

melomag

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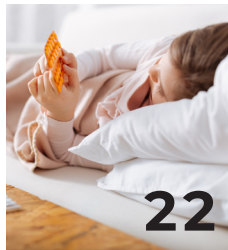
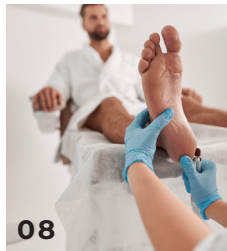
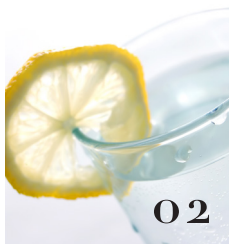
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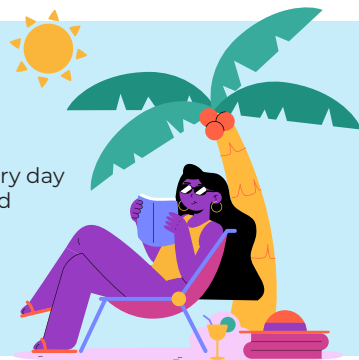
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SAD? Weathering the Winter Blues

Feeling out of sync lately? Are you down in the dumps in the winter months and happier by the spring or summer time? You may be affected by SAD or Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD is characterised as the onset of depression during the winter months when there is less natural sunlight. You don't have to continue on this journey alone. Tell your doctor about the signs and symptoms you are having and have a conversation around the treatment options available. Treatment options include light therapy, antidepressant medication and psychotherapy.

Signs and symptoms of SAD may include

- Feeling hopeless, worthless or guilty
- Persistent feelings of sadness, anxiety or emptiness
- Irritability
- Feeling listless, sad or down most of the day, nearly every day
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies you once enjoyed
- Having low energy and feeling sluggish
- Insomnia or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Having thoughts of not wanting to live



Sources: Mayo clinic - www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder

AVOID A KIDNEY STONE:

SQUEEZE LEMON IN YOUR WATER.



Lemon juice is often used to help avoid and pass kidney stones due to its citric acid content, which has the ability to dissolve small kidney stones. Found abundantly in fruits and vegetables, citric acid transforms kidney stones into soluble citrate salts. These salts can attach to calcium, aiding in the passing of kidney stones and also playing a role in preventing their formation.

Sources: www.summitmedicalclinic.com/tips-for-passing-kidney-stones/

DID YOU KNOW?

ways to
prevent
heart
failure



Maintain a healthy weight and stay within a healthy body mass index range



Minimize alcohol and caffeine intake



Exercise at least 30 minutes per day to strengthen your heart ■

Why do we crave comfort food in

WINTER

It's winter and many of us find ourselves drawn to bowls of cheesy pasta, oozing puddings, warming soups, and hot chocolate with marshmallows.

These and other comfort foods can make us feel good. But why? And why do we crave them in winter and not in summer?

Research tells us there are three good reasons.



1. THE GUT 'SPEAKS' TO THE BRAIN

We know from the relatively new field of nutritional psychiatry that our stomachs produce the "happiness chemicals" dopamine and serotonin. When we eat, a complex process involving the brain means these neurochemicals trigger feelings of happiness and well-being.

These happiness chemicals are also produced when we exercise and are exposed to sunlight, which decline in winter.

This results in a change in the fine balance between the good and bad bacteria that live in our stomachs, and consequently, the relationship between the gut and the brain.

So, in winter when we eat our favourite comfort foods, we get a rush of happiness chemicals sent from the gut to our brain and this make us feel happy and content. >>





2. EVOLUTION MAY HAVE A HAND

The second reason we crave more comfort foods during the winter months could be evolutionary. Before we enjoyed technological advances such as housing, heating, supermarkets and clothing, humans who increased their body weight during winter to keep warm were more likely to survive their environmental conditions. Craving carbohydrate and sugar rich foods was therefore a protective mechanism.

Although we are not still living in shelters or foraging for food today, food cravings in winter may still be programmed into our biology.



3. PSYCHOLOGY, CRAVING AND MOOD

Social learning theory says people learn from each other through observing, imitating and modelling. In the context of food cravings this suggests that what our caregivers gave to us in winter as children has a striking impact on what we choose to eat in winter as adults.

A review of studies on the psychological reasons behind eating comfort food says this food may



play a role in alleviating loneliness and boosting positive thoughts of childhood social interaction.

We may also naturally experience lower mood in winter and low mood has been linked to emotional eating.

In winter due to it being darker and colder, we tend to stay indoors longer and self-medicate with foods that are carbohydrate and sugar rich. These types of foods release glucose straight to our brain which gives us an instant feeling of happiness when we are feeling cold, sad, tired or bored.



Comfort food can be healthy

For all the comfort they provide, comfort foods generally receive a bad rap because they are usually energy and calorie dense; they can be high in sugar, fat and refined carbohydrates.

These types of foods are usually linked to weight gain in winter and if you eat too much over the longer term, can increase the risk of heart disease and diabetes.

However, not all comfort foods are created equally, nor are they all bad for our health.

You can get the same comforting feelings from winter foods containing ingredients that are good for you. For example, a hearty bowl of soup with a slice of wholegrain bread can give you all the components you need for optimal physical and psychological health. Steaming bowls of chilli and curries can provide immunity boosting properties with the use of their warming spices. So too are all the wonderful citrus fruits that become available in the winter.

If you are craving something that is carbohydrate rich, try swapping white varieties for wholegrain versions that will dampen carbohydrate cravings. If you crave a hot chocolate try swapping the cocoa powder for cacao which has a higher concentration of vitamins and minerals.

More good news

The good news for all of us who crave comfort foods in winter is studies that assess intuitive eating – eating when you are hungry, stopping when you are full and listening to what your body is telling you to eat – suggest people who eat this way are happier with their body image, feel better psychologically and are less likely to have disordered eating.

So, embrace this wonderful chilly weather. Rug up in your favourite woolly jumper, sit by the fire, cuddle up with a loved one, make some healthier swaps to your classic comfort foods, remove the food guilt and listen to what your body is telling you it needs during these cold winter months. ■



ALL ABOUT YOUR HORMONES

Hormones are your body's chemical messengers and are part of the endocrine system. They play a critical role in our body's chemistry. Our endocrine glands make these hormones which travel through our bloodstream to tissues and organs.

The endocrine system regulates most of our body's major systems and functions.

