



Chronic conditions



Your mouth & your mood



RSV Vaccine in Australia

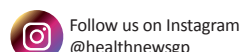


Spring readiness

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT:

ENJOY THIS FREE NEWSLETTER

Please remember that decisions about medical care should be made in consultation with your health care provider so discuss with your doctor before acting on any of the information.
www.healthnews.net.au



PRACTICE DOCTORS

Dr Myrna Jover

MD, FRACGP

Awarded GP of the Year 2012
Illawarra/Shoalhaven Area

Dr Neill Jover

MD, FRACGP

Dr Verman De La Cruz

MD, FRACGP

Dr Michael Petinga

MBBS, FRACGP

Dr Jamie Mercado

MBBS

Dr Michelle Medenilla

MBBS

Dr Samia Shawkat

MBBS

Dr Adeel Siddiqi

MBBS

Dr Priya Shroff

MD, FRACGP

Dr Kim Adriano

MBBS

PRACTICE NURSES

Margaret, Matthew, Cherry, Debbie & Nicole

RECEPTION STAFF

Krystal, Melinda, Vanessa, Cherry, Robin, Debbie & Sheynl

SURGERY HOURS

Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm

Saturday 8am - 12pm

Sun & Public Hols..... Closed

AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY

For after hours consultations call:
Wollongong Radio Doctor:
4228 5522

In case of an emergency dial: **000**

BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

Mixed Biling Practice.

Please bring your Medicare and concession cards to your appointment.

Private medicals are charged at AMA rates.

Payment at the time of consultation for non-Medicare card holders can be made by cash or EFT.

▶ **Please see the Rear Cover for more practice information.**

SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

Our practice philosophy is to provide thoughtful medical care to families by keeping up-to-date with medical innovations and bringing you efficient personal service.

Our practice **has been selected by the** University of Wollongong's Graduate School of Medicine to help train senior (phase 3) medical students. Each July a new student will join our practice team for a 12 month placement. The student will participate in the delivery of care to consenting patients under supervision. For example he or she may conduct a consultation, prior to the doctor's arrival. The student may complete a pre immunization check on children, administer influenza vaccinations over 65 year olds, take part in patient education and health screening, and be an extra pair of hands in emergencies.

Referrals. Doctors in this practice are competent at handling common health problems. When necessary, they can use opinions from specialists. You can discuss this openly with your doctor.

Patient Feedback. We would like to hear about your concerns, complaints or suggestions. Please feel free to talk to your GP or the Practice Manager regarding any issues. If you prefer to make your concerns known outside the surgery, you can call the Health Care Complaints Commission on **(02) 9219 7444 or 1800 043 159.**

Telephone advice. Most problems are best dealt with in consultation. A doctor is available during normal surgery hours for **emergency** advice. Our staff are experienced in deciding the appropriate response to any phone request.

Test results. It is your responsibility to ensure you follow-up test results, particularly when practice staff or your doctor stress that you do this. Ask reception staff about the best way to go about it.

Despite our best intentions, we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected urgent attention. Thank you for your consideration.

APPOINTMENTS

Consultation is by appointment. Urgent cases are seen on the day.

ONLINE APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE. Please visit our practice at www.imsberkeley.com.au or the Hotdoc website.

Home Visits. Doctors at this practice make home visits at their discretion.

Booking a long appointment. This is important for more complex problems – insurance medical, health review, counselling, a second opinion. Please bring all relevant information. Please notify us if you are unable to attend an appointment, well in advance. If more than one person from your family wishes to see the doctor at the same time, please ensure a separate appointment is made for each family member.

This is a family owned AGPAL Accredited Practice.

We provide a comprehensive family medical service – quality care in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

Practice doctors are experienced in a broad range of health problems affecting all age groups.



Chronic conditions

Chronic and long-term conditions affect millions of Australians and drive much of our health system use. The most common remain mental and behavioural conditions (notably anxiety and depression), back problems, arthritis, asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. These conditions often cluster: someone with back pain may also experience depression or obesity, compounding symptoms and making day to day life harder. Prevalence rises with age, but many start earlier than people expect, especially musculoskeletal pain and mental health conditions.

