

DECEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2025 EDITION

FREE TO TAKE HOME!



Breast Cancer



Vitamin B6



School Holidays



New Year's Resolutions

● PRACTICE DOCTORS

Dr Michelle Barrett

MBBS, DRANZCOG, FRACGP
Family Medicine

Dr Patrick O'Callaghan

MBChB, BAO (NUI), FRACGP

Monday 9:00am - 5:00pm
Tuesday..... 9:00am - 12:00pm
Thursday..... 9:00am - 12:00pm

Dr Kate McCallum

MBBS, DRACOG, DCH
Family Medicine

Tuesday & Friday 9:30am - 5:00pm

Dr Ying Chow

MChD

Tuesday..... 9:00am - 3:30pm
Thursday..... 9:00am - 3:30pm
Friday..... 9:00pm - 4:00pm

Dr Matthew Lewis

MBBS (Hons), Bsc (Hons), FRACGP

Monday 9:00am - 12:00pm
Wednesday..... 9:00am - 12:00pm

Dr Jaclyn Moss

MBBS, FRACGP

Tuesday..... 9:00am - 5:00pm
Thursday..... 8:30pm - 12:00pm
Friday..... 8:30am - 12:00pm

Dr Michelle Hart

MBBS, FRACGP

Monday 8:30am - 12:00pm
Wednesday..... 8:30am - 3:30pm
Thursday..... 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Dr Gwenda Griffiths

MBBS

Monday 1:30am - 5:00pm
Wednesday..... 1:30am - 5:00pm

Dr Matt Smith

MBBS, FRACGP

Monday 1:00am - 5:00pm
Tuesday..... 1:00am - 5:00pm
Wednesday..... 1:00am - 5:00pm
Thursday..... 8:30am - 12:00pm

Dr Katherine Lovat

MBBS, FRACGP

Thursday..... 12:30pm - 3:30pm
Friday..... 8:30am - 3:30pm

● PRACTICE STAFF

Practice Manager:

Graeme Sellar

Practice Nurses:

Jane (RN), Danielle (RN) & Kirsty (EN)

Reception Staff:

Anne, Deb, Niamh, Ned, Constance
and Ulrika,

● SURGERY HOURS

Monday – Friday..... 8.00am – 6pm

● AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY

For after hours care please phone: **1300 422 567**

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

● PRACTICE NEWS

Welcome to our first edition since Covid marched its way across the country and the world in early 2020. Many things have changed since then and many more have stayed the same. However we could not let one recent change go unheralded. As of September this year we have had a change of ownership here at Hughes Family Practice. Drs Barrett & O'Callaghan have passed the baton so to speak to our own Drs Chow, Hart and Moss.

Dr Barrett had owned the practice since 2000 having taken over from the late Dr Jim McCauley. He had started the practice in the late 1960's! Dr O'Callaghan joined Dr Barrett in 2007 and they have steered the practice through the many challenges that have arisen in primary care since.

For Drs Barrett and O'Callaghan, whilst this is the first big step in their transition to retirement from clinical practice they will be around in some capacity for some time to come.

Drs Chow, Hart and Moss are very keen to continue the legacy of the practice, noting that it is a "true family practice" with many 4th generation families counted amongst current patients. Between them the Drs have been at the practice a combined 25 years so they are well placed to understand the practice philosophy and protect its legacy. An aim clearly shared by the staff and GP's alike as not one staff member is leaving after the changeover.

Dr Chow joined the practice in 2014 as a GP registrar having completed her medical degree at ANU in 2012. Ying amazingly juggled home duties with two young children whilst her husband completed not one but two overseas postings. With him now home she is looking forward to throwing herself into practice ownership.

Dr Hart joined the practice in 2017 having completed her medical degree at University of Queensland. A year in London followed and then a return to Canberra. Now with three young children and a husband also in the medical field Michelle recently completed building a new house and with clearly too much spare time decided to take on practice ownership! Michelle has an interest in teaching and is working closely with our GP registrar and medical students.

Dr Moss also joined the practice in 2016 having completed her medical degree at University of Sydney. Jackie recently admitted to having held five different medical positions at one time a few years ago and realised that was perhaps a little much! Having now consolidated to two positions and also with three young children she also thought Practice ownership would help fill her spare time! Jacki is particularly keen to further our use of IT in the practice where possible.

The new principals are very keen to expand the services currently offered and further develop the practices online profile, including the introduction of online appointment bookings in the not too distant future.