Some of the body functions they affect are:



Growth and development



Heart rate



Appetite



Metabolism - how the body gets energy from foods we eat



Reproduction



Sleep cycles



Sexual development and function



Mood



Stress management

ENDOCRINE GLANDS AND HORMONES

Endocrine glands and special groups of cells that make hormones. The major endocrine glands are:

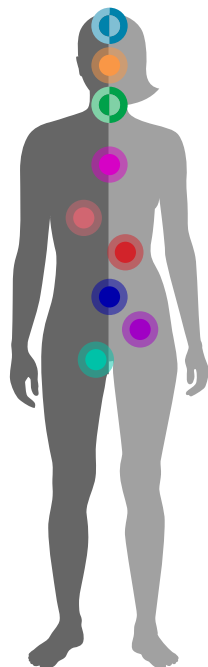
Pineal Gland - produces and regulates hormones, including melatonin.

Pituitary Gland - the "master control gland" that controls several other hormone glands in your body, including the thyroid, ovaries and testicles.

Thymus - only active until puberty; produces cells crucial to the immune system that protect the body from threats such as viruses and infections.

Adrenal Glands - produces androgens and cortisol; gives your body odour and pubic hair; helps in how we respond to stress; regulates blood pressure and more.

Testes - male reproductive glands produce sperm and secrete testosterone.



Hypothalamus - produces hormones that regulate body temperature, appetite, sex drive, weight, mood, sleep and thirst.

Parathyroid - controls the amount of calcium in our bones and blood.

Thyroid - located in the front of the neck below the Adam's apple. This gland produces thyroid hormones.

Pancreas - produces insulin, glucagon and other hormones but primarily responsible for controlling blood sugar levels.

Ovaries - female reproductive glands that produce eggs and sex hormones - including estrogen - which are vital to reproductive organ development, breast development, bone health, pregnancy, and fertility.

YOUR ESSENTIAL HORMONES

When your hormones are in proper balance, they help your body thrive. But an imbalance in your hormone levels and hormone levels that are too high or too low can affect your body and your well-being. Here are a few of your body's most important hormones, their role and why they're important:



TESTOSTERONE

Main male sex hormone but also produced in women's ovaries in small amounts. Controls sex drive, bone density, muscle strength and growth of body hair.



ESTROGEN

Main female sex hormone. Responsible for puberty and menopause. Regulates the menstrual cycle, maintains pregnancy and keeps bones strong for women and men.



PROGESTERONE

Helps maintain the menstrual cycle. After ovulation these levels rise to prepare the uterus for a fertilised egg. When pregnancy doesn't occur, levels drop and the menstrual cycle occurs.



PROLACTIN

Prolactin levels rise during pregnancy. The pituitary gland releases prolactin after childbirth to trigger lactation, which enables new mothers to breastfeed.



CORTISOL

Controls physical and psychological stress. During times of stress, it increases heart rate, blood pressure, blood glucose, respiration and muscle tension in response to danger.



INSULIN

Released by the pancreas so your body can use glucose from food for energy or to store for future use. Helps keep blood sugar levels from getting too high or too low.



THYROID HORMONES

Determines metabolism. Controls the rate at which the body burns calories, regulates weight and determines energy levels, internal body temperature, skin-, hair-, nail growth, etc.



SEROTONIN

Known as the happy chemical as it boosts and stabilises mood. Eating chocolate may make you feel happier – dark chocolate converts a compound called L-tryptophan to serotonin.



GROWTH HORMONE

Stimulates growth, cell reproduction, increased muscle mass and bone development. Protects your tissues from breaking which guards against injuries and boosts your metabolism.



ADRENALINE

In a stressful situation, this flight-or-fight hormone releases into the blood, sending impulses to initiate a quick reaction which makes you respond quickly to the stress.



GLUCAGON

Produced by the pancreas and helps keep blood sugar levels stable. When blood sugar levels dip, it breaks down stored glucose so the body can use it for energy.



MELATONIN

Hormone that affects sleep patterns which regulates our sleep and wake cycles. The pineal gland produces melatonin at night to help you fall asleep and stay asleep. ■



All About BOUTS WITH GOUT

An acute gout attack is a throbbing, hot, extremely painful experience. Gout is a form of arthritis brought on by a build-up of needle-sharp uric-acid crystals.

Gout is the most common inflammatory arthritis. It is also the easiest arthritis to treat. However, patients with gout often have poorly controlled disease, usually due to a combination of the following reasons:

1. "THE GOUT PACK EFFECT"

Acute gout is a very painful condition usually affecting a single joint. The management of an acute gout attack responds very well to gout packs that are sold over the counter at various pharmacies.

This usually contains a combination of prednisone, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID), like diclofenac and colchicine. All these drugs are excellent in managing the acute attacks of gout but unfortunately do nothing to prevent future attacks.

2. CO-MORBID DISEASES

Patients with gout often have other diseases, usually hypertension, diabetes, heart and kidney disease. Often medication used to treat these conditions can increase the risk of having gout attacks. Thiazide diuretics like Ridaq can result in more frequent gout attacks. Heart and kidney disease will limit the treatment options for the acute attacks where anti-inflammatory drugs may be contraindicated.

3. LIFESTYLE CHOICES

Dietary choices impact acute attacks of gout and its complications. A diet high in purines will lead to acute attacks of gout. Purines are found in offal, oily fish, and some vegetables like mushrooms and spinach. Beer is also well known for causing gout attacks.

WHAT IS GOUT?

Gout is caused by an accumulation of uric acid in the body. Uric acid is a normal byproduct of metabolism and the body can usually control the balance very effectively by getting rid of it in the urine or stool. Most people have a problem with getting rid of uric acid.



GOUT HAS TWO CLINICAL PRESENTATIONS:

- 1 The acute attack that usually presents with a swollen joint, usually a peripheral joint, like the toe, ankle, knee or wrist. The pain is at its maximal intensity within the first 24 hours before improving slowly over the next week. This responds very well to anti-inflammatory treatment.
- 2 The second presentation is when the uric acid deposits into the tissues and causes irregular lumps in the skin around tendons and over joints. These lumps are called tophi. Tophi cause erosions of bones and joints and may rupture and ooze a chalky white substance. These tophi can become secondarily infected, resulting in an abscess forming at the site.

For the most part, both these presentations are preventable. There are rare conditions that make gout very difficult to treat, like patients who have had kidney transplants or if they have hereditary enzyme deficiencies.

CAN GOUT BE CURED?

No, unfortunately like hypertension and diabetes, gout is a chronic condition that requires life-long treatment.

