health news

SANDRINGHAM MEDICAL CENTRE

Total Health Care

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Sandringham
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AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2025 EDITION

FREE TO TAKE HOME!

Screen Time for Children

Febrile Fits in Children

Managing Hay Fever

Managing Asthma

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT:

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• PRACTICE DOCTORS

Dr Andrew Harris
Minor Surgery, Sports Medicine, Diving Medicine, Authorised Aviation Medicals

Dr Emma Pearce
Women's Health, Child Health

Dr Andrew Leaver
Family Medicine, Minor Surgery

Dr Katrina Denison
Family medicine, Obstetric shared care, Women's & Children's Health.
Speaks Czechoslovakian

Dr Grant Russell
Family Medicine, Child health, Minor Surgery

Dr Jack Yu
Managing complex medical issues, Chronic Disease management, Care of the elderly, Preventive health & Minor procedures including Implanon insertion and removal

Dr Dilan Ranasinghe
Special interest in all areas of general practice, including weight loss management, chronic disease management, men's health, minor surgical procedures, skin checks and particularly children's health, where he holds a Diploma in Children's Health

• PRACTICE STAFF

Practice Manager:
Cecilia Troncoso

Practice Nurses:
Charmaine, Karen, Enya & Kokila

Receptionists:
Helen, Deb, Lucy, Mariah & Sarah

• SURGERY HOURS

Monday to Friday
8.00 am to 6.30 pm

Saturday
8.30 am to 4.30 pm

Sunday
CLOSED

All Public Holidays
CLOSED

• AFTER HOURS & EMERGENCY

Please phone the locum service on **9429 5677** for the doctor on call.

Dial **000** and ask for an ambulance in case of a medical emergency.

• SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

Travel Vaccinations and Advice. We are accredited to offer full travel health advice and a full vaccination service at your convenience

Fibreglass Plasters. Our clinic is able to offer you the convenience of fibreglass plastering for your uncomplicated fractures. Please make an appointment to discuss this service.

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

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

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

Test results. To obtain the results of any tests, please make a further appointment with your Doctor. Please ask the doctor at the time of your appointment how long it will take for these results to be received by the clinic so that a convenient appointment time can be made. To maintain confidentiality, results will not be given over the phone except in special circumstances.

• BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

We are a private billing practice. Children 12 and under are bulk billed.

Information about our fees and services are available at reception.

Payment at the time of consultation is required. Payment can be made by cash, cheque, credit card or EFTPOS.

• APPOINTMENTS

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

Home Visits. If you require a home visit for special reasons, please request this first thing in the morning. Visits are at the doctor's discretion for patients within a 5 km radius.

Booking a long appointment is important for more complex problems – insurance medical, health review, counselling, a second opinion, etc. This may involve a longer wait. Please bring all relevant information.

AGPAL

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

Screen Time for Children: Finding a Healthy Balance

In today's digital world, screens are everywhere—from televisions and tablets to smartphones and computers. While technology offers educational and entertainment benefits, managing screen time for children is essential to support their overall health and development.

Excessive screen time has been linked to problems such as poor sleep, reduced physical activity, and behavioural issues. It can also affect attention span, social skills, and even mental health. The Australian Government's guidelines recommend no more than one hour of screen time per day for children aged 2 to 5, and encourage parents of older children to set clear boundaries around use.

To promote a healthy balance, encourage a mix of screen-free activities like outdoor play, reading, arts and crafts, and family games. These not only support physical development but also help build creativity and connection.

Lead by example—children often mimic adult behaviour. If they see you engaging with them without a phone in hand, they're more likely to do the same. Also, establish tech-free zones or times, such as during meals or before bedtime, to encourage healthy routines.

Not all screen time is equal. Educational programs, video calls with loved ones, and creative apps can be valuable. The key is to be intentional and engaged—watch together, talk about what they're seeing, and stay involved.

With the right balance, screens can be part of a healthy lifestyle that supports learning, fun, and family connection.

Understanding Febrile Fits in Children

Febrile fits, also known as febrile seizures, are convulsions triggered by a sudden rise in body temperature, usually due to a fever. They are most common in children aged between 6 months and 5 years and can be alarming for parents, especially when experienced for the first time.

A typical febrile fit may involve twitching or jerking of the limbs, loss of consciousness, rolling of the eyes, and stiffening of the body. Most febrile seizures are short, lasting less than five minutes, and do not cause long-term harm. They are not a sign of epilepsy and rarely lead to ongoing health issues.

Febrile fits are usually caused by viral infections such as the flu, ear infections, or roseola. The seizure is not due to how high the fever gets, but rather how quickly the temperature rises.

