



JANUARY 2014

## HEALTH HQ

### “Quality Caring”

95 Nerang Street  
Southport 4215

**P:** (07) 5526 4444

**F:** (07) 5531 3697

**W:** [www.healthhq.com.au](http://www.healthhq.com.au)

**W:** [www.skinhq.com.au](http://www.skinhq.com.au)



### Dr Norman Hohl

MBBS, FRACGP, FAFPHM, DTM&H, CTH

### Dr Simon Thatcher

MBBS CTHP

### Dr Michael Read

MBBS

### Dr Donna Armstrong

MBBS

### Dr Neil Chorley

MBBS FRACGP FACCRM FACSM

### Dr Bill Cassimatis

MBBS

### Dr Danika Fietz

MBBS, FRACGP, M.Med (Skin Cancer)

### Dr Craig Thompson

MBBS, FRACGP, FACRRM, MPHMT

Please visit our new and improved website for information on all our doctors and staff.

[www.healthhq.com.au](http://www.healthhq.com.au)

### PRACTICE STAFF:

Kathryn (Practice Manager)

Mirja, Kim, Kris, Viv, Margie, Jenny, Kim C and Lindsey (RN) Brenda (AIN)

Nicky, Ilana, Dorothy, Rosalie, Heidi, Charlotte and Christina (Reception) Janet (Office)

### SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES:

CONSULTATIONS by appointment.

(Refer to reception for each doctors' sessions)

**Monday** 8.30am–5.00pm

**Tues, Wed, Frid** 8.30am–5.00pm

**Thursday** 8.30am–6.00pm

**Saturday** 8.30am–12.30pm

If you need to be seen urgently or need a long consultation, please ask when you book. Home visits within 5km can be arranged if necessary. Please ask if you need to speak with a Doctor. On occasions it may be necessary to return your call later.



## TURNING A BLIND EYE TO OBESITY

**Australians' waistlines are growing** and, according to new data, we're having a hard time coming to terms with it. Around two thirds of adult Australians are overweight or obese, skyrocketing us to one of the fattest nations in the world. Statistics released by the National Heart Foundation of Australia, however, reveal that a large number of affected people are in denial about the dire state of their health.

The Heart Foundation survey looked at 10,156 people, 32% of whom were obese. Data revealed that one in 10 obese Australians, who already had high blood pressure and high cholesterol, rated their health as good or excellent, and eight out of nine did not rate their risk of heart attack as significant. The survey also revealed that the majority of obese participants had already been told by their doctor to lose weight, exercise more, or adhere to a better diet, yet they still did not perceive there to be a problem with their health.

Overweight and obesity affect our health in numerous ways increasing risk of cardiovascular disease, as well as chronic illnesses such as diabetes and some cancers. The Heart Foundation has cited a

possible reason for our clouded judgment as our propensity to judge our own health based on the health of our friends and relatives, rather than against evidence based medical advice and guidelines. It's important to consider your health independently of those around you, who may lull you into a false sense of security. The Heart Foundation has a lot of good information about healthy eating, lifestyle modifications and evidence based facts surrounding normal and healthy weight ranges. Visit their website at:

[www.heartfoundation.org.au](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au)

Or talk to your doctor about it.

## INSIDE:

- **BEETROOT: A SPORTSMAN'S BEST FRIEND**
- **QUENCHING CRANKINESS**
- **MYTH AND FACT?**
- **DR NORMAN SWAN - A MATTER OF HEALTH**



## BEETROOT: A SPORTSMAN'S BEST FRIEND

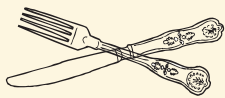
**Beetroot is a great vegetable.** It contains essential minerals and vitamins, is high in fibre, low in calories and contains no fat. Beetroot juice also contains a lot of naturally occurring nitrate – a powerful chemical in our body that turns into nitric oxide. Nitric oxide has many positive effects on our body including improving blood flow and oxygen delivery to working muscles, and assisting the action of insulin and the immune system.

Several studies have also looked at beetroot juice in relation to sporting performance in athletes. Results have indicated that athletes who supplement with beetroot juice may gain a small benefit on exercise endurance. For athletes working at constant load, beetroot juice may improve their exercise economy which translates to a slightly longer time until exhaustion. Trials have identified benefits to both elite and recreational athletes, however they've found that recreational athletes

may gain a greater advantage, perhaps because of less prior adaptation of their cardiovascular system to exercise.

Beetroot juice has few harmful side effects, aside from perhaps the occasional minor upset tummy, so may be a safe option for professional or recreational athletes looking for a boost. It's cheap and can be consumed with other vegetables to enhance the flavour.

