

BERRY MEDICAL CENTRE

22 Prince Alfred St
Berry 2535

P: (02) 4464 1577

F: (02) 4464 2533

W: www.berrymedicalcentre.com.au



Dr Neil Donovan

MB, BS (Hons. Syd.) DipPaed, DRACOG, FRACGP

Dr Liz Cuninghame

BMed(Hons)

Dr Ingrid Buchner

Dr.Med(Ger.), DipPaed, FRACGP

Dr Lucie Stanford

BMed(Hons), FRACGP

Dr John Thomson

MB, BS, FRACGP

Dr Jessica Wilson

BSC(Hons), MBBS, FRACGP, DipChildHealth

Dr Costa Boyages

MBBS BArts (Hons) LLB

NURSING STAFF

Leilani Donovan (RN and midwife)

Chris Bolt (RN)

Ebony Wasson (RN)

ADMIN STAFF

Leona Brooke (Practice Manager)

Linda Anderson (Reception Team Leader)

Lyn Burke (Receptionist)

Gail Norris (Receptionist)

Jodie Thompson (Receptionist)

Abbey Welsh (Receptionist)

Ashleigh Varty (Receptionist)

HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS by appointment:

Monday to Friday 9am–5.30pm

URGENT medical problems are dealt with promptly.

The practice provides a complete range of general practice care, including home visits, hospital and nursing home care.

AFTER HOURS: For urgent after-hours problems please call the surgery on 4464 1577

SERVICES

- Diagnosis and management of short-term illness
- Surveillance of chronic illness
- Sports injuries
- Minor operative procedures (moles, ingrown toenails, Mirena)
- Palliative care
- Sutures and fractures
- ECG (heart assessment)
- Iron infusion
- Travel advice and immunisation
- Family planning
- Paediatrics
- Pregnancy care
- Newborn care
- Immunisations

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our Doctors aim to provide a comprehensive service. We aim to do more than just give you a script or write a referral. We are keen to look at your health, to discuss preventive steps and provide a more personal approach.

YOUR DOCTOR

FREE!!
TAKE ME HOME



OCTOBER 2017

The effects of exercise in early life

Most adults are aware that regular exercise is good for their health.

In addition to a healthy diet, the benefits of regular physical activity for weight control, warding off diabetes and improving mood are well documented. More recently, attention has been focused on encouraging children to exercise more regularly.

With childhood obesity rising rapidly, increasing emphasis is being placed on the benefits of exercise as a way to combat this condition. Whilst we may not think children need encouragement to get active, greater use of portable electronic devices and more time spent on screen-related activities mean that children are leading a more sedentary life.

A report in 2015 suggested that, on average, children between five and sixteen years old spend six and a half hours each day looking at screens. This figure had more than doubled compared to results gathered 20 years earlier. Encouraging children away from screens is an ongoing challenge for many parents – however a recent study from New Zealand adds another layer to the argument in favour of ensuring young children get active regularly.

Using rats as a model, the group of researchers looked at the effects activity levels in early life had on the health of the animals as they got older. Surprisingly, they found that regular exercise early in life changed the way the rats' bodies handled high calorie diets, even well into 'mid-life'.

When the rats were given a high calorie diet in mid-life, as expected, all the rats became overweight. However, those that

had exercised regularly as youngsters stayed healthy and did not show signs of developing high blood pressure, diabetes or vascular disease – the same conditions that are often found in overweight people.

The animals who had exercised less earlier in their life developed all the typical problems. This is fascinating as it is the first time that such long-term effects of early exercise have been observed. Not only were the animals healthier as 'children', the benefits of exercise were maintained right through into middle-age.

Of course, for humans, keeping an eye on our weight throughout life is important. The best way to stay healthy is to eat well and exercise regularly. This research may go some way, however, to explaining why some adults seem relatively healthy despite being overweight, whilst others quickly develop problems when they gain weight.

Encouraging exercise in the early years is well known for forming good habits later in life, making unhealthy weight gain less likely. This new study suggests that, even for those who go on to become overweight in middle age, having exercised regularly in childhood might help them remain well.

Australian Government recommendations are that toddlers and pre-schoolers should be physically active for at least 3 hours every day, whilst older children should accumulate at least 60 minutes over the course of a day. If we achieve this, we may not only be keeping our children healthy and avoiding obesity in early life, but also helping to prevent obesity-related diseases later in life.

Take me home to complete our PUZZLE – check inside!

Reducing the risk of dementia

Throughout our ageing population, dementia is becoming ever more common. The burden on family and carers is huge, with sufferers often needing years of round-the-clock care.