Allopurinol is usually the first drug prescribed to lower uric acid levels. Provided patients are compliant, this drug is usually very effective in bringing down uric acid. However, the dose may need to be adjusted if the uric acid levels don't come down initially. Probenacid is the alternative drug that can be used

to lower the uric acid. There is ongoing research in gout and new drugs are in development at the moment.

Research has shown that there is an association between elevated uric acid levels and hypertension and diabetes. At present thought, there is not enough evidence to treat elevated uric acid levels on its own. Only a third of patients with a raised uric acid level will develop gout.

"ALLO-PURINOL WILL MAKE YOUR GOUT WORSE."

This is partly true. Allopurinol can precipitate an acute attack of gout when initially started. This occurs in 1 in 4 patients starting this drug for the first time. To negate this effect, colchicine or an NSAID is usually prescribed as well, when starting treatment. Even if an acute attack does occur, one should not stop using the Allopurinol but rather treat the acute attack in the usual way. The benefits will be seen when the uric acid levels normalise.

WHEN TO START TREATMENT?

Patients who have two or more attacks per year, those who have tophi or those who have evidence of joint damage should be started on Allopurinol. However, the non-drug improvement should take place with the first attack. This includes avoiding foods rich in purines, maintaining a healthy weight, changing the hypertension treatment (especially diuretics) and avoiding alcohol. >>

GOT GOUT?

Pay attention to what you eat.

Your diet plays an important role in both causing gout and reducing the likelihood of suffering further painful attacks of gout. If you already suffer from gout, eating a diet that is rich in purines can result in a five-fold increase in gout attacks.

Some foods are high in purines. Avoiding eating the foods below can help reduce the risk of a gout attack:

OFFAL – liver and kidneys, heart and sweetbreads

GAME – rabbit, pheasant and venison

OILY FISH – anchovies, herring, mackerel, sardines, sprats, whitebait and trout

SEAFOOD – mussels, crab, shrimp and other shellfish, fish roe and caviar

Foods or supplements that contain **YEAST OR MEAT EXTRACT** – Marmite, Bovril, commercial gravy and beer



KEEP HYDRATED

It is important to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Aim to drink about 1.2 litres (six to eight glasses) a day, or more if you are exercising or when it is hot. Keeping yourself well hydrated will reduce the risk of crystals forming in your joints.

LIMIT SUGARY FOODS/SWEETENED FOODS

Overindulging in these foods can lead to weight gain and obesity. Additionally, sugary foods, drinks and snacks often contain fructose or what might be labelled as high-fructose corn syrup/glucose-fructose syrup. A high intake of fructose can increase uric acid levels in the blood and may increase insulin resistance. These are both risk factors for developing gout, so aim to limit these foods. As well as biscuits, cakes, sweets, fruit juices and sugary drinks, high-fructose corn syrup can be found in unexpected foods. These include:

- Bread
- Yoghurts
- Frozen pizzas
- Cereals and cereal bars
- Jarred sauces
- Some condiments such as jams, tomato sauce, mayonnaise or salad dressings

GOUT-FRIENDLY FOODS (LOW PURINE)



WHITE BREAD, PASTA AND NOODLES

Refined carbohydrates are safe to eat for gout sufferers. They have a low purine content but too much consumption can cause a rapid rise in blood sugar and increase one's risk of developing metabolic syndrome and diabetes. Whole-grain breads and wholegrain pasta are healthier than refined carbohydrates, but since they contain moderate amounts of purine, they should be eaten only occasionally.



NUTS AND SEEDS

A gout-friendly diet should include two tablespoons of nuts and seeds every day. Good sources of low-purine nuts and seeds include walnuts, almonds, flaxseeds and cashew nuts.



DAIRY PRODUCTS (MILK, CHEESE, YOGURT)

Low-fat milk and low-fat yogurt are excellent foods for gout sufferers because of their low purine content and ability to lower gout risk.



EGGS

Eggs are low in purines.



OILY FISH

Essential fatty acids found in cold-water fish such as tuna can reduce gout inflammation. However, to prevent a gout flare-up, limit the intake of fish to one serving per day as it still contains purines.



VEGETABLES

Eat plenty of vegetables such as cabbage, squash, red bell pepper and beetroot, but limit the intake of vegetables with moderate purine content such as asparagus, spinach, cauli-flower and mushrooms.



FRUITS

Eat fruits high in vitamin C such as oranges, naartjies, papaya and cherries. Apples, pears, pineapples, avocados are low-purine fruits and therefore can be eaten in moderation.



COFFEE AND TEA

Coffee and tea are safe for gout sufferers.

SUMMARY

Reducing the amount of uric acid levels in the blood can help to prevent gout attacks. This can be done by:

- Achieving a healthy weight
- Limiting alcohol
- Avoiding or reducing foods high in purines
- Drinking plenty of fluid
- Limiting foods sweetened with fructose
- Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Consuming low-fat dairy products ■

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THE SILENT ADDICTION TO “EVERYDAY” MEDICINES

Is your medicine cabinet a source for a family member's legal “high?” Because a doctor's prescription is not needed, many mistakenly believe that over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are safer than prescription medicines and illegal street drugs. They are in fact safe and effective when taken as directed, but even OTC medicines – including herbal medicines or homeopathic preparations – can cause serious and potentially fatal side effects when abused.

Abuse of OTC medicines is most common among teens between the ages of 13 and 16. In fact, prescription and OTC drugs are, after marijuana (and alcohol), the most commonly abused substances by Americans 14 and older. Adults also abuse OTC medicines, particularly in combination with other medicines, alcohol, and illegal drugs, which increases the risks. The list that follows includes some of the medicines currently abused by teens and adults.



Codeine is used in pain relief and for the suppression of coughs. Since codeine is a member of the opiate drug class, it has similar morphine-like effects on the body, including an impaired emotional response to pain and long-term impacts on the way the nervous system functions. Codeine has many side effects that can impact an abuser in several ways, including but not limited to their physical well-being, mental health, and relationships.

Codeine, if taken regularly over a period of time can produce physical dependence that will result in withdrawal symptoms if ceased. In addition it is possible to create a psychological dependence, for example; when the drug is seen as a coping strategy to lower anxiety. A characteristic of addiction is that the awareness of the excessive and continued use actually increases anxiety. Codeine is the most abused OTC drug in South Africa and patients are required to provide their personal details including ID numbers, when they purchase a range of popular over-the-counter medications containing codeine. It is difficult to regulate codeine as no national database exists.