**See below for a refreshing beetroot juice recipe.**



### Good Health on the Menu

#### BEETROOT, CUCUMBER AND PINEAPPLE JUICE

*A refreshing and cleansing drink perfect for a sunny summer afternoon.*

##### Ingredients:

- 1 beetroot
- 1 cucumber
- 1 cup of pineapple chunks

##### Method

1. Remove the top off the beetroot and wash thoroughly
2. Cut beetroot into medium sized chunks
3. Wash, peel and dice the cucumber
4. Remove skin from the pineapple and cut into medium sized chunks
5. Ensure that all ingredients are at an appropriate size to fit in your juicer
6. Juice the fruit and vegetables together and serve with icecubes for extra chill



*Enjoy!*

## MYTH AND FACT BREAST MILK OR BABY FOOD?

There are some mixed messages as to whether or not babies should be started on complementary feeding, in addition to breast milk, before six months of age. While major health authorities recommend exclusively breastfeeding babies in their first six months of life, many mothers are concerned that their breast milk or formula does not provide sufficient nutrients and therefore begin feeding their babies with commercial baby foods.



A study has found, however, that these baby foods, purchased from many supermarkets, may not provide nutrients in levels higher than those found in breast milk. Furthermore, many of the foods were found to be high in sugar and too sweet. Breast milk is a remarkably complex liquid, containing an array of unusually constructed fats, branched sugar molecules and small fragments of DNA. It serves to nourish the rapidly growing infant in its first few months of life. The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends that.

Each of the words can be found in this issue of "Your Doctor". Answers are shown on the bottom left of the back page.

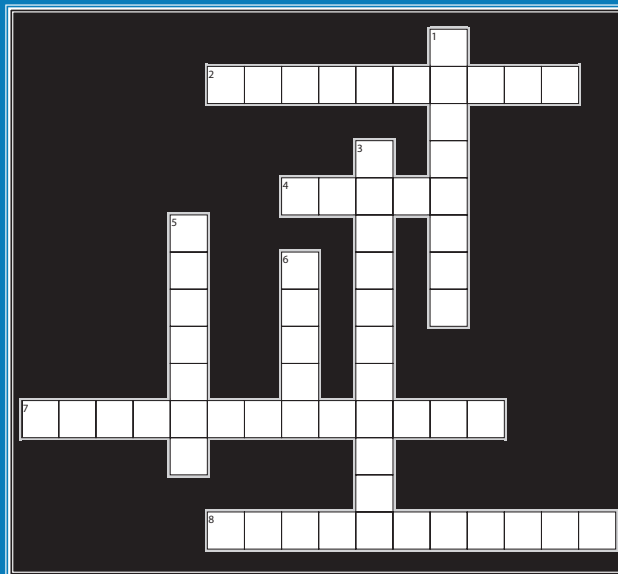
## Clever CROSSWORD

### Down:

1. Beetroot contains essential minerals and what?
3. Water helps normalise body what?
5. Nitric oxide from beetroots can improve blood flow and oxygen delivery to your what?
6. Some baby foods have been found to contain high levels of what?

### Across:

2. Around two thirds of Australians are obese or what?
4. Poor quality of what contributes to fertility problems?
7. Drinking water can improve your mood and what?
8. High levels of what may be a risk factor for heart attack and stroke?



Each of the words can be found in this issue of "Your Doctor". Answers are shown on the bottom left of the back page.

## QUENCHING CRANKINESS

Fluids are vital for our survival, the human body can only last so long without water. Water helps to normalise body temperature, cushions our joints, protects our spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and gets rid of waste through urination and perspiration. In addition to the physical benefits of drinking water, studies have shown that there may be mental benefits as well, namely improvements in our mood and concentration. This has been studied extensively in athletes and people in extreme environments however more recent studies have focused on regular people on a typical day.

Researchers measured the difference in mental state between people who were hydrated and people who were mildly dehydrated. Mild dehydration was induced in people by 40 minutes of brisk walking combined with diuretic drugs

(which increase the flow of urine to rid the body of fluid). Over the course of the day this resulted in dehydration of around 1% of body weight. The control group drank 480ml of mineral water throughout the morning and did no exercise. The results showed that those who had mild dehydration got headaches, had difficulty concentrating, found computer tasks more challenging and were in a worse mood.

Staying hydrated is an important part of day to day life. Remember to only drink water when thirsty, rather than forcing yourself, and your body and mind will thank you for it.





**Dr Norman Swan**

## A MATTER OF HEALTH

### YOUR CHOLESTEROL AND YOU

There's been a lot of talk about an ABC Television show that suggested cholesterol was not an important risk factor for heart disease and stroke and also that statins, the medications which reduce cholesterol levels did not save lives and had serious side effects. This has resulted in large numbers of people going off their medications and returning to high fat diets.

**Here are the facts.**

There is excellent research from multiple studies which shows that cholesterol levels, are an important risk factor for heart attacks and strokes. One example is the Framingham Study in Massachusetts, which has followed the health and wellbeing of thousands of people for over 50 years. Also studies where cholesterol has been deliberately reduced using various medications (not just statins) show a significant reduction in heart attacks, strokes and death rates. Those kinds of studies

prove cause and affect and not just a link which might be due to something else. The important thing to note though is that cholesterol is just one of many risk factors which include smoking, high blood pressure, family history and lack of physical activity. Cholesterol and blood pressure tend to be talked about more because they're easier to reduce with medications.

