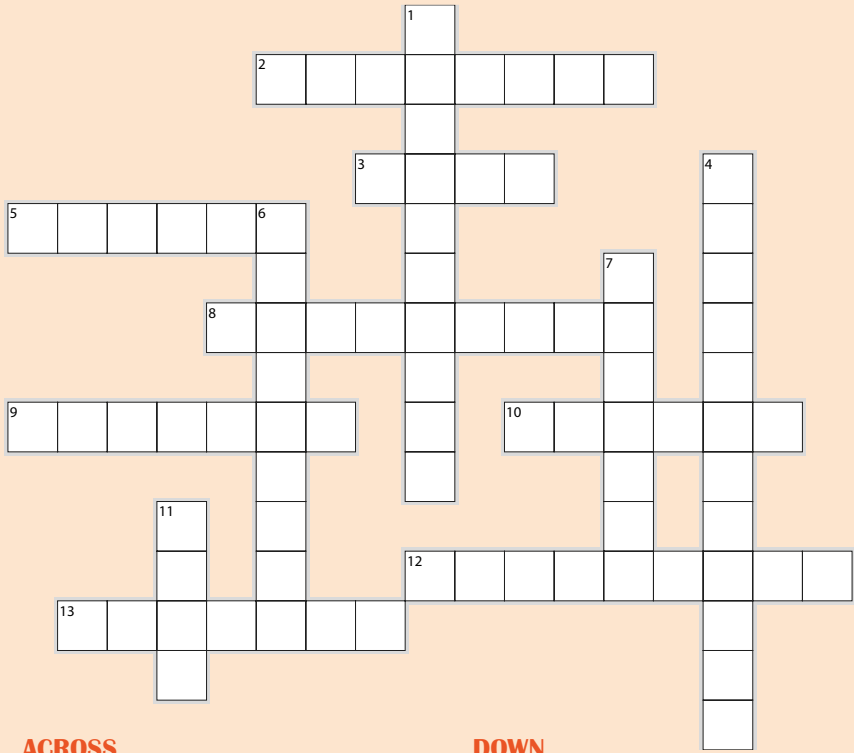
### ASSESSING YOUR PAIN

Occasional heartburn is common, but if it's frequent, persistent and not easily managed, it may indicate a more serious form of heartburn called gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD), for which you should visit your doctor.

There are also other conditions that can cause pains in the chest so it's important to know when to get help. Severe chest pain or pain which feels like heartburn but isn't relieved by your usual treatment should be assessed urgently.

If chest pain is accompanied by shortness of breath, arm pain, becoming clammy or dizzy, or having an irregular or rapid heartbeat – treat this as a medical emergency.

# CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

2. The correct name for school sores.
3. Short for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
5. A chemical that removes or whitens colour.
8. A highly processed food high in trans fat.
9. Healthy nuts that may help to reduce chronic inflammation.
10. Damp, sticky and sweaty.
12. A circular band of muscle.
13. A condition that is long-lasting.

## DOWN

1. The tube that goes from your mouth to your stomach.
4. A natural, essential part of our body's healing and defence processes.
6. Another name for acid reflux
7. A material in our bodies which determines the shade of our hair and skin.
11. Short for gastro-oesophageal reflux disease.

## Banana walnut loaf

This tasty, moist loaf doesn't have any added sugar – the ripe bananas make it naturally sweet. It makes a great snack for lunchboxes or for morning/afternoon tea.

### INGREDIENTS

- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 3 large ripe bananas, mashed | 1 cup wholemeal flour  |
| 2 eggs                       | 1 cup rice flour       |
| ½ cup olive or walnut oil    | ¾ cup walnuts, chopped |
| ¼ cup milk                   | 1 tsp baking powder    |
| 1 tsp vanilla extract        | 1 tsp baking soda      |
| 1 tsp ground cinnamon        | Pinch salt             |



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 23 x 13cm loaf tin with baking paper.
2. In a large bowl beat the eggs, oil, milk and vanilla, add the mashed bananas and stir to combine.
3. In a separate bowl mix the flours, cinnamon, salt, baking powder and baking soda.
4. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and stir to combine. Fold in the walnuts.
5. Pour the mix into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a skewer comes out cleanly and the top is golden brown.
6. Leave loaf to cool in tins for 5-10 minutes before removing.