Dextromethorphan (DXM) is the active ingredient and cough suppressant in more than a hundred OTC cough and cold medicines. Large doses can cause euphoria, distortions of colour and sound, and “out of body” hallucinations that last up to 6 hours. Other dangerous side effects including impaired judgment, vomiting, loss of muscle movement, seizures, blurred vision, drowsiness, shallow breathing, and a fast heart rate. When combined with alcohol or other drugs, a large dose can lead to death. DXM is also addictive and can cause withdrawal symptoms, including depression and difficulty processing thoughts, when the abuse stops. Teens are most likely to abuse cough and cold medicine, the cough syrups or the higher-dose tablets containing DXM.



Pain killers like acetaminophen and ibuprofen are taken in doses higher than recommended to ensure that the medicine work faster. Liver failure can happen with large doses of acetaminophen, and stomach bleeding, kidney failure, and cardiac risks are heightened when taking large doses of ibuprofen.



Caffeine medicines and energy drinks have all been abused for the buzz or “jolt of energy” they seem to impart. Large doses of caffeine can cause serious dehydration, gastric reflux, panic attacks, and heart irregularities that have occasionally been linked to accidental deaths, particularly in those with an underlying heart condition.



Diet pills in large doses can create a mild buzz. Abuse of diet pills often starts with trying just a few to lose weight. But these OTC medicines can be highly addictive. Ephedrine is one of the dangerous stimulants that can be found in diet pills. Many other diet pill ingredients cause digestive problems, hair loss, insomnia, anxiety, irritability, extreme paranoia, blurred vision, kidney problems, menstrual cycle disturbances and dehydration. Furthermore, even the most “natural” diet preparations can have serious side effects when misused.



Laxatives and herbal diuretics (water pills) are also abused, to lose weight. Laxatives and herbal diuretics can cause serious dehydration and life-threatening loss of important minerals and salts that regulate the amount of water in the body, acidity of the blood, and muscle function. This can lead to kidney damage.



Motion sickness pills that contain dimenhydrinate or diphenhydramine taken in large doses can cause one to feel high and have hallucinations similar to street drugs. The dose needed to cause these symptoms varies widely according to body weight and tolerance. Extremely high doses have caused dangerous irregular heartbeats, coma, heart attacks, and death. Long-term abuse can cause depression, liver and kidney damage, memory loss, eye pain, itchy skin, urine retention, and abdominal pain. ➤➤



Sexual performance medicines often purchased online, are sometimes abused by teens and adults who are drinking to counteract the negative effects of alcohol on sexual performance. These medicines can cause heart problems, especially when combined with alcohol or when taken in large doses.



Herbal products are increasingly being abused for their stimulant, hallucinogenic, and euphoric effects.

Since OTC drugs are legal and easy to find it makes it easy to abuse. Like any medicine, it can have benefits when taken as directed and in moderation. But there is always the danger of taking too much, mixing it with other drugs and even overdosing.



Pseudoephedrine is a nasal decongestant and stimulant is found in many cold medicines. The medicine has also been taken as a stimulant to cause an excitable, hyperactive feeling. Dangerous side effects include heart palpitations, irregular heartbeats, and heart attacks. When combined with other drugs, such as narcotics, pseudoephedrine may trigger episodes of paranoid psychosis.



TREATMENT FOR OTC MEDICATION ABUSE OR ADDICTION

Treatment for drug abuse or addiction to OTC medications depends upon several factors, including the type of over-the-counter medication or medications being abused, the age and gender of the patient, the length and severity of the patient's drug problems, and the presence of any co-occurring disorders.

Treatment may include the following therapies and techniques:

- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
- Family therapy
- 12-Step education
- Relapse-prevention instruction
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)



One of the greatest difficulties with preventing OTC drug use is that few teens and adults realise the danger. Unlike the risks associated with illegal street drugs like cocaine and heroin, the risks associated with OTC drug abuse are given little thought and attention. Teens and young adults who learn about the risks of drugs at home are up to 50% less likely to abuse drugs.

TEEN'S MEDICINE ABUSE: A CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

Teen abuse of cough and cold medicines is a widespread and serious issue. As a parent, you may not have any idea how you can prevent it. Here's hands-on advice for what you should do, starting right now.



Know which drugs are being abused. The biggest problem is with medicines that contain dextromethorphan and codeine which is found in over-the-counter medicines sold to treat the symptoms of cough and colds.



Learn the slang. Find out what teens are calling these drugs. DXM goes by many names – tussin, skittles, robo, CCC, triple C, dex syrup, and red devils, to name a few. If you didn't know that, your kids could be talking about cough medicine abuse while you drive them home in the carpool, and you'd have no idea. Monitor their behaviour, be aware if they tend to go to the local pharmacy or supermarket prior to going out with friends and look for empty bottles of cough syrup or cough and cold pill packs.



Look in your medicine cabinet. No parent wants to be a drug supplier for his or her children. Treat your medicine cabinet like your liquor cabinet: know what's in it and keep track. Just like you did when your child was a baby, you may need to remove some medications to a place where your kids won't be able to get them.



Get rid of medicines you don't use. Don't keep them around just in case – many are probably expired, anyway. If you're sick and need a cough or combination cold medicine, get only what you need and dispose of what's left when you're feeling better.



Talk to other parents. Share what you know about cough medicine abuse with other parents, particularly the parents of your teen's friends. Coordinate your efforts. If you're cleaning out your medicine cabinet, get the parents of your teen's friends to do the same. By making it a community effort, you'll help keep everyone safer.



Model good behaviour. You may be careless with how you use medication yourself. If your headache is really bad, you may double the recommended dose. If your back goes out, you might bum a few narcotic painkillers from a friend who had them left over after dental surgery. These medications have real risks when not taken appropriately. What's more, your kids are watching. If you don't treat these medicines with respect – and only use them as recommended – why should you assume your teens will?



Talk to your teen. When parents talk to their children a lot about drug abuse, it reduces the risk that they will use drugs. So, don't beat around the bush. Talk to your kids directly about the risks of drug abuse, and mention cough medicine abuse specifically. Just because medicines come from a pharmacist doesn't mean they are risk-free. ■



UNDERSTANDING

By Dr Shukri Raban

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and Influenza are two common respiratory illnesses that can be particularly serious for young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems. Although they can cause similar symptoms like coughing, fever, and congestion, RSV and Influenza are caused by different viruses and have distinct characteristics. This article will help you understand the differences between RSV and Influenza, so you can better protect yourself and your loved ones.