The recent ACT election is now over and it is unclear if general practice will benefit from direct investment to the same degree the Nurse led Walk in Centres and community pharmacies have this year. However the practice remains committed to working with the government in the hope that the family GP remains at the centre of your healthcare journey.

Our Christmas shutdown is from midday 24th December through to 8am Thursday the 2nd January. We wish you and your families a safe and happy Christmas and all the best for 2025.

Finally on a personal note having worked in more than a dozen practices in the region over 25 years I can say with confidence this practice is in excellent hands moving forward. The practice has the best possible chance to flourish in years to come with Drs Chow, Hart and Moss at the helm.

Graeme Sellar, Practice Manager

Health News
wishes you a
very Merry Xmas
and Happy
New Year!

Understanding Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women worldwide, with millions diagnosed each year.

It occurs when cells in the breast grow uncontrollably, forming a malignant tumour that can spread to other parts of the body. Although the exact cause of breast cancer is unknown, certain risk factors increase its likelihood. These include age, family history, genetic mutations (such as BRCA1 and BRCA2), lifestyle factors like obesity, and hormonal influences.

Early detection is crucial in the fight against breast cancer, as it significantly improves treatment outcomes. Regular breast self-exams and awareness of any changes, such as lumps, pain, nipple discharge, or changes in breast shape, are essential first steps. Mammograms, an X-ray of the breast, is recommended annually for women over 40 or earlier for those at high risk, as they can detect cancer at an early stage when it is most treatable.

Treatment for breast cancer varies depending on its stage and type and may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or targeted therapy. Advances in medical research have led to more personalised treatments, increasing survival rates and improving patients' quality of life.

Beyond treatment, support for breast cancer patients and their families is vital. Support groups, counselling, and community resources provide emotional and mental assistance during recovery. With continued research and awareness efforts, breast cancer outcomes are improving, giving hope to millions. Early detection, a healthy lifestyle, and regular screenings are key steps in reducing the impact of this disease and improving survival rates.



Vitamin B6

As the wellness trend continues to surge, millions worldwide have incorporated over-the-counter vitamins into their daily routines. While vitamin supplements are generally safe when consumed as directed, excessive intake can lead to adverse side effects.

Vitamin B6 is commonly found in many multivitamins and mineral supplements available without a prescription in supermarkets, health food shops, and pharmacies. Excessive vitamin B6 intake is associated with peripheral neuropathy, which can result in symptoms such as tingling, burning, or numbness, typically in the hands and feet.

In March 2023, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) mandated that products containing vitamin B6 in daily doses above 10 mg require a label warning. This previously applied to products containing over 50 mg per daily dose.

Dr David Kanowski, a chemical pathologist at Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology in Brisbane, says "Many people may unknowingly consume high doses of vitamin B6 by taking multiple supplements. For example, vitamin B6 (as pyridoxine hydrochloride) is often included in magnesium supplements, with each tablet containing up to 60 mg. A patient taking two magnesium tablets per day could be unintentionally consuming 120 mg of vitamin B6, far exceeding the recommended dietary intake for adults in Australia and New Zealand, which is 1.3–2.0 mg/day with a maximum of 50 mg/day. As pyridoxine hydrochloride has a half-life of up to 30 days, repetitive small doses taken over months can accumulate to high blood concentrations."

It is important to be vigilant about vitamin B6 intake and to consult healthcare professionals if you have any concerns about supplement use.





Keeping Children Engaged During School Holidays

School holidays offer a great opportunity for children to relax and enjoy a break from structured learning, but keeping them engaged and productive can be a challenge for parents. Balancing free time with structured activities can help ensure they stay busy, learn new things, and enjoy themselves.

A great way to start is by planning a range of activities that mix fun with learning. Creative projects, like arts and crafts, help children express themselves and develop fine motor skills. Reading is another excellent activity; a holiday reading list can keep their minds sharp while exploring new topics and stories.

Outdoor activities are vital, too. Parks, nature trails, or even backyard playtime allow children to get exercise, enjoy fresh air, and burn off energy. For rainy days, indoor games, puzzles, or even educational apps can provide entertainment and stimulate problem-solving skills.

Enrolling kids in holiday programs or day camps is another way to keep them engaged. These programs often offer a variety of sports, arts, and social activities, letting children make new friends and learn new skills.

Involving children in household activities, like cooking or gardening, can also be enjoyable and teach valuable life skills. By balancing free play, structured learning, and family time, parents can create a holiday routine that keeps children happy, active, and engaged throughout the break.



New Year's Resolutions: A Fresh Start

New Year's resolutions offer a chance to set fresh goals and make positive changes. Each January, millions of people commit to resolutions, whether it's to eat healthier, exercise more, quit smoking, or focus on personal growth. These resolutions reflect our desire to start the year on a positive note, motivated by a sense of renewal and self-improvement.

However, despite good intentions, many people struggle to keep their resolutions. Studies show that by February, a large percentage have already given up. One reason is that people often set unrealistic goals or try to make drastic changes overnight. Without a clear, manageable plan, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and lose motivation.

The key to a successful New Year's resolution is setting realistic, specific goals and breaking them into small, achievable steps. Instead of saying, "I want to lose weight," try a more specific goal like, "I'll exercise for 20 minutes three times a week." Making resolutions measurable and attainable increases the likelihood of success. Additionally, tracking progress and celebrating small victories along the way can keep motivation high.

Support from friends, family, or online communities can also be a powerful motivator. Sharing your goals with others not only provides accountability but can also offer encouragement during challenging times.

Ultimately, New Year's resolutions should be about positive change rather than perfection. Embrace the journey, allow room for mistakes, and celebrate the effort you put in. With patience, persistence, and a clear plan, resolutions can be a wonderful tool for personal growth and improvement.

Overindulging at Christmas Time



Christmas is a time for celebration, good food, and quality time with loved ones. However, the holiday season often brings an abundance of rich foods, sugary treats, and indulgent drinks that can lead to overindulgence. While enjoying festive food is part of the holiday spirit, consuming too much can leave you feeling sluggish, bloated, and unwell.

Overindulging in high-calorie, high-fat foods can strain your digestive system and lead to weight gain. The festive season also often comes with an increase in alcohol consumption, which can impact liver health, sleep quality, and overall mood. For people with health conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, excessive eating and drinking can be especially harmful.

To avoid these pitfalls, consider pacing yourself throughout the season. Opt for smaller portions, savour each bite, and balance indulgent foods with healthier options. Drinking plenty of water, maintaining some physical activity, and getting enough rest can help counteract the effects of overindulgence. Remember, you can still enjoy the holiday treats without going overboard. Moderation is key to feeling good and making the most of the Christmas season. Enjoy the festivities while staying mindful of your health.

Hughes Family Practice

● BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

Please pay all fees on day of consultation. All children below the age of 5 are bulk billed.

● APPOINTMENTS

Home Visits. If you need your doctor to make a home visit, please call the surgery first thing in the morning.

Booking a long appointment. Long appointments are available when required. They are not to be booked routinely, please ensure if you think you need a long appointment that you book one with reception. If a standard appointment is booked and there are many issues to discuss or resolve the doctor will require you return for another appointment rather than run very late in their session. Thank you for your co-operation.

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.

● SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

Communication policy.

Our GP's cannot routinely take phone calls during consultations. A message can be left with staff and the GP may call back or arrange a staff member to book an appointment where appropriate. We don't communicate by email.

Test Results.

You will be contacted where there is an abnormal result or if your GP requests follow up. You can call the practice nurse between 12.30 and 1.00 pm for information.

Recalls and Reminders.

Our practice operates a recall and reminder system for a range of health issues and in response to test results as appropriate. Patients wishing to opt out of our recalls system should discuss this with their GP.

Patient Privacy.

The practice takes the privacy of your personal health information very seriously. If you have any questions please ask at reception for a copy of the practice privacy policy.

Repeat Scripts. You need to make an appointment for Repeat Scripts. Fees apply.



CLASSIC CHRISTMAS GINGERBREAD COOKIES

These delicious gingerbread cookies are perfect for the holiday season. They're easy to make, fun to decorate, and fill your kitchen with warm, festive aromas.

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- For Decoration: Icing, sprinkles, or any decorative toppings

Method

1. Prepare the Dough: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg.
2. Mix Wet Ingredients: In a large bowl, cream the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, molasses, and vanilla extract until smooth.
3. Combine Ingredients: Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, mixing until combined. Divide the dough in half, wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
4. Bake: Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Roll out the dough to 1/4-inch thickness and use cookie cutters for your desired shapes. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 8-10 minutes.
5. Decorate: Let cookies cool completely before decorating with icing and sprinkles.

