



FREE TO TAKE HOME!



Family break-ups



Heartburn



Flu vaccination



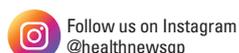
Dealing with Depression

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](http://www.healthnews.net.au)



**APRIL - MAY 2022 EDITION**

● **AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY**

In case of a medical emergency call '000' and ask for an ambulance immediately.

For all other After hours medical enquiries, after Stawell Medical Centre has closed, on weekends or public holidays, please call **5358 1410** and your call will put through to our after hours service for advice.

● **PRACTICE DOCTORS**

- Dr Andrew Cunningham** MBBS
- Dr Eleazer Okwor-Ojwang** MBBS, FRACGP
- Dr Venkateshwar Komerelly** MBBS, FRACGP
- Dr Swetha Bandaru** MBBS, FRACGP
- Dr Adnan Rasheed** MBBS, FRACGP
- Dr Catherine Pye** MBBS, FACRRM
- Dr Christian Ezeobi** MBBS
- Dr Marcus Wilcox** MBBS
- Dr Chanodha Batawalaarachchi** Registrar

*Practice doctors are experienced in the broad range of general practice problems and the treatment of all age groups.*

● **PRACTICE STAFF**

**Practice Manager:** Bader Adel  
**Administration Staff:** Bader, Kerry, Jess, Rebecca, Leah, Rhea & Shenae

**Nursing Staff:** Pam, Vicki, Belinda, Crystal, Lana & Paigen

● **COVID-19**

As the practice is observing social distancing we ask that you limit the number of people accompanying a patient to one other.

We also advise that telephone or video consults are preferred if you do not need to be seen in person.

● **SURGERY HOURS**

**Monday – Friday**.....9.00am – 5.30pm  
**Saturday, Sunday & Public Holidays**  
(By appointment by the doctor at Urgent Care Centre, Stawell Regional Health - Urgent patients only)

**All attendances at Stawell Regional Health Urgent Care Centre WILL incur an out of pocket fee of \$50.00**

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

● **BILLING ARRANGEMENTS**

All patients are required to pay in full at the time of appointment. Medicare refunds can be processed immediately via TYRO terminal and deposited directly back into your account. Payment can be made by cash, credit card or EFTPOS. If you would like to know more please ask to speak to our accounts team.

**Fees as of 1st July 2021:**

**Standard consult**

Private .....	\$80.00
Health Care Card Holder.....	\$68.40
Pension Card Holder .....	\$61.30



All patients under 16 and over 75 years of age will be bulk billed for appointments at Stawell Medical Centre Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm only.

After Hours fees apply to EVERYONE seen by a Doctor at Stawell Regional Health Urgent Care Centre:

**Standard consult - Regular Hours**

Saturday .....	\$89.10
Sunday .....	\$101.00

All attendances at Stawell Regional Health Urgent Care Centre WILL incur an out of pocket fee of \$50.00

● **APPOINTMENTS**

Consultation is by appointment. We have appointments available for urgent cases on the day. Please let reception staff know if you would like a longer appointment, for a medical report, TAC or Workcover form or if you have several things you wish to discuss.

**Home Visits.** These are available on request. Please speak to reception if you would like further information.

If **more than one person** from your family would like to see the doctor, please ensure that a separate appointment is made for each person otherwise they may not be seen.

**Time is valuable to all of us.** If you are **unable to attend a booked appointment**, please let the practice know at least 2 hours prior. If you **fail to attend** a booked appointment without warning or explanation you may be charged a non-attendance fee. We may not be able to offer you booked appointments in the future either.

● **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

*Stawell Medical Centres Values and Mission align with those of Stawell Regional Health;*

**Influenza vaccines.** Dates will be announced soon.

**COVID vaccine** clinics are now operating with consent forms available at the clinic or on our SRH website.

**Stawell Regional Health Mission**

*In partnership with our community, Stawell Regional Health will deliver high quality care and improve health outcomes by providing safe, accessible and integrated services.*

**Stawell Regional Health Vision**

*Caring for our community.*

**Despite our best intentions**, we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected or urgent medical attention. Be assured that when it comes to your appointment, your doctor will give your consult the time that it deserves. We thank you for your understanding and consideration.