If a child has a febrile fit, remain calm. Lay the child on their side, away from sharp objects, and do not put anything in their mouth. Once the seizure stops, seek medical advice, especially if it's the child's first episode or the seizure lasts longer than five minutes.

To help prevent febrile seizures, monitor your child's temperature when they're unwell and treat fevers early with paracetamol or ibuprofen as directed. While febrile fits can be frightening, they are generally harmless and children usually outgrow them by age six.

Always consult a healthcare professional if you're concerned about your child's health or if seizures recur.

Early Symptoms of Gout

Gout is a form of arthritis caused by a build-up of uric acid in the blood, leading to the formation of sharp crystals in the joints. It often comes on suddenly and can be extremely painful, especially during a flare-up. Recognising the early symptoms is important for prompt treatment and long-term management.

The most common early symptom of gout is intense joint pain, often in the big toe. This pain usually starts suddenly, often at night, and may be so severe that even a bedsheet touching the joint feels unbearable. Other joints such as the ankles, knees, wrists, and fingers can also be affected.

Alongside pain, you may notice swelling, redness, and warmth in the affected joint. The area can become very tender and may feel stiff or difficult to move. Some people also experience a mild fever or feel generally unwell during an attack.

Gout symptoms often come in waves, with flare-ups lasting several days followed by periods of no symptoms. If left untreated, attacks can become more frequent and lead to joint damage.

If you suspect gout, see your doctor for diagnosis and treatment. Early intervention can help reduce pain and prevent future complications.

Tips for Managing Hay Fever

Hay fever, or allergic rhinitis, is a common condition triggered by pollen from trees, grasses, and weeds—especially during spring and early summer. Symptoms include sneezing, a runny or blocked nose, itchy eyes, and throat irritation. While hay fever isn't dangerous, it can significantly affect daily life and sleep quality if left unmanaged.

To minimise symptoms, limit outdoor activities on high pollen days, particularly in the morning and evening when pollen levels peak. Check daily pollen forecasts and keep windows and doors closed during peak times. Using an air purifier indoors can also help reduce allergens in the home.

When outdoors, wearing sunglasses may protect your eyes from pollen. Showering and changing clothes after being outside can help remove pollen from your skin and hair.

Over-the-counter antihistamines, nasal sprays, and eye drops can provide effective symptom relief. For persistent or severe cases, speak with your GP about prescription options or longer-term treatments such as allergy immunotherapy.

Managing hay fever involves a combination of avoidance strategies and symptom control. With the right approach, you can enjoy the warmer months without letting allergies get in the way of your wellbeing.

Managing Asthma and Respiratory Conditions During Winter

Winter can be a challenging time for people with asthma and other respiratory conditions. Cold air, viral infections, and indoor heating can all trigger symptoms and increase the risk of flare-ups. Proactive management is key to staying healthy and breathing easy during the colder months.

Cold, dry air is a common asthma trigger. Breathing through the nose and wearing a scarf over the mouth and nose can help warm and humidify the air before it reaches the lungs. It's also wise to avoid outdoor exercise on particularly cold or windy days.

Viral infections, such as colds and the flu, are more common in winter and can worsen respiratory symptoms. Getting a yearly flu vaccination is strongly recommended for people with asthma. Practicing good hygiene, including frequent handwashing and avoiding close contact with sick individuals, also helps reduce the risk.

Indoor heating and air quality can affect breathing. Dust, mould, and pet dander tend to accumulate indoors during winter. Regular cleaning, using air purifiers, and ventilating rooms can help improve air quality. Avoid using wood fires or gas heaters that release fumes into the home.

It's essential to follow your asthma action plan, take prescribed medications as directed, and have a reliever inhaler readily available. If symptoms worsen, consult your GP promptly.

By taking simple precautions and staying prepared, individuals with asthma and respiratory conditions can manage their health effectively and reduce the risk of complications during winter.

FRESH SPRING VEGETABLE RISOTTO

Light, creamy, and full of seasonal flavour, this spring risotto makes a perfect dinner as the weather warms up.

Ingredients (Serves 4):

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ cups arborio rice
- ½ cup dry white wine (optional)
- 5 cups hot vegetable stock
- 1 cup asparagus, chopped into 2cm pieces
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 zucchini, finely diced
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp butter
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Fresh herbs (basil or parsley), for garnish

Instructions:

1. In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, cooking until soft (about 3–4 minutes).
2. Stir in arborio rice and cook for 1–2 minutes until lightly toasted.
3. Pour in the wine (if using) and cook until it's mostly absorbed.
4. Add hot vegetable stock, one ladle at a time, stirring continuously and allowing each ladle