



# YOUR DOCTOR



JUNE 2013

## HEALTH HQ

### “Quality Caring”

95 Nerang Street  
Southport 4215

**P:** (07) 5526 4444

**F:** (07) 5531 3697

**W:** www.healthhq.com.au

**W:** www.skinhq.com.au



### Dr Norman Hohl

*MBBS, FRACGP, FAFPHM, DTM&H, CTH*

Two years in Papua New Guinea convinced me of the imperative need for preventive medicine. After six years in Nigeria establishing a Rural Health Program, my emphasis is still on preventive medicine.

### Dr Simon Thatcher *MBBS CTHP*

I have many years of experience, having worked at The Royal Brisbane Hospital, Greenslopes Hospital and in General Practices on the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Special interests in family medicine, antenatal care and chronic illness.

### Dr Michael Read *MBBS*

After graduating from Qld university in 1983 I worked for two years at Royal Brisbane & Prince Charles Hospitals before taking up the position as Medical Superintendent With Right of Private Practice in a rural community. For twenty years I have provided all the services to this community, including emergency care, surgery, obstetrics and General Practice.

### Dr Donna Armstrong *MBBS*

After graduating from University of Qld in 1986 and working for three years at Royal Brisbane Hospital, I have spent the last twenty years practicing as a rural general practitioner, providing “birth to death” medicine, including obstetrics and anaesthetics. After relocating to the Gold Coast for family reasons, I am hoping to continue to focus on whole patient care with a special interest in antenatal care, women’s health and paediatrics.

### Dr Neil Chorley *MBBS FRACGP FACCRIM FACSM*

I have recently enjoyed eight challenging years as a rural GP in western Qld. Previous to that I worked as a GP in inner city Brisbane, Bamaga/Thursday Island, UK, RBH Greenslopes and the Gold Coast Hospital. Most recently I have become a Fellow in Skin Cancer Medicine which led me to become the President of the Australasian College of Skin Cancer Medicine.

### Dr Bill Cassimatis *MBBS*

### Dr Matthew Hasdell *MBBS B.SC*

### Dr Rachel Wyndham *MBBS*

### Dr Dale Fox *M.B.ChB. FRACGP*

### PRACTICE STAFF:

Kathryn (*Practice Manager*)

Lynne, Mirija, Kim, Kris, Viv, Margie, Jenny, Robyn & Kim C (*RN*)

Brenda (*AIN*)

Nicky, Ilana, Dorothy, Rosalie, Heidi & Charlotte (*Reception*)

Tracey (*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–7.00pm

**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.



## NUTS – A HELPFUL HAND IN DIABETES

**Type 2 diabetes** is a chronic illness due to an inability to effectively use the insulin that the body produces. When left unchecked, diabetes causes hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar) and other effects which lead to serious damage to the heart, arteries, kidneys, eyes and nerves. There are dietary guidelines that people with type 2 diabetes are advised to follow, involving high fibre (low glycaemic index) carbohydrate foods, very low saturated fats, and plenty of fruits and vegetables. Recently, researchers have suggested replacing less healthy carbohydrate foods with healthy fats as a means of helping to improve blood sugar control as well as helping to maintain a better blood fat profile (such as cholesterol and triglycerides). Nuts have been suggested as a potential replacement, being high in healthy monounsaturated fats. A study investigated the effect of nut consumption in people with type 2 diabetes.

Researchers recruited 117 participants with type 2 diabetes and divided them into three groups. The first group received 75 grams of unsalted mixed nuts a day, the second was given one muffin per day with a similar energy content to the nuts in the first diet and the third group was allocated half the portion