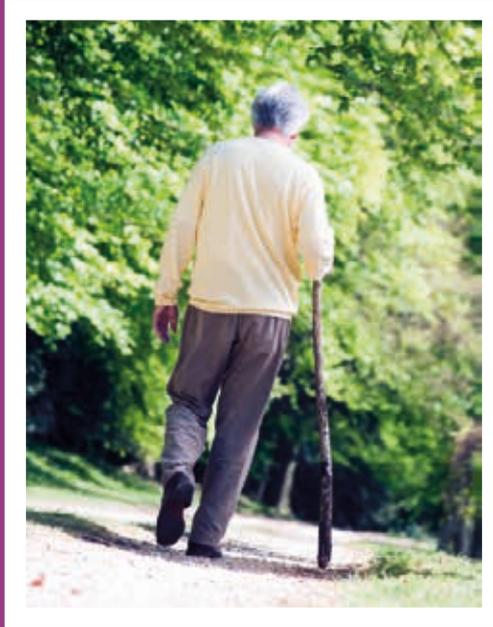
This cruel disease sees the gradual, unstoppable decline in the cognitive function of a person – making it seem like they are slowly but steadily disappearing before our eyes.

Whilst we know that age is the single biggest risk factor for dementia, attention has increasingly turned to searching out other factors that may contribute to the likelihood of developing dementia, particularly to try and identify those which we can alter.

We know that dementia runs in families and there is little we can do about that. There are however many things we can control which might reduce the risk.

For example, we know that our health in mid-life makes a difference. Bad habits during this period can set in motion changes which can lead to cognitive decline and even

dementia in our later years. And it's the same health messages that keep coming through – obesity, diabetes and raised blood pressure in middle-age have all been shown to increase the chance of dementia in old-age. For those of us with the opportunity to do so, this provides yet another incentive to look after ourselves in order to preserve both mind and body for the future.



Even in later life there are things we can do to reduce the risk of dementia. Regular physical activity – whatever our age – has been shown to help prevent mental decline. Smoking increases the risk, whilst moderate alcohol consumption seems to reduce it. There may also be dietary changes that could help – a recent study found that people who regularly drink artificially sweetened drinks have a higher risk of dementia. So, substituting 'diet' drinks with say tea or coffee could, it seems, help ward off dementia.

The hunt goes on with investigations into fields as diverse as low vitamin D and exposure to pesticides. Because of these continual studies the list of things we can do to help ourselves keeps growing. Keeping your weight stable, engaging in regular physical exercise, not smoking, indulging in the occasional glass of wine and even avoiding artificially sweetened drinks all have the power to help. At the moment we cannot completely prevent or 'cure' dementia, but we can all help ourselves a little by reducing our own risk.

ACROSS

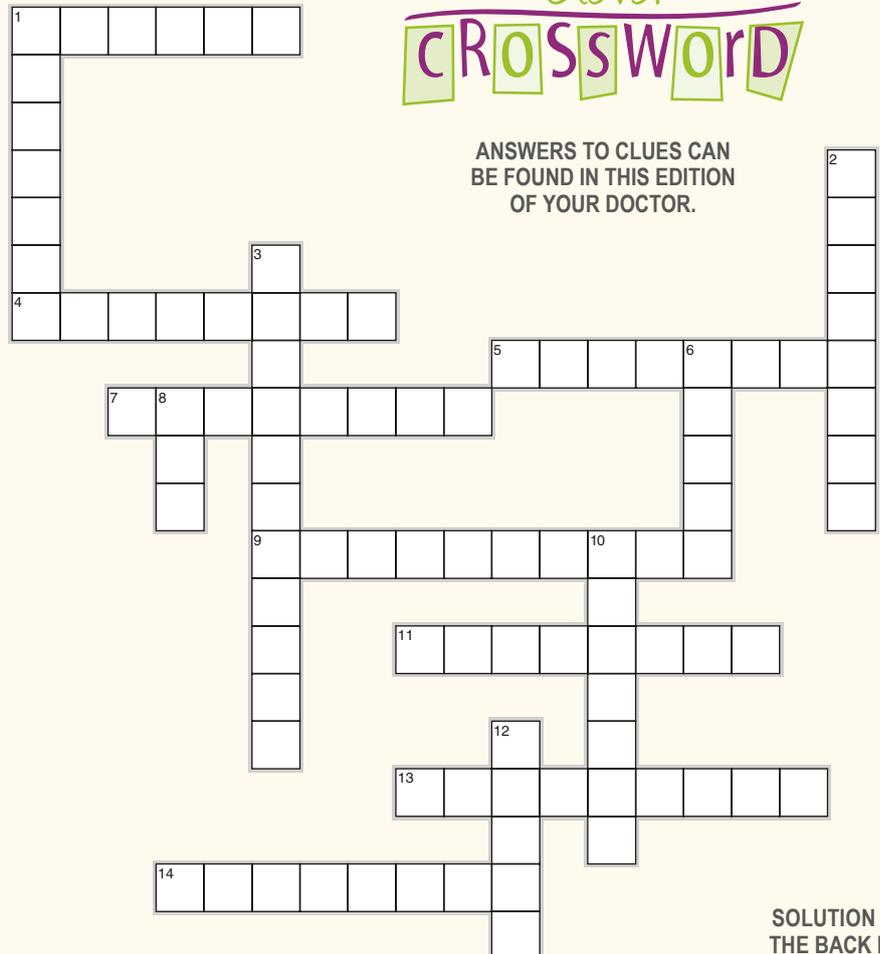
1. A new medical glue inspired by slugs is both flexible and _____.
4. Using medical glues to close wounds helps prevent this.
5. Chemical 'messenger' our nerves use to pass sleep messages to the brain.
7. A type of disease common in overweight people.
9. Nerves or chemicals that help or hinder us in falling asleep.
11. Exercising as a child can help reduce the risk of this in middle age.
13. Taking this may help to reduce the effects of jet lag.
14. A food very high in vitamin B3.