# Impact on children with family break-ups

It is estimated that 40% of marriages will end in divorce or separation. In many instances, there are children involved, and the impact on them is significant.

Regardless of whether a couple love each other or not, their children will still love them both. Whilst all children are affected in the short term, American research showed that in the longer term, the vast majority of children in divorced families did as well as their peers regarding behaviour, academic performance, and social relationships.

What has been found is that high levels of parental conflict were associated with poorer outcomes for children. This means it is less, that parents may separate, but how it is managed. It also says that remaining together when there is much conflict is not helpful either.

The effects are those of stress and differ widely. Age is also a factor. Some children may develop night terrors or become anxious. Others may cry a lot. Those who are newly toilet trained may regress. Some children may complain of headaches or tummy aches. Some may lose appetite.

Children will need the support of both parents. In turn, parents will also

need support. There are many services available to support families. Talk to your children honestly and listen to what they have to say. Allow them to express emotion and allow them to adjust in their own time.

Talk to your GP about any concerns you have about your child or your own health.



 <https://headspace.org.au/friends-and-family/understanding-school-refusal/>

## Heartburn

This is a burning pain in the chest or upper abdomen caused by acid "leaking" from the stomach into the oesophagus.

It is also known as reflux and Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD). It is very common and can affect all age groups starting with infants, and ranges from mild to severe and occasional to daily. Not everyone with heartburn has GORD. Some with GORD may have a hiatus hernia, where some of the stomach "slips" above the diaphragm.

In adults, risk factors include being overweight, smoking, alcohol consumption and a family history. Certain foods will trigger heartburn in certain people, but there is no one set of foods to avoid.

Caffeine, dairy, and spicy foods are common culprits, but each person needs to find what "disagrees" with them.

Prevention includes avoiding known triggers and not overeating at one time. Treatment depends on severity and frequency. Simple home remedies like bicarbonate of soda or herbal teas help some people. Simple



 <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/indigestion>

antacids can relieve symptoms. At night it can be helpful to sleep on a slight incline from the head down to the toes.

If simple approaches fail, you need to see your GP. Often the history is sufficient for diagnosis, but you may be sent for tests to rule out other causes.

For ongoing problems, there are prescription medications that can reduce acid production. Some people need short courses of these, and others need it long term. If symptoms are not relieved after some weeks, you may be referred for a gastroscopy to assess the oesophagus and stomach.

# Flu vaccination

With all the focus on COVID 19 vaccination, including boosters, which many will have had by the end of March, it may be easy to forget that flu season will be with us soon.

Flu vaccination typically starts in the second half of April based on peak flu season, generally from late June to mid-August (albeit this varies year to year and varies from city to city within the same season). As flu strains change, you need a shot each year. The annual vaccine is not a "booster" but to cover the strains anticipated for the upcoming winter. Vaccination is recommended for everyone older than six months.

Like other viral illnesses, the severity of influenza varies from mild to severe. Typical symptoms are fever, headache, fatigue, muscle pains and loss of appetite. People generally

feel more unwell with the flu than a cold- the two illnesses are not the same.

Certain groups who are at increased risk of complications from flu are eligible for a free vaccine under the national program; those over age 65, ATSI people aged over six months, pregnant women, those over age six months with a chronic medical condition, and children aged six months to five years. Some states have programs that cover additional groups.

Many clinics will run dedicated flu vaccination sessions and/or do it as part of a regular consultation. Ask your GP about flu vaccination for you and your family.



 <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/vaccines/influenza-flu-immunisation-service>



 <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression>

## Dealing with Depression

Depression is common, affecting as many as one in five Australians. For some, it can be an ongoing condition with ups and downs. For others, there may be only one isolated episode.

Depression is more than just feeling sad for a day or two. It is feeling miserable for at least two weeks together with lack of enjoyment of usual activities, withdrawal from friends and often sleep and appetite disturbance.

There are no diagnostic blood tests or scans. Diagnosis is based on the symptoms.

There are non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatment options. There are several medications that can be used if needed. Counselling through a psychologist or counsellor will be of benefit to many. Your GP can refer you.