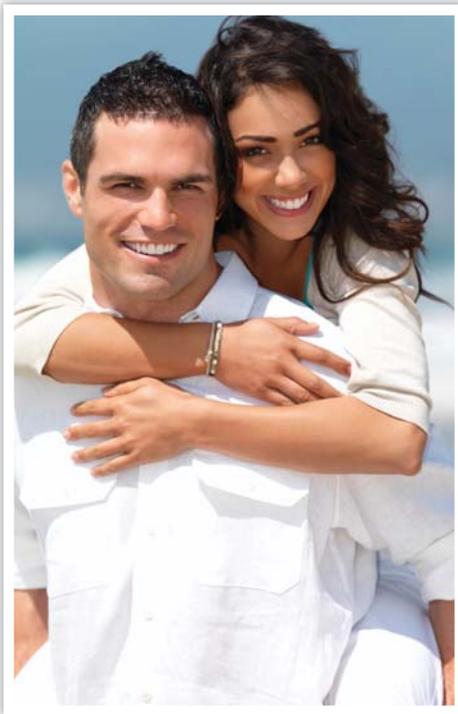
size of both the nuts and the muffin. The results revealed that the group consuming the nuts showed significant improvements over the other two including improved long-term sugar control and a reduction in LDL-cholesterol (the bad cholesterol).

If you suffer from diabetes, it may be worth adding a small handful of nuts to your diet each day. Have a chat to your doctor about it. Aside from potentially assisting and improving your condition, they’re a delicious and healthy snack that taste great on their own or when added to a meal. (*See recipe inside for a deliciously fresh and nutty salad*)

## INSIDE:

- **SCREENING FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS**
- **OBESITY AND THE FLU VACCINE**
- **DR NORMAN SWAN - A MATTER OF HEALTH**

# SCREENING FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS



**Chlamydia** is one of the most prevalent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Australia with an estimated 79,833 cases reported in 2011 alone. The disease, which is often present without any symptoms, can lead to complications such as pelvic

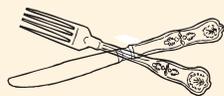
inflammatory disease and infertility if left untreated. Chlamydia is most common in the 15-24 age group however a number of people are not aware that they have it, and research has shown that the majority of young people do not get regular testing. There are a variety of reasons for this including costs, inconvenience, fear of lack of privacy and the stigma attached to STIs. Researchers investigated the effectiveness of an online Chlamydia testing program (OLC), developed by the Department of Health in Western Australia, and how this more private way of approaching the problem could contribute to more efficient treatment and safer sex.

The OLC comprised of a risk self assessment tool and sample testing without having to visit a doctor. The self assessment component asked questions regarding sexual history, number of partners, incidence of unprotected sex and any current symptoms. Participants were advised that they would be required to provide a swab – a urine sample for men and a self obtained lower vaginal swab for women. Test results were available three to five days after submitting the swab and those who tested positive were contacted by a nurse via mobile phone to follow up with a doctor for antibiotic treatment. Researchers measured how well the OLC performed,

based on the number of forms that resulted in a test, effectiveness of follow-up for participants with a positive result, and participant satisfaction measured by an online survey.

The results revealed that the online method of testing was an effective means of identifying and treating Chlamydia. Within the first year, 675 forms were downloaded, 56% of which resulted in a test. Chlamydia was present in 18% of those who took the test, all of whom were treated with antibiotics within two weeks. All those infected notified their sexual partners with or without the assistance of a clinician, and engaged in post treatment follow up.

This research indicates that online methods of testing for STIs may be a useful means of minimising the incidence of these infections in young people. Being able to take the test in the privacy of your own home eliminates many of the issues that deter people from getting tested. Chlamydia is an easily treatable condition therefore it should not get to the stage of serious disease or infertility. Like all diseases, prevention is the best method of treatment so consult a healthcare professional if in doubt about the best and safest form of contraception for you.



## Good Health on the Menu

### APPLE, FIG, ALMOND AND WALNUT SALAD

*A delicious, fresh and easy salad – perfect to complement a main dish when entertaining or great for a quick and easy afternoon snack.*

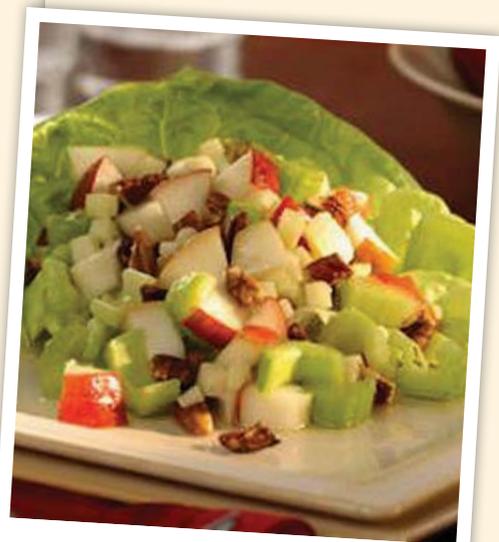
#### Ingredients:

- 2 large red apples, cored and diced
- 6 dried figs, chopped
- 2 large stalks of celery, diced
- 1/2 cup plain yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons slivered almonds
- 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts
- 2 carrots, peeled and grated

#### Method

1. In a bowl, combine the apples, figs and celery.
2. Add yoghurt and lemon juice, and mix thoroughly.
3. Serve topped with almonds and walnuts, and garnish with grated carrot.

**Note:** *Recipe serves six*



*Enjoy!*

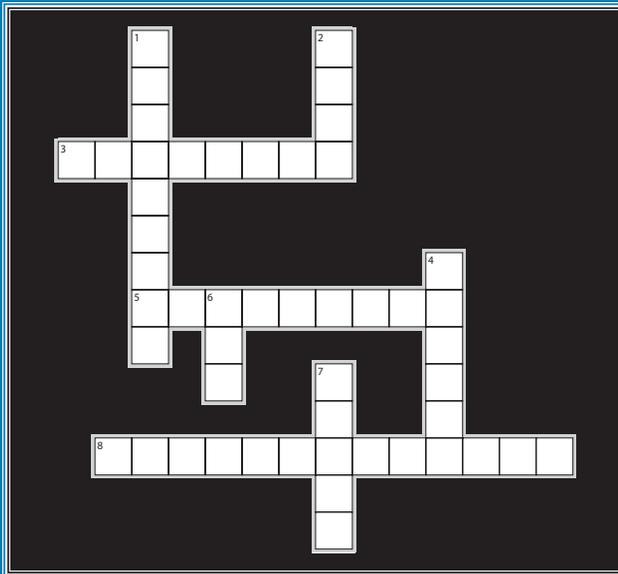
# Clever CROSSWORD

## Down:

1. One of the most prevalent STIs in Australia is what?
2. If you suffer from Diabetes, a small amount of what, could be good for your diet?
4. Do not buy your medicine where?
6. Maintaining a healthy weight, also helps you fight off what?
7. Flu vaccinations could be less effective if you're what?

## Across:

3. What chronic illness is due to the body's inability to effectively use insulin?
5. Hands are a major source of germs and what?
8. Online Chlamydia testing takes the what out of regular testing?



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

## MYTH VS FACT - WALK YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHY HEART



**Emerging research** suggests that a brisk walk is just as good as a run when it comes to improving your health. Many consider walking to be a sedentary activity, but this is not the case. The National Heart Foundation of Australia has highlighted the numerous benefits of brisk walking on our health including weight loss and weight maintenance, helping to control diabetes, and lowering blood pressure and cholesterol. The recommended 30 minutes a day of walking, at a pace fast enough to cause you to puff, can reduce risk of heart disease by up to 50%.

For people who feel as though they are strapped for time, small lifestyle modifications like walking to work or taking the stairs instead of the lift can make a big difference. The Heart Foundation has organised walking groups that meet regularly throughout Australia. They are suitable for all ages and fitness levels and cost nothing to join. In addition to improving your health and wellbeing, it's a great way to meet new people from your local area. To join or start a Heart Foundation Walking group visit their website at [heartfoundation.org.au/walking](http://heartfoundation.org.au/walking) or call their Health Information Service on **1300 36 27 87**.



## OBESITY AND THE FLU VACCINE

**With flu season fast approaching**, the annual influenza vaccination is an important preventative measure to take against the virus. The flu can be debilitating, resulting in days of missed work, pain and, in some cases, death. Those who are most affected by the flu virus include the elderly, the very young, and those predisposed to chronic illness – including people who are obese. Given that obesity is known to put someone at higher risk of illness, researchers investigated how the effects of the flu vaccination differ in people of varying weights.

The flu vaccination activates the body's immune system to produce antibodies

that can attack the virus if it is contracted. Researchers analysed a group of 499 adults who received the seasonal flu vaccine from a single medical centre. 30% of the participants were of a healthy weight, 33% were overweight and 36% were obese. One month after the vaccine was administered, the researchers measured participants' antibody levels and tested their immune cells.