DOWN

1. NZ children aged 5-16 spend around 6 ½ hours a day looking at these.
2. Something to avoid in the evening for a good night's sleep.
3. Around 103,000 families in Australia are affected by this each year.
6. Produced by slugs, what is the inspiration for a new medical glue?
8. What is the single biggest risk factor for dementia?
10. This middle age condition increases the risk of dementia later in life.
12. Catch up on this before you travel to avoid jet lag.

Clever CROSSWORD

ANSWERS TO CLUES CAN
BE FOUND IN THIS EDITION
OF YOUR DOCTOR.



**SOLUTION IS ON
THE BACK PAGE.**

Vitamin B3 may help reduce birth defects and miscarriages

For most couples, becoming pregnant and having a baby seems like the most natural thing in the world; and it's a happy and hopeful time.

However, for a significant number of couples, miscarriage – sometimes repeated miscarriages – can turn the happy event into a hugely stressful and distressing time.

Figures show that around 103,000 families in Australia are affected by miscarriage each year. Although we know that a large proportion of miscarriages are due to genetic problems with the baby, the reasons behind recurrent miscarriages are often unclear. A few couples will have an identifiable cause, but for the majority we simply don't understand why it happens.

A recent study from Australia, published in the highly regarded New England Journal of Medicine, may shed some light on a possible cause for the tragedy of miscarriage. The group found that

recurrent miscarriage – and some birth defects – could be explained by a problem with processing vitamin B3. Furthermore, when this problem was reproduced in experiments, miscarriages could be reduced by treating the mother with high doses of the vitamin. Vitamin B3 is found in many foods such as poultry, peanuts and (in very high levels) vegemite.

We are still a long way from suggesting pregnant women have an extra vegemite sandwich every day, as the treatment hasn't yet been trialled in women. What's more, the doses given in the experiments were far higher than our recommended daily intake. But this study does represent a real breakthrough in understanding one of the possible causes of recurrent miscarriage.

If such a simple dietary treatment (or vitamin supplement) really could help families avoid the heartbreak caused by miscarriage, that would be truly remarkable.

Medical glue inspired by slugs

When skin or tissue is injured or damaged, doctors and surgeons need ways to join things back together.

Closing wounds helps to stop bleeding and prevent infection, and promotes healing with the least possible scarring. Wounds need to be closed both when they happen accidentally – eg, a gashed head following a fall from a bike, or a finger cut by a kitchen knife, and when they are deliberately formed during an operation.

Traditionally, most wounds are stitched closed. Although effective, suturing requires skill to achieve a good result, can be uncomfortable or even painful for the patient, and is time-consuming. Simple wounds can be closed with dressings such as 'steri-strips', which work a bit like a sticking plaster. However, these need clean, dry surfaces to stick to, and can only be used on the surface of the skin.

Internal wounds are more challenging, as the area is usually moist and whatever substance is used to close a wound, needs to be well tolerated by the body. Medical 'glues' do exist, but until now they too have struggled with wet or moving surfaces, and their use has been limited.