Lifestyle measures also help. Eating a healthy

diet rich in vegetables and lower in sugar may help. Cut down on alcohol use. Regular exercise is good for mental health. Meditation or guided relaxation can help. Getting enough sleep is also important. Equally, do not stress if your sleep pattern takes a while to get back to normal. Switch off screen at least 30 minutes before bed and have a regular night-time routine.

Regular follow up with your GP is important. Changes in treatment may be needed if you are not making improvements. With recovery, medication (if prescribed) may be reduced and then stopped. Do not stop your medication without talking to your doctor.



 <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/otitis-media>

## Otitis Media

The human ear has three parts (outer middle, and inner). All three can get infected. Otitis media is an infection of the middle ear.

It is most common in children with a peak between six and 18 months. The cause may be bacteria or viruses. It can affect one or both ears and may come with a "cold" type illness or be of itself. It is more common in Indigenous children.

Typical symptoms are a painful ear. There may be a sore throat in the lead-up or concurrently. Fever may be present but is usually mild. Children may lose appetite and be distressed – especially younger children.

Diagnosis is made by examination of the eardrum. This is typically bright red in colour when infected. There may be fluid in the middle ear "behind the drum". Glands in the neck may be enlarged, and the throat may be inflamed too. There is generally no need for blood tests.

Until recently, antibiotics were given routinely. Current thinking is that most viral infections will settle without antibiotics in a few days. Some cases will still need them. Pain relief is important, as is comforting your child. Maintain hydration, but if appetite is low, there is no need to force this.

Children with repeated middle ear infections can develop glue ear (where fluid stays in the middle ear and does not drain to the sinuses), which can impact on hearing. These children may benefit from the insertion of grommet tubes by an ENT surgeon.



## KEY LIME PIE

### Ingredients

- 300g digestive biscuits
- 150g butter, melted
- 1 x 397g can condensed milk (we used Nestlé)

### Directions

- Heat the oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3.
- Whizz 300g digestive biscuits to crumbs in a strong plastic bag and bash with a rolling pin.
- Mix with 150g melted butter and press into the base and up the sides of a 22cm loose-based tart tin. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove and cool.
- Put 3 medium egg yolks in a large bowl and whisk for a minute with electric beaters.
- Add a can of condensed milk and whisk

- 3 medium egg yolks
- finely grated zest and juice of 4 limes
- 300ml double cream
- 1 tsp icing sugar
- extra lime zest, to decorate

- for 3 minutes, then add the finely grated zest and juice of 4 limes and whisk again for 3 minutes.
- Pour the filling into the cooled base, then put it back in the oven for 15 minutes. Cool, then chill for at least 3 hours or overnight if you like. When ready to serve, carefully remove the pie from the tin and put on a serving plate.
- To decorate, softly whip together 300ml double cream and 1 tsp icing sugar. Decorate as desired and finish with some extra lime zest and lime slices.



**COLOUR FUN!**



## Stawell Medical Centre

A division of Stawell Regional Health

### ● SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

**SMS reminders** are sent to all registered mobile phones. Phone reminders are also available should you require this.

### Electronic Communication.

Telehealth consults are available for eligible patients; our staff can assist you to decide if this or an in clinic consult is more appropriate. You can contact the practice by email. This is not the most secure method of communication.

We have a **recall system** in place for all test results and chronic disease management.

**Patient Health Information.** To obtain a copy of your health record or to obtain a copy of Stawell Regional Health "Protection and use of your health information" brochure or to view the Stawell Regional Health privacy policy, please ask to see our Practice Manager or Privacy Officer.

If you prefer you can contact the Health Services Commissioner Complaints and Information on; Telephone: 1300 582 113 or email: [hsc@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:hsc@dhhs.vic.gov.au).

**Patient Feedback.** We welcome your feedback and invite you to fill out a "Compliment, Complaint and Feedback form". These are located near the entrance to the practice, in the reception area. You can also ask to speak to the Practice manager or your GP.

**Test Results.** Results are viewed by our doctors and acted upon in a timely manner, always with your health as a priority. Please make sure you have made an appointment with your doctor to review any results as they will not be given over the phone.

### ● SPECIALIST SERVICES

Stawell Regional Health has a large number of other Medical Services and Visiting Specialist's available. Our doctors have extensive knowledge of these and can advise you about whether a referral is appropriate and arrange for this to occur if needed.