RSV AND FLU

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

RSV is a common virus that affects the respiratory tract. It is highly contagious and spreads through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. RSV can cause a range of symptoms, from mild cold-like symptoms to more severe respiratory illness such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia. RSV is a significant cause of respiratory illness globally, particularly in young children and older adults. Young children are more likely to introduce RSV into the home, and to be infected. In South Africa, RSV poses a substantial burden on public health, contributing to hospitalizations and mortality, especially among infants and young children.

Universally, the majority of severe RSV disease occurs in younger children, under the age of one. In fact, RSV is the most common cause of bronchiolitis (inflammation of the small airways in the lungs) and pneumonia in this age group. Symptoms of RSV infection in infants may include coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing,

and a bluish colour of the skin due to a lack of oxygen.

In 2019, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) caused around 33 million cases of serious lung infections worldwide. Among children under 5 years old, there were about 3.6 million hospital admissions and over 100,000 deaths due to these infections. This means that RSV was responsible for about 2% of all deaths in children aged 0 to 5 years.

Most of these cases (over 97%) occurred in low- and middle-income countries, and about three-quarters of the affected children did not receive medical attention. RSV infections were most common in infants under 6 months old. However, about 80% of serious RSV cases in children under 5 years old happened in those aged 6 months to 4 years. RSV also poses a significant risk to older adults, causing severe illness in this age group as well.

RSV infections follow distinct seasonal patterns around the world. In South Africa, RSV is

most common during the autumn and winter months. For 2024, the RSV season started in the first week of February. Apart from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the detection rate of RSV cases in 2024 has been similar to the average rates seen from 2016 to 2019 and from 2022 to 2023.

Each year in South Africa, it is estimated that between 178,000 and 443,000 children under the age of five will get infected with RSV. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, RSV was estimated to be responsible for about 44,615 hospitalizations and 490 deaths annually in children under five. Among children aged one to four years, there were 52 deaths each year due to RSV.

There is no specific treatment for RSV. Most cases can be managed at home with supportive care, such as rest, fluids, and medications to reduce fever. However, severe cases may require hospitalisation, especially for infants and young children who have difficulty breathing. >>

PREVENTION OF RSV

Prevention measures include isolation of children with influenza-like symptoms (sick children should not go to crèches or schools for a few days), and teaching children (and adults looking after infants) to practice sneeze and cough hygiene.

The use of prophylactic antibiotics for children with upper respiratory tract infections is not recommended.

The monoclonal antibody, palivizumab, administered monthly throughout the RSV season to preterm infants and children at high risk of severe RSV disease, has been shown to be effective for prevention. However, high costs and the need for monthly intramuscular injections throughout the RSV season limit its use. New maternal vaccines and long-acting monoclonal antibodies for RSV prevention in infants have been licensed in some areas such as the United States of America and Europe since 2023, but these products are not yet available in South Africa. Live-attenuated vaccines targeting children aged >6 months are also under development.

INFLUENZA (FLU)

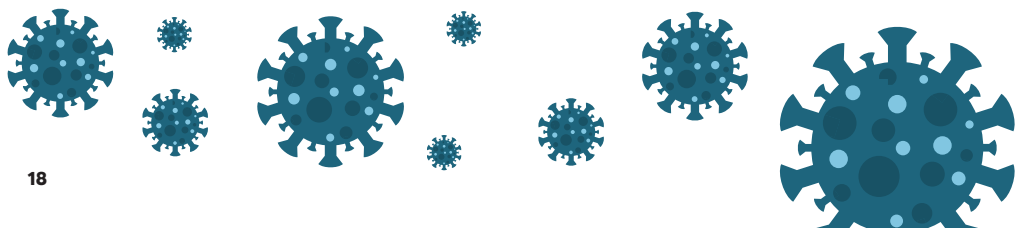
Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is also a viral infection that affects the respiratory system. It is caused by influenza viruses, primarily types A and B, which can change rapidly, leading to seasonal outbreaks of the flu. Like RSV, influenza is highly contagious and spreads through respiratory droplets. The symptoms of influenza are similar to those of RSV and can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, fatigue, and headaches. Influenza can also cause serious complications, especially in young children, older adults, and people with certain underlying health conditions.

These complications can include pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus infections, and ear infections. In South Africa, the flu season typically occurs during the winter months, from May to September. The influenza season started in week 17 (week starting 22 April 2024).

Unlike RSV, there are antiviral medications that can be used to treat influenza. These medications work best if started within the first 48 hours of illness and can help reduce

the severity of symptoms and the duration of the illness. To combat the flu, the South African government typically promotes vaccination campaigns. Ideally the influenza vaccine should be administered prior to the start of the influenza season because it takes about 2 weeks for antibodies to develop following vaccination. However, it is never too late to vaccinate. In South Africa, the flu vaccine is typically recommended for individuals who are at higher risk of complications from the flu, including:

- Adults aged 65 and older
- Children aged 6 months to 59 months
- Pregnant women (the vaccine protects the mother as well as their babies from flu illness and flu related hospitalizations for the first several months after their birth, when they are too young to get vaccinated)
- Individuals with certain chronic medical conditions (e.g. HIV/AIDS, diabetes, asthma and other lung diseases)





CONCLUSION

RSV and influenza are both respiratory viruses that can cause serious illness, particularly in vulnerable populations. While RSV primarily affects young children, influenza can affect individuals of all ages. RSV and influenza are a significant public health concern in South Africa, particularly among young children, and imposes a substantial burden on healthcare systems. Vaccination against influenza and practicing good hygiene, such as washing hands regularly and avoiding close contact with sick individuals, are important measures to reduce the spread of both RSV and influenza. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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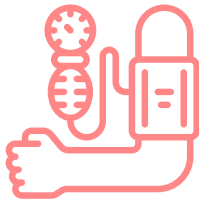
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YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE [HYPERTENSION]

By Dr Jade Mogambery

Hypertension is defined as having a blood pressure of 140/90 mmHg and above on two or more occasions.



What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is created by the force of blood pushing against the walls of blood vessels as it is pumped by the heart. The heart has to work harder when the blood pressure is high and this leads to many complications.