A new substance which appears to overcome these challenges has been developed by an international group of scientists. The researchers took inspiration from the sticky mucus produced by slugs to form the new 'glue'. Slug mucus is extremely sticky and also incredibly flexible.

By studying its properties and chemical make-up, the researchers have created a new medical glue with incredible properties. The new glue is made up of two elements – one incredibly sticky and the other very flexible. The adhesive bonds closely to the natural tissue, working even in wet conditions. The flexible part means the glue stays in place, even when the tissues are moving. During testing, the researchers claim to have used the glue to close a hole in an animal's heart.

Potentially, this glue has a huge range of uses – from closing cuts after accidents to helping surgeons during difficult procedures and reducing scarring after routine surgery. It just goes to show what fascinating advances we can make by taking inspiration from the natural world – even something as mundane as the common slug!

The nerves behind jet lag

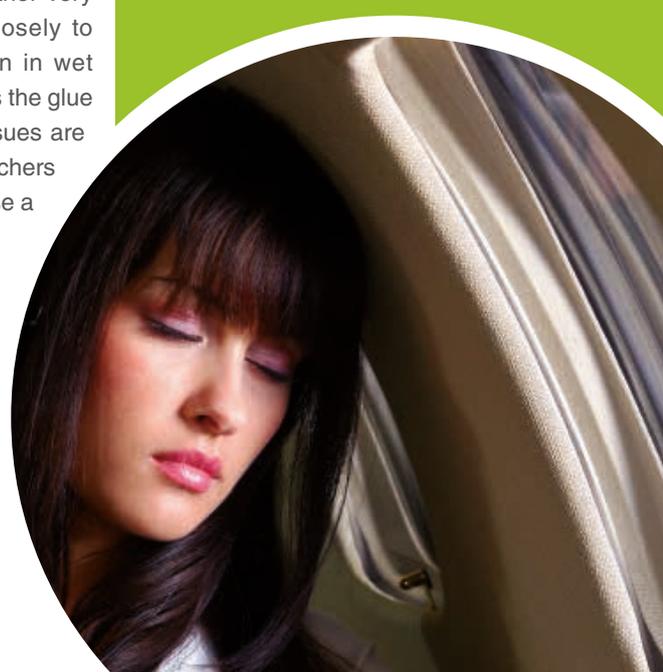
Jet lag is a common condition for many who undertake long distance flights. The dragging tiredness, inability to sleep in the 'new' night-time and sometimes the days it takes to adapt to the new time zone often means that valuable days of enjoyment are lost.

On one level, jet lag is very easy to understand. We can appreciate that our body and brain become 'confused' by the rapid change in rhythm, and can take some time to adapt. In order to try and prevent jet lag, we need to have a more in-depth understanding of processes in the brain, the chemicals that influence our state of wakefulness, and how these are controlled.

Advice for minimising jet lag or recovering from it more quickly includes eating well, keeping hydrated and catching up on sleep before you travel. Some suggest taking melatonin (the substance that regulates our sleep-wake cycle), but not all studies support this. Most agree that it takes several days to adapt to a change in time zone.

New research has perhaps taken us a step closer to being able to control jet lag, and possibly even eliminating it completely. A study from America published in 'Current Biology' journal has identified specific neurons (nerve cells) within the brain which are responsible for regulating our day-night, sleep-wake cycle; and dopamine as the chemical messenger these nerves use to pass on messages.

Although a long way from developing a treatment, findings like these are the first step towards understanding what causes jet lag, and therefore identifying opportunities for possible remedies. Perhaps one day we may be able to make the most of every day during a round-the-world trip.



Chocolate Brownie: a healthier version...

*A tasty flourless treat
full of black bean protein...*

Suitable to freeze

INGREDIENTS

- 400g tin black beans, drained and rinsed
- 4 eggs
- 100g butter (or coconut oil), softened
- 1/3 cup coconut sugar (or other unrefined sugar)
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1/3 cup cocoa
- 2 tsp baking powder
- Pinch of salt

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 170°C. Line a 20cm cake tin with baking paper.
 2. Place beans and eggs into food processor and process until smooth. Set aside.
 3. In a separate bowl, cream butter (or oil) and coconut sugar until light and fluffy.
 4. Add vanilla essence. Sift in cocoa powder, baking powder and salt, and add the black bean mixture. Gently fold together until just combined.
 6. Pour into prepared tin and bake for 25 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.
 7. Allow to stand in tin for 5 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool.
- Store in an airtight container.