Store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place for up to three days, or in the fridge for up to five days. It also freezes well.

## Shedding light on school sores

School sores is the common name for impetigo; a very common and contagious skin infection caused by bacteria. Impetigo can spread quickly in schools or child care centres – hence the name school sores. It can be painful and itchy, but doesn't usually cause serious problems.

### TREATING IMPETIGO

See your doctor if you think anyone in your family might have impetigo, or if you're worried about their symptoms. There are some other conditions which can look similar but need different treatment.

Impetigo causes small sores, usually on the face and hands. The sores may start as a blister and then develop a yellow crust which will fall off, leaving healthy skin. Keeping the sores clean and dry can prevent further infection and help them heal.

Impetigo will usually clear up after a few days, but if it seems to be getting worse the doctor may recommend a different course of treatment. In some cases swabs may need to be taken from the sores to ensure they're treating the right kind of bacteria.

### PREVENTING IMPETIGO

Impetigo spreads by touch, so covering sores and general good hygiene, such as frequent handwashing, helps prevent it spreading. Children with impetigo are usually not allowed at school until they've begun treatment, or the sores have cleared up.

It's difficult to stop small children from touching sore or itchy areas of their skin, so it's very common to see impetigo spread from the face to the hands, or vice versa. Keeping their fingernails short and clean may help.

The bacteria which cause impetigo can infect damaged skin more easily than healthy skin, so it's important to be careful with cuts and grazes. People who have dry skin conditions may be more prone to getting skin infections.

People taking certain medications or with conditions which affect their immune system should take extra care if they've been in contact with someone with impetigo, and consult their doctor if they have any concerns.



# Could mushrooms be the answer for a safer hair dye?

Conventional hair dyes are notoriously bad for your hair – products containing bleach and ammonia make hair dry and straw-like, and can cause irritation to the scalp. Hair dyes are strongly associated with allergic reactions – the reason that patch tests prior to full application are always recommended.

To dye hair a lighter colour, harsh chemicals are used to strip colour and open the hair cuticles so the dye can penetrate the hair shaft. Even plant-based dyes like henna come with risk of allergies and irritation, and often give unpredictable results. Some of the chemicals in standard hair dyes are also linked to certain cancers, so the development of alternatives could be ground-breaking.

Researchers have been developing an idea of a more natural hair dye – one which, in fact, uses exactly the same mechanism to make colour that our hair naturally uses. Melanin is a material often found in the form

of brown or black pigment which determines the shade of our hair and skin. Since melanin is naturally produced by the body, scientists believe there would be less risk of allergic reactions to it.

Most organisms produce melanin, making it readily available and versatile. Scientists have used enzymes found in mushrooms to make synthetic melanin in a range of natural hair colours. It effectively replaces the natural melanin in hair, instead of removing it. It would be a similar process to conventional hair dyeing, but with the benefit of a more sustainable and natural product.

Using melanin-based dyes also appears to offer the hair a degree of protection from the sun's damaging rays. Synthetic melanin hair dyes are still in the developmental stage, but have huge potential – for allergy sufferers and seasoned hair-dyers alike.

## 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 \$30.00 for a standard consultation or \$50.00 for a long consultation.

## 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.

## 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.

## Discuss your concerns with the doctor

It's a good idea to think about what you'd like to discuss before your visit. This form can help you organise your thoughts. After you make an appointment, take a minute to write down the doctor's name and appointment details. Then use this form to make a list of your concerns.

DOCTOR'S NAME	DATE	TIME
1.		
2.		
3.		
NOTES:		

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

DOWN  
 1. OESOPHAGUS 4. INFLAMMATION 6. HEARTBURN  
 7. MELANIN 11. GORD  
 ACROSS  
 2. IMPETIGO 3. COPD 5. BLEACH 8. MARGARINE  
 9. WALNUTS 10. CLAMMY 12. SPHINCTER 13. CHRONIC

**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.

Our newsletter is free! Take a copy with you.