What you can do today:

- Know your numbers. Track blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose (if at risk), and weight/waist. Early changes are easier to reverse.
- Move most days. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate activity weekly plus two strength sessions; even 10 minute bouts reduce pain, improve mood, and support heart health.
- Prioritise sleep and stress care. Regular sleep times and simple stress routines (breathing, brief walks, social connection) help both pain and mood.
- Eat for stability. Emphasise vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, olive oil, and fish; limit ultra processed foods and sugary drinks to reduce inflammation and support weight and glucose control.
- Plan care, not just visits. Ask your GP about a chronic disease management plan and allied health referrals under Medicare, including physiotherapy, dietetics, and mental health support.
- Stay up to date with vaccines. Annual flu shots and recommended COVID boosters lower complications, especially for people with heart, lung, diabetes, or kidney disease.
- Make it social. Join local walking groups or condition specific programs—accountability boosts adherence.

Small, consistent steps matter more than perfection. If pain, breathlessness, low mood, or daily function worsens, book a review with your GP to adjust your plan promptly.

How your mouth shapes your mood

A healthy mouth does more than prevent cavities—it meaningfully supports wellbeing. Oral pain, bleeding gums, and missing or sensitive teeth can limit what you eat, how you sleep, and whether you smile or socialise. Those daily frictions add up: people with untreated dental problems report more stress, lower life satisfaction, and higher rates of anxiety and depression. Conversely, comfortable, functional teeth enable varied, enjoyable eating, clearer speech, better sleep, and confidence in social and work settings—core ingredients of happiness.

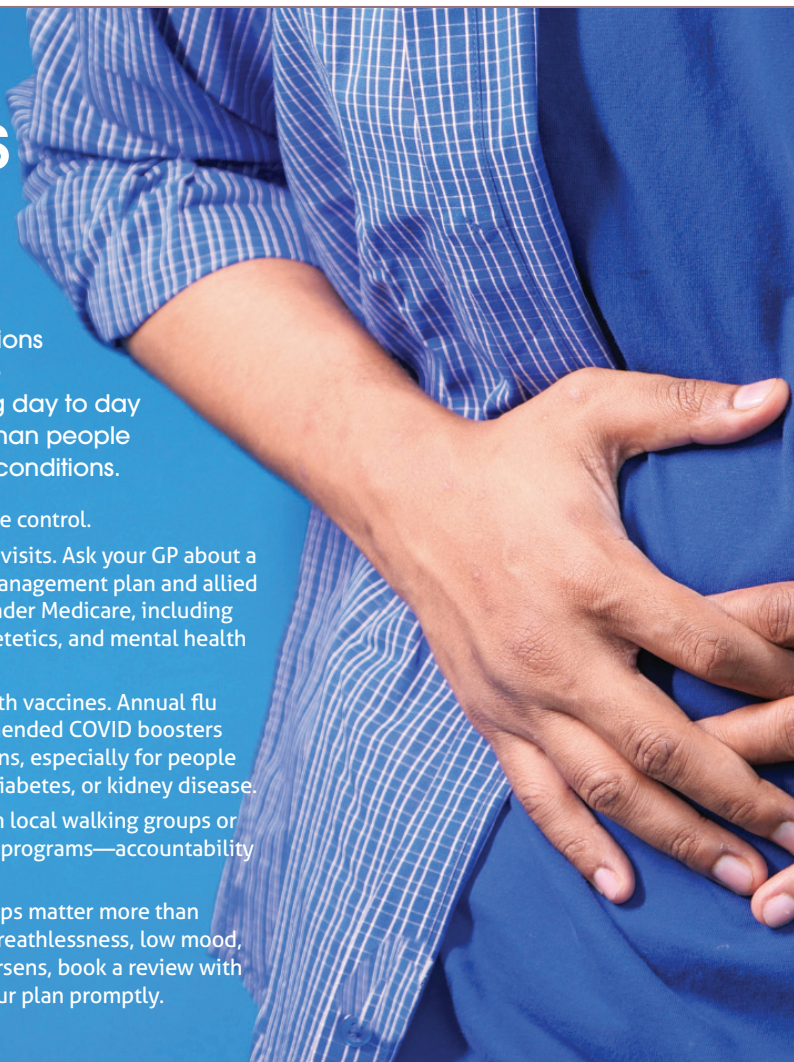
Biology plays a role too. Chronic gum disease is an inflammatory condition; persistent inflammation is linked with fatigue, low mood, and conditions like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Treating periodontal disease can reduce systemic inflammation markers, often improving energy and overall quality of life.

Practical steps to boost both oral and emotional health:

- Brush with fluoride toothpaste twice daily and floss every day..
- Limit frequent sugary snacks and acidic drinks.
- Book regular check ups and cleanings

Whilst the primary specialist for dental health is your Dentist, if you start to have concerns over your teeth or gums, your GP is always a good place to start especially if there may be a link to more serious health concerns.

Small, consistent habits create a positive feedback loop: a healthier mouth, easier daily life, and more reasons to smile.



The Importance of the RSV Vaccine in Australia

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is one of the leading causes of serious respiratory illness in Australia, particularly affecting infants, older adults, and people with chronic medical conditions. While RSV often causes symptoms similar to the common cold, it can lead to severe complications such as bronchiolitis, pneumonia, and hospitalisation in vulnerable groups. With safe and effective vaccines now available, Australia has an important opportunity to reduce the burden of this common virus.

Each year, RSV places significant pressure on Australian hospitals during the autumn and winter months. Thousands of babies require medical care for RSV-related illness, while older adults aged 60 years and over are at increased risk of severe infection, particularly those with heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or weakened immune systems.

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent serious RSV disease. In Australia, maternal RSV vaccination during pregnancy helps protect newborn babies during their first six months of life by passing protective antibodies from mother to baby. Vaccines are also available for older adults to reduce

the risk of severe illness, hospitalisation, and complications.

The benefits of RSV vaccination extend beyond the individual. Preventing severe illness helps reduce hospital admissions, eases pressure on the healthcare system, and protects families from the emotional and financial impact of caring for a seriously ill loved one.

If you are pregnant, over 60 years of age, or have underlying health conditions, speak with your GP or healthcare provider about whether the RSV vaccine is recommended for you. Vaccination is a simple step that can help protect both yourself and those most vulnerable during Australia's respiratory virus season.



Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is a rare, aggressive cancer that forms in the lining of the lungs (pleura) most often, and less commonly in the abdomen (peritoneum) or around the heart.

The primary cause is inhaling asbestos fibres, typically from occupational or environmental exposure decades earlier. Symptoms can be subtle at first—shortness of breath, persistent chest pain, cough, fatigue, or unexplained weight loss—and may be mistaken for common respiratory conditions.

Diagnosis usually involves imaging (chest X ray, CT), fluid analysis if there's a pleural effusion, and a tissue biopsy to confirm cell type (epithelioid, sarcomatoid, or biphasic). Staging assesses how far disease has spread and guides treatment.

Treatment is individualised and often combines:

- Surgery for selected early pleural cases to remove diseased lining and relieve symptoms.
- Systemic therapy: platinum based chemotherapy, immunotherapy (checkpoint inhibitors), or combinations to improve survival and control symptoms.
- Radiation therapy to shrink tumours or reduce pain.
- Supportive care: procedures to drain fluid, pain control, pulmonary rehab, and nutrition support.

If you've had asbestos exposure and develop persistent chest symptoms, see your GP promptly and mention the exposure history.

In Australia, asbestos exposure has a long legacy in construction, shipbuilding, and home renovations. If you're renovating, use licensed professionals for asbestos testing and removal, and follow your state's safety regulations.



Spring readiness

As winter fades, spring brings longer days—and spikes in pollen, asthma flares, and sudden storms. Get ahead now to protect your breathing and wellbeing.