Risk factors:

- A family history of hypertension
- Overuse of alcohol
- Increased weight
- High salt diet
- Sedentary lifestyle, not being active
- Getting older
- Ethnicity: People of African, followed by South Asian descent have a high risk of developing hypertension

Symptoms:

- There are commonly no symptoms until there is a devastating complication. 46% of adults with hypertension are not aware that they have the disease and for this reason, it is often described as 'the silent killer'.
- Headaches
- Palpitations
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Blurred vision
- Nausea and vomiting

Non-pharmacological management:

- The majority of one's meals should be healthy and nutritionally balanced
- Avoid adding salt to meals
- Avoid processed foods e.g. polony, bacon, processed cheese, and food high in salt e.g. chips, biltong
- Stop smoking
- Reduce or stop alcohol use
- Physically activity: at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity
- Strength training two or more days each week, such as push-ups, sit-ups, squats
- Stress management

Pharmacological management

Your doctor will prescribe medication for you and monitor your blood pressure. There are many drugs available, so if you develop side effects, rather than stopping the medication, visit your doctor so that a different drug can be substituted.

Do not stop your medication without your doctor's permission.

Treatment goals:

Aim for a blood pressure below 130/80 mmHg.

Complications of hypertension

- Stroke
- Heart failure or heart attack
- Retinopathy (bleeding in the retina of the eye)
- Kidney failure

When should you see a specialist?

People who are diagnosed with hypertension under the age of 45 should see a specialist. Hypertension can present as a symptom of another disease and in younger individuals and further investigation is required to determine if there is a primary cause.

A sudden increase in blood pressure is another red flag. High blood pressure associated with severe headache, chest pain, shortness of breath, change in vision or weakness of the limbs.

Recommended diet for people with high blood pressure

- More fruit and vegetables
- Low fat dairy products
- Low intake of food high in saturated fats and cholesterol
- Whole grains food, fish, poultry, nuts
- Reduction in sweets, sugary drinks and red meat

Screening of blood pressure

- Adults aged 40 years or older: annual screening
- Those who are at increased risk for high blood pressure (see risk factors above), regardless of age: annual screening
- Adults aged 18 to 39 years with normal blood pressure (< 130/85 mm Hg) who do not have other risk factors should be rescreened every 3 to 5 years.

Keep an eye out for information on Melomed Hospital's Wellness Day where you can have your annual screening done free of charge. ■



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HOW TO TREAT A FEVER: FIRST AID ESSENTIALS

Fever is the body's natural response to infection, helping to fight off viruses and bacteria. Since viruses and bacteria don't thrive well in a body with a higher temperature, a fever actually helps fight off infections. A higher temperature boosts the production of white blood cells, which are crucial for fighting infections, and makes them respond faster and more effectively.

A normal body temperature, measured orally, ranges between 36.5°C and 37°C. When your temperature exceeds 37°C, it indicates a fever. This can be particularly concerning for very young children and infants, as even a slight increase in temperature may signal a serious infection. In newborns, unusually low temperatures – rather than a fever – can also be a sign of serious illness. Understanding how to properly manage a fever is crucial for promoting recovery and ensuring overall health. This article provides essential tips and advice on how to treat a fever effectively.

HOW IS A FEVER TREATED?

Paracetamol (found in Panado and other over-the-counter medications) helps to lower fever. It is also an analgesic (pain reliever), so it eases the discomfort and body aches that often accompany fever. Ibuprofen is another fever-reducing medication that relieves mild to moderate aches and pains.



HOME TREATMENT

To bring down a person's temperature:

- Remove excess clothing.
- Give medication or prescribed suppositories to reduce a fever of 40°C or higher.
- Keep the patient hydrated by giving plenty of water or fruit juices. It is best to give small, frequent drinks.
- Sponge the skin with tepid water. (If the water is too cold, this can be a shock to the system.) Evaporation will have a cooling effect.
- Do not give aspirin to a child with a fever. Many fevers are caused by viral infections, and the combination of aspirin and viral illness has been linked to the development of Reye's syndrome, a progressive and very dangerous liver disease.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR ABOUT A FEVER

- When a newborn or baby younger than six months has a high (or low) temperature.
- When the fever is accompanied by a stiff neck, confusion, lack of energy, difficulty in waking or inconsolability and headaches.
- If an adult has a temperature of more than 39.4°C or has had a fever for more than three days.
- If persistent vomiting, unusual skin rash or mental confusion accompany a fever.
- When the sufferer shows signs of seizures.



FIRST-AID SUGGESTIONS FOR SEIZURES

- Secure the airway by putting the child on his side. Check that he is breathing.
- Lay him down, place a cushion under his head and loosen tight clothing.
- Remove any object that he could knock himself against.
- Don't force anything into his mouth. Do not give him anything to drink.
- Don't restrain your child.
- Once the fit has stopped, place your child on his side with his face turned to the floor.
- Any child who has had a seizure should be seen by a doctor to determine the cause.
- It is common for a child to be drowsy or sleepy after a seizure.

In conclusion, while a fever can be uncomfortable, it is an important part of the body's defence mechanism against infections. By raising the body temperature, the immune system is better equipped to fight off viruses and bacteria. Remember to monitor the fever closely, especially in young children and infants, and seek medical advice if necessary. Most fevers can be managed with rest, fluids, and fever-reducing medications. By understanding the role of fever and knowing how to treat it, you can help your body recover more quickly and effectively. ■



BUCKET-LIST GETAWAYS YOU NEED TO EXPERIENCE!



Do you also have a few dream getaways somewhere in the back of your mind? Everyone's bucket list looks different, but here are a few that definitely belong on that list, whether it's something unique, strange, luxurious or cosy that beckons you, all of these suggestions will make your eyes sparkle!



ANGELS VIEW HOTEL

The dreamy location of this hotel makes you feel as if you are entering another world – a world where you relax high above sea level with hills rolling out endlessly in front of your porch. There are several B&B units, but the ten exclusive units on the edge of the plateau each offer sleeping space for two adults and have luxurious facilities such as air conditioning, TVs with DSTV channels and hairdryers. There are also three swimming pools, a spa, a gym, an amphitheater and even a wedding chapel where the newlyweds can start their new life with a breathtaking backdrop.



KUNAME LODGE

Luxury lodges with the Big Five on your doorstep are always a dream destination, but not everyone's dream budget. However, Kuname Lodge makes sure you get bang for your buck by including a variety of amenities such as all meals, a morning and evening game drive with a free beverage and cleaning services. There is also a swimming pool in which you can cool off if the African sun gets too hot. This exclusive safari lodge is located on 9000 hectares of pristine forest in the Karongwe Private Game Reserve, just a 45-minute drive from the world-famous Kruger National Park.