*... don't mention it and no-one
will know any different!*

Serving suggestions

*On its own warm or cold,
or dust with cocoa and
top with raspberries and
natural yoghurt.*

Sleep regulator may be outside the brain

Sleep seems like one of the most natural things in the world – mostly because we all need it. When we are tired we should simply be able to close our eyes, and drift off.

Unfortunately for many, the impact of the modern world and the demands of our daily lives often mean it isn't as easy as all that. Sleep problems and insomnia are affecting a growing number of people. In fact, 1 in 4 Australians report having sleep difficulties, with similar results in New Zealand.

The amount of sleep needed by an adult individual varies, however most should aim for around seven to eight hours each night.

For many who are struggling to nod off, there are simple remedies which may help. Getting sufficient physical exercise, avoiding caffeine in the evening, and ensuring we have some 'screen-free' time before bed are all good ways of helping sleep to come sooner.

For something so fundamental to us all, it is perhaps surprising how little scientists

understand about sleep. We really don't know what triggers it, nor why it is so vital. For people suffering from sleep disorders, or simply trying to catch up on lost hours, this can be frustrating as doctors don't have easy solutions.

Many studies have been done searching the brain for sleep regulators – nerves or chemicals which either help or hinder us in falling asleep. However, for the first time recently, a group has discovered that one of the key regulators of sleep might be found outside the brain. American scientists found that by changing the levels of a specific muscle protein, they could increase or decrease how much the mice in their experiments slept.

Up until now, we have thought that sleep is controlled solely by the brain. However, this new research suggests that perhaps we should be searching more widely for solutions to assist those troubled by disturbed sleep.

PRACTICE FEES

We are a fee for service practice. Unfortunately, the Medicare rebate has failed to keep pace with costs of general practice, which means that your out of pocket expenses may have increased. Our fees will remain in line with AMA recommended fees.

MEDICARE REBATES

Our practice offers the facilities for your Medicare Rebate to be deposited immediately into your bank account.

SKIN CLINIC

Dr Neil Donovan and Dr Ingrid Buchner have undertaken post graduate training in skin cancer detection and management. Our Practice also has the latest skin cancer digital diagnostic technology (MoleMate). The clinic runs on a Tuesday and Thursday by appointment.

PRACTICE NURSE

We have Practice Nurses on site every day. This means that we can provide better access to health screening and management of long-term health problems like diabetes and heart failure.

HEALTH CHECKS

If you are making an appointment for a health check, please book a long appointment. It may best be preceded by a visit with the nurse, fasting blood tests and perhaps an ECG of your heart.

PRESCRIPTIONS

Unfortunately we cannot issue prescriptions to patients without seeing them. It is illegal for an Authority prescription to be issued unless it is accompanied with a consultation. Please make sure that you make an appointment ahead of time so that you do not run out of medications, and give us the time to help manage your medicines in a safe manner.

PATHOLOGY & RESULTS

Southern IML Pathology collect samples in the surgery Monday to Friday, mornings from 8am to 12pm. Appointments are not necessary.

Receptionists are unable to give specific results to patients over the phone or in printed form. It is a legal requirement that results are reviewed by the ordering doctor and discussed with the patient by the doctor. We can, however, let you know if your results require action. Please call for results between 2:30pm and 4:00pm.

NEED A LONG APPOINTMENT?

Being late is annoying for patients and stressful for staff and doctor. One of the causes is that our consultations often run over time. Just four minutes extra per consultation means that the doctor is one hour late at the end of the morning. You can help by being aware that your time with the doctor will be about 12–15 minutes, which is usually only enough time for one problem. If you have more than one problem, longer appointments are available – please ask our receptionist when you make your appointment.

COMPLAINTS

We value patient feedback and take your concerns seriously. If you have a suggestion or complaint, please feel free to use our suggestion box or talk to our Practice Manager. If you have a problem you wish to take beyond this practice, you can contact:

The Health Care Complaints Commission

Locked Bag 18

Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

Regional Free Call: 1800 043 159

<http://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au>

CROSSWORD SOLUTION
DOWN
ACROSS: 1. STICKY 4. SCARRING 5. DOPAMINE 7. VASCULAR
9. REGULATORS 11. DIABETES 13. MELATONIN 14. VEGEMITE
1. SCREENS 2. CAFFEINE 3. MISCARRIAGE 6. MUCUS
8. AGE 10. OBESITY 12. SLEEP

Take me home and give our healthy RECIPE a try!