- Track pollen and plan. Check daily pollen counts and thunderstorm asthma alerts for your region. On high risk days, keep windows closed, use recirculated air in cars, and prioritise indoor exercise.
- Tune your asthma and allergy plan. If you wheeze, cough at night, or use a reliever more than twice a week, book a GP review. Start or step up preventer inhalers before peak pollen. Use intranasal corticosteroid sprays daily for hay fever; add non drowsy antihistamines as needed.
- Prep your environment. Replace or clean HVAC filters, service inhalers/spacers, and stock tissues, saline rinses, and eye drops. Shower after outdoor activities to remove pollen; dry laundry indoors on extreme pollen days.
- Build resilience habits. Aim for regular sleep, movement most days, and a Mediterranean style eating pattern to support immune and respiratory health.
- Prepare for severe weather. Thunderstorms and early heat spikes can hit in spring. Assemble a simple kit: updated medications, water, a charged power bank, and copies of action plans. Save emergency numbers and set local alert notifications on your phone.

Early, consistent steps reduce flare ups, days off work or school, and unplanned doctor visits. If you notice worsening breathlessness, chest tightness, or persistent facial pain from sinus symptoms, seek medical advice promptly.



LEMON-HERB CHICKEN WITH ASPARAGUS AND PEA ORZO

Here's a bright, easy spring recipe that can be made as directed, or made veg by swapping out the chicken for Haloumi and using vegetable stock. Serves 4 | 30 minutes

Ingredients (Serves 6–8):

- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup orzo pasta
- 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 500 g chicken thigh fillets, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed, cut in 3–4 cm pieces
- 1 cup frozen peas
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp honey (optional)
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh mint or dill
- 30 g grated parmesan (plus extra to serve)
- Salt and pepper
- Lemon wedges, to serve

Method:

1. Cook orzo: Bring stock to a boil, add orzo, simmer until al dente (8–9 min). Reserve a splash of stock; drain.
2. Sear chicken: Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Season chicken with salt/pepper; cook 5–7 min until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate.
3. Spring veg: In the same pan add remaining oil, asparagus, and a pinch of salt; cook 2–3 min. Add peas and garlic; cook 1 min.
4. Sauce: Stir in lemon zest/juice, Dijon, honey, and a splash of reserved stock to make a light pan sauce. Scrape up browned bits.
5. Combine: Return chicken to pan with orzo, parmesan, parsley, and mint/dill. Toss until glossy; loosen with more stock if needed. Season to taste.
6. Serve: Finish with extra parmesan, black pepper, and lemon wedges.

WORD SEARCH

H K A A K S S N T V
M E T L I L O T R A
C O A C L E H C A C
F P O L L E N O V C
I L O D T P R U E I
S L M C W H T G L N
H A B I T S A H Y E
O K C U T C M A L H
L T O C A N C E R A
N M C H R O N I C I

MOOD MOUTH TRAVEL ALLERGY CANCER CHRONIC COUGH FISH
HABITS HEALTH POLLEN SLEEP VACCINE



• OTHER SERVICES

- Accident & Emergency Care
- Antenatal Care
- Dietitian
- Berkeley Pharmacy next door
- Clinical Psychologist
- Podiatrist
- Women & Men's Health
- Mental Health
- Immunisation
- Medicals e.g. Driving, Seaman's
- Exercise Physiologist
- Psychologist
- Pathology on site
- Physiotherapist
- Minor Surgery
- Wheelchair access is available
- Skin Cancer Clinic – e.g. Mole check
- Aged Care Facilities – we visit the local nursing homes and hostels
- Travel Medicine (Accredited Yellow Fever Vaccination Centre)

• SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

Medical record confidentiality.

This practice protects your personal health information to ensure it is only available to authorised staff members for the intended purposes and to comply with the Privacy Act.

Reminder system. Because our practice is committed to preventive care, we may send you an occasional reminder regarding health services appropriate to your care. If you wish to opt out of this, please let us know.