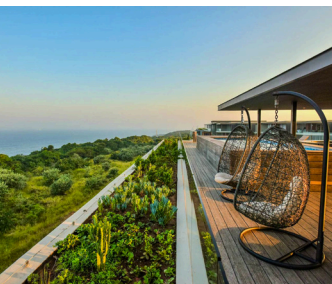
THE STARGAZING CUBE

At the very top of your list belongs this glamping unit with only a transparent roof that separates you from the sky. The Stargazing Cube is one of many spectacular units that are part of the Misty Mountain Reserve in Tsitsikamma. This unique unit sleeps two adults who want to exchange the noise of the city for the sounds of nature without giving up luxury and comfort. The curtains ensure privacy and the best part is the bed that can move inside or outside so you can still be one with nature, regardless of the weather. Outside there is a wooden deck with chairs, a hammock and nearby trails that can be explored.



CAPE RECIFE LIGHTHOUSE VILLA

You won't get a better sea view than this! Cape Recife Lighthouse Villa is a luxury villa that forms part of the lighthouse in the Cape Recife nature reserve in Somerstrand. Each of the two bedrooms and the living area boast exceptional views of the sea and allow you to admire wildlife such as bird species and biodiversity. There is also a well-equipped kitchen and a dining table that seats 6. With numerous activities waiting to be explored, this getaway is a unique experience that one cannot miss.



OCEAN DUNES ESTATE

This charming one-bedroom apartment on the Ocean Dunes Estate in Durban is only 600 metres from Umdloti South Beach! The apartment boasts an open-plan layout and facilities such as air conditioning, DSTv and free Wi-Fi. Ocean Dunes combines modern architecture with the outdoors and creates a natural paradise with swimming pools, a deck with cocoon chairs and an ocean view, as well as an on-site spa. You also have access to braai facilities and a peaceful garden and will be close to attractions such as the Umhlanga Lighthouse and Kings Park Stadium.

AVIARY HILLS LUXURY HIDEAWAY

Aviary Hills Luxury Hideaway's charm makes this intimate retreat perfect for couples. The modern self-catering cottage is located 7 kilometres from Heidelberg which means that the characteristic mountains and valleys of the Garden Route are on your doorstep. Inside you are treated to a fireplace in front of the sofa and outside there is a wood-fired hot tub and a hammock where you can relax and forget about all your worries.



EAGLE VIEW 2

This unit lives up to its name - the view from Eagle View 2 makes you feel as if you are soaring over the landscape like an eagle. This luxury getaway near Dullstroom is the perfect hideaway for couples and is one of three self-catering units nestled on the Beumont Farm in the Steenkamp mountain range. Admire these landscapes from the wood-fired hot tub or greet the day with a beverage on the deck as the sun colours the Highlands Meander with a colourful palette. If you prefer to spend indoors on a cooler day, you can still make the "four walls" disappear by opening the enormous glass doors and welcoming the fresh mountain breeze. The house is designed to have a minimal impact on the environment – it uses a natural water source and the electricity is provided by a battery and gas system.



If you've also heard your travel bags rustling after reading this blog, it's definitely time to start ticking off those bucket list getaways. Don't miss one of these unique stays and start planning your next vacation immediately. ■

REVAMPING SCHOOL

APPLE AND CINNAMON MUFFINS

Servings: 12

Muffins are a delicious treat, but shop-bought muffins can be very high in sugar, fat and other additives – which is why homemade is always best. These muffins are easy to prepare and the whole family will enjoy them!

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180 °C and place paper muffin cups into a 12-hole muffin pan.
2. Mix dry ingredients together in a mixing bowl. Stir in apples and carrots until blended.
3. Beat eggs, milk, oil and vanilla together. Stir egg mixture into the dry ingredients until just mixed through. Take care not to over mix.
4. Divide batter between muffin cups and bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and cooked through.
5. Allow to cool on a cooling rack and pack as a lunch box treat or enjoy as an afternoon snack.



Ingredients

- 1 cup (250 ml) cake flour
- 1 cup (250 ml) whole wheat flour
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
- 2 tsp (10 ml) ground cinnamon
- ½ cup (125 ml) sugar
- 1 cup (250 ml) grated apples
- 1 cup (250 ml) finely grated carrots
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 100 ml low-fat or fat-free milk
- ½ cup (125 ml) sunflower oil
- 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla essence

LUNCH BOX TIPS:

PACKING FOR KIDS

- Pack food that looks appealing, like kebabs with cucumber and tomato.
- Keep everything fresh in a well-sealed lunch box or small cooler bag.
- Food that is a size that is easy to handle, like mini meat balls or small pieces of veggies or fruit, are more likely to be eaten.
- Pack a variety of textures and colours to ensure that the lunch is eaten and not swapped at school.
- Keep treats for special occasions, rather than every day.
- Send kids to school with a bunch of grapes or an apple instead of tuck shop money.

LUNCH BOXES



TUNA AND CORN CAKES

Servings: 25

These easy and tasty little fish cakes are perfect to get kids to eat more veggies – especially at lunch time. You could add different flavours or spices to the mixture, such as paprika or dried mixed herbs. For a spicier flavour add a pinch of cayenne pepper.

Instructions

1. Place all the ingredients, except the oil, in a large mixing bowl. Mix until well combined.
2. Heat half of the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Fry small spoonfuls of the mixture on both sides until golden brown and cooked.
3. Spoon out and drain on paper towel. Repeat with the rest of the mixture and a little extra oil if necessary.
4. Serve as part of a lunch box with lemon wedges, sweet chilli sauce, tomato sauce or chutney. Carrot sticks, blanched broccoli florets and wedges of fruit like apple and pear will make for a more filling lunch.



Ingredients

- 1 x 170 g tin tuna in water, drained
- 1 x 410 g tin cream style sweet corn
- ⅓ cup (80 ml) frozen peas, rinsed
- 1 cup (250 ml) whole wheat flour
- ½ tsp (2,5 ml) baking powder
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ tsp (1,2 ml) salt
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- black pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) sunflower or canola oil for frying ■

PACKING DRINKS

- Avoid fizzy or sugary cool drinks, rather enjoy diluted 100 % fruit juice or homemade ice tea.
- Water is the best choice, add lemon slices for extra flavour.
- In summer, freeze water bottles overnight to have ice cold water throughout the day. This also keeps your lunch box cool.

HOUSECALL

MEET ONE OF OUR DEDICATED SPECIALISTS

DR MARION NTSAKO NKANYANE



DR. NKANYANE IS A OBSTETRICIAN & GYNAECOLOGIST CURRENTLY PRACTICING AT MELOMED RICHARDS BAY.



WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF "HAPPINESS"?

Peace. When I have peace with who I am, where I am at in life and peace in my circle of relationships then I am happy.

WHAT'S THE MOST FUN YOU'VE HAD THIS MONTH / YEAR?

Early morning game drive. It reminded me of the beauty that is in nature that we often do not take time to appreciate. So many different creatures yet beautiful in their unique way and complementing each other in their existence.



WHAT IS YOUR HAPPIEST MEMORY?

The birth of my son.

WHAT IS YOUR BEST CHILDHOOD MEMORY, AND WHY?

My grandmother baking bread from scratch and using firewood coals. The most delicious bread I've ever eaten. She had a way of showing off her skills and talent now and then in a way that would leave me amazed at how much she knew and was capable of.



WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Sleep, because at this point in my life I am not getting enough of.

WHICH CHILDHOOD MOVIE DO YOU STILL LOVE TODAY, AND WHY?

The lion king. It reminds me always that what God has willed and purposed for your life will come to pass irregardless of he hurdls that are thrown in your path. And never to forget who you are through the hills an valleys of the journey of life.



IF YOU COULD POSSESS ONE SUPER-HUMAN POWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

To stall time. There's just so much to do in day and not enough hours, including sleeping hours.

WHOSE BIGGEST FAN ARE YOU?

My mother

IF YOU COULD ONLY KEEP FIVE POSSESSIONS,

WHAT WOULD THEY BE? My health, wisdom, my family, good social network and favour with God. With these I can attain any material possession I wish for. ■

EMPATHY, EXPERTISE, AND EXCELLENCE: Unveiling the **Leading Obstetric and Gynaecological Team at Melomed Tokai!**



Dr. Aneeqah Hendricks
Bringing New Life into the World

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✉ secretary@aneeqahhendricks.co.za

Meet Dr. Aneeqah Hendricks, a compassionate Gynaecologist and Obstetrician who finds immense joy in welcoming new life into the world. With a focus on achieving positive outcomes, Dr. Hendricks not only provides expert medical care but also connects on a personal level, drawing from her experience as a mother herself.

Dedicated to comprehensive patient care, Dr. Hendricks considers every aspect of her patients' well-being, including socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. She takes the time to understand individual needs, offering clear explanations and support throughout the journey. Beyond the hospital walls, Dr. Hendricks enjoys exploring the world through travel, indulging in movies, and cherishing quality moments with her own family.

Specialising in vaginal surgery, adolescent gynaecology, hormonal disorders, and reproductive endocrinology, Dr. Hendricks is your partner in women's health at every stage. From family planning to menopause, she ensures her patients receive the best care, including surgeries, screenings, and personalized attention.



Dr. Matshidiso Agnes Tisane
Holistic Care for Women's Health

☎ 021 023 2046
✉ drtisanesecretary@gmail.com

Introducing Dr. Tisane, a dedicated Gynaecologist and Obstetrician committed to the holistic well-being of women. As an Obstetrician, she brings vast experience in maternal and fetal care, guiding expectant mothers through the beautiful journey of pregnancy. Dr. Tisane believes in building strong patient relationships, ensuring effective communication, and providing comprehensive care with a personal touch.

Beyond her medical expertise, Dr. finds joy in the outdoors and values quality time with her own family. With a passion for helping mothers navigate the challenges of newborn care, she strives to make each patient feel heard and supported.

In addition, to her passion and expertise in Obstetrics, she also specialises in addressing gynaecological issues such as abnormal bleeding, infertility, and recurrent miscarriages. Dr. also conducts crucial screenings for cervical and breast cancer.



Dr. Tladiso Motsema
Nurturing Life with Expertise & Passion

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Meet Dr. Tladiso Motsema, an experienced Obstetrician and Gynaecologist dedicated to nurturing life with a blend of medical and surgical expertise. Dr. Motsema's journey in Obstetrics and Gynaecology started in 2011, driven by a passion for integrated patient care.

With a wealth of experience gained through a Diploma in Obstetrics and a fellowship in 2016, Dr. Motsema's commitment extends beyond clinical practice. He takes pride in teaching and guiding future healthcare professionals, ensuring the legacy of compassionate and knowledgeable practitioners.

Patient care and wellness are at the forefront of Dr. Motsema's priorities. From general obstetrics and gynaecology to contraception and family planning, he contributes to the community's health, emphasizing the importance of a healthy mother for a healthy baby.

Join Dr. Motsema on the journey of well-rounded women's healthcare.

Contact our Obstetricians for the best quality & service and most affordable price. Our Drs accept most medical aids.

Smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes are some of the common risk factors for developing heart conditions. While your doctor is the best guide to help you identify your risk of heart disease, it is important to know that some heart related blood tests hold a lot of importance to diagnose and manage heart conditions.

Lipid profile test

Also called cholesterol test, this test measures the levels of fats in your blood and can point out towards your risk of having a heart attack, stroke or other heart disease. This test typically includes measurements of various other numbers:

- **Total cholesterol:** This refers to the amount of cholesterol in your blood. An increased level of total cholesterol increases your risk of heart disease.
- **High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol:** Also called the "good" cholesterol, it helps keep arteries open and your blood to flow more freely.
- **Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol:** Also called the "bad" cholesterol, too much LDL cholesterol in your blood can lead to plaque deposition in your blood vessels, and results in reduced blood flow. This plaque build-up may rupture and cause major heart and blood vessel problems.
- **Triglycerides:** These are another type of fat in the blood, high levels of which can raise your risk of heart disease.

Natriuretic peptides test

Brain natriuretic peptide is a protein that your heart and blood vessels make to help your body eliminate fluids, relax blood vessels and excrete sodium into your urine. When your heart gets damaged, levels of BNP entering your blood increases.

Different people can have different values for normal BNP levels since it can vary based on the age, gender, and being overweight.

Troponin (T) Test for Heart Attack

Troponin (or cardiac troponin) is a type of protein found in your heart muscles. It isn't normally found in the blood and is released into the blood when heart muscles become damaged.

A troponin test looks for the level of troponin in your blood. As more and more heart muscle gets damaged, greater amounts of troponin are released in the blood. A high level of troponin in the blood may indicate you are having or recently had a heart attack.

One heart blood test alone may not determine your overall risk of heart disease. If you think your lifestyle or family history can put you at risk of developing heart disease at an early age, contact your doctor.

PathCare offers testing for Lipid profile, B-Natriuretic peptides, and Troponin. Contact your doctor for more information.