What really matters is your total risk of a heart attack and stroke, and cholesterol is only one part of that. If you've already had a problem like a heart attack, stroke, angina, a coronary procedure, diabetes or very high cholesterol for genetic reasons then you are at very high risk and do need to be on medications. Also, if your total risk (it's called an Absolute Risk Score) shows a risk of a heart attack or stroke of 15% in the next five years then the experts suggest you should be talking to your doctor about a medication to reduce your cholesterol and doing something about your other risk factors too.

So let's go to statins. They do save lives and the extent to which they do that depends on your risk level. Around one in 10 people taking statins experience some side effects most of which are minor – like muscle aches in the legs. A small number of people have reported feeling mentally 'foggy' but that is not common. No drug is side effect free which is why your risk needs to be high enough to be worth taking.

The key message here is know your risk and don't believe everything you see on the telly.



### DID YOU KNOW? SIZE, SUN AND SICK SPERM

Poor sperm quality accounts for a significant proportion of fertility problems in couples who visit fertility clinics, which is why sperm injection into the egg is such a common procedure these days in IVF clinics. Research over the past few decades has shown a gradual loss of sperm function in a lot of men, and the exact reason for this remains unknown. Researchers, however, think that obesity and heat may share some of the blame.

Sperm quality was analysed in 500 men who presented at a fertility clinic in New Zealand. The quality of the sperm was found to be reduced in fatter men. Weight gain is associated with a reduction in testosterone synthesis and a suppression of testosterone

action. Furthermore, fat generates a number of steroid hormones, some of which resemble oestrogens. These changes in hormones serve to further impair sperm synthesis.

Heat is also thought to diminish sperm quality. Testes are designed to avoid high temperatures, with them hanging down away from the warm body. Wearing tight and restrictive underwear on hot days may increase the risk of damaging the testes' function and therefore contribute to a decline in sperm quality.

This research provides yet another incentive for men to maintain a healthy weight. Keeping a cool profile on those hot days of summer may also assist in keeping sperm in the best possible condition.

### READER COMPETITION: BE IN TO WIN A \$50 SHOPPING VOUCHER

Choose from either **Woolworths, JB Hi Fi** or **Dymocks Book Stores.**

Simply answer the crossword question below, from our crossword puzzle, found inside.

**Down 6.**

Email your answer, name, address, phone number and the clinic you attend to:

[competition@yourdoc.com.au](mailto:competition@yourdoc.com.au)

with the subject heading 'January Doc 2014'.

*Entries must be received by 31/01/2014.*

**THAT'S IT! GOOD LUCK!**

### PRACTICE UPDATE

#### Valuable websites of quality information

- [www.travelmedicine.com.au](http://www.travelmedicine.com.au)
- [www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au)
- [www.blackdoginstitute.com.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.com.au)
- [www.uptodate.com/patients](http://www.uptodate.com/patients)
- [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Remember to have your Skin Check with Skin HQ. Also ask about our Laser, IPL and PDT treatments.

#### FEE POLICY

**Consults** \$55 gap. **Welfare** \$40 gap **DVA** bulk billed. **Home Visits** \$75 gap. **Skin operations** \$125 gap, **Welfare** Bulk Billed. **Scripts and Referral Letters**, \$20.

If collected by patient bulk billed.

**SATURDAY:** No Concessions.

**A \$5 cancellation fee** will be charged if 24 hours notice isn't given to cancel your appointment.

\$55 fee for procedural appointments.

Amex & Diners Club payments will now attract a 3% surcharge.

#### FEEDBACK

Our goal is to provide a quality, caring service. Therefore if you have any concerns or suggestions, please phone or write. We genuinely wish to hear from you. If we appear not to have satisfied your concerns, please write to the Health Quality and Complaints Commission, on 1800 077 308.

#### SERVICE

Quality caring means we do everything possible to see you on time and provide a service that listens to and meets your personal needs.

#### PRIVACY POLICY

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 staff members.

**VASECTOMY VENUE** Phone (07) 5531 1170  
[www.vasectomyvenue.com.au](http://www.vasectomyvenue.com.au)  
[www.gccircumcisions.com.au](http://www.gccircumcisions.com.au)

**Vasectomies:** See our websites or ask at Reception for a brochure on Vasectomies.

Are you aware Dr Read performs CIRCUMCISIONS on boys and men as well as babies?

#### TRAVEL HEALTH

The Travel Health Doctors is a member of the Travel Medicine Alliance. Daily updates from worldwide sources mean we can advise you accurately and personally for your trips. We carry almost all vaccines and other travel requirements. We will send a detailed report back to your personal GP.

Our Travel Medicine Service exists to assist your GP in caring for you in a specific area. We encourage you to continue a strong relationship with your GP.

**After Hours Care: Phone Chevron After Hours on 5532 8666 after 6pm or Pindara Emergency Centre on 5588 9000.**

If you require a home visit call Chevron After Hours. In a serious emergency Call 000.

Health HQ welcomes Dr Craig Thompson. Dr Thompson comes with extensive medical experience both in Aus and overseas.

### ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD

**Down:** 1. Vitamins; 3. Temperature; 5. Muscles; 6. \* Blanked out for competition, see upper right for details.  
**Across:** 2. Overweight; 4. Sperm; 7. Concentration; 8. Cholesterol.