The results revealed, disturbingly, that there were fewer antibodies present in obese people than in those in the healthy weight range. Furthermore, the immune analysis revealed that one of the key cells involved in activating the immune system, and thus hindering the development of the virus,

was not working as effectively in people with obesity. This means that not only were antibody levels lower in obese people, but they were probably also less effective.

This research corroborates the need to maintain a healthy weight, especially in the winter months when the flu virus is most prevalent. Immune system impairment can lead to a range of health complications and can increase susceptibility to illnesses that are otherwise preventable. If you are in an at-risk category it may be helpful to ask your doctor for some advice on lifestyle alterations that could make a huge difference to your health on all fronts including influenza prevention.



**Dr Norman Swan**

## A MATTER OF HEALTH

### WATCH WHEN YOU'RE BUYING MEDICINES

There's growing international concern about fake or counterfeit medicines as a relatively new source of illicit earnings for organised crime. The market is massive. It's been calculated that around \$400 million a year is made from selling fake malarial drugs in West Africa alone. Instead of anti-malarials, they can contain anything from paracetamol to antibiotics to Viagra. What's worse is that they can contain just enough of the real drug to be detected by the authorities and pronounced genuine but not enough to combat the parasite effectively, and therefore increase the risk of resistance. While this is a problem predominantly for the developing world, richer nations like Australia are not immune.

The estimates suggest that up to half of all medicines bought online are either fake or seriously substandard. So there's a double whammy. The medicine doesn't work for your condition, it could contain dangerous medications or antibiotics which risk you carrying antibiotic resistant organisms and as a result harder to treat if you develop an infection. There have even been scandals over chemotherapy drugs and contaminated steroids for spinal injections (in this case made by a large compounding pharmacy in the US). While compounding pharmacies aren't part of the fake drug issue, they are completely unregulated. So while some are excellent, others are not and you could be taking an unnecessary risk by using them. At least the pharmaceutical industry is tightly regulated and produces predictable and well-tested products made to high manufacturing standards.

In any event, returning to counterfeit medicines, it's certainly not a good idea at all to be buying your meds online. You absolutely don't know what you'll be getting.



### DID YOU KNOW? ELBOWS ARE THE NEW HANDS

Amidst warnings that this flu season may be a bad one, adequate and accurate public health messaging surrounding safe hygiene practice is imperative to minimize the spread of infection. In a letter to the Medical Journal of Australia, University of Sydney Associate Professor of Surgery and Cancer, Dr Guy Eslick, has advocated a shift in messaging to encourage coughing into a tissue or your inner elbow as opposed to your hands. Hands are a major source of germs and infection and therefore play a key role in spreading the flu.

Other important preventative measures include washing hands frequently, whether that be with soap and water or an alcohol hand gel that requires no water, use tissues and dispose of them immediately after use, and refrain from going to work or social events when sick – while many believe that they are doing the right thing by continuing to work they are ultimately spreading a nasty virus to their co-workers.

**TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT INFLUENZA, PREVENTION AND VACCINATION VISIT:**

[health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/seasonal\\_flu\\_vaccination.aspx](http://health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/seasonal_flu_vaccination.aspx)

## ANSWERS TO THE CROSSWORD

**Across:** 3. Diabetes; 5. Infection; 8. Inconvenience  
**Down:** 1. Chlamydia; 2. Nuts; 4. Online; 6. Flu; 7. Obese

### 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.virtualcancercentre.com](http://www.virtualcancercentre.com)  
[www.blackdoginstitute.com.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.com.au)  
[www.uptodate.com/patients](http://www.uptodate.com/patients)

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

#### FEE POLICY

**Consults** \$50 gap. **Welfare** \$35 gap  
**DVA** bulk billed. Home **Visits** \$70 gap.  
**Skin operations** \$120 gap, Welfare Bulk Billed.  
**Scripts and Referral Letters**, \$20.  
If collected by patient bulk billed.  
**SATURDAY:** No Concessions.  
Cancellation fee \$22 and \$55 for procedural appointments unless 24 hours prior notice given.

**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.

**Make sure you get your Bowel Cancer Test Kit \$13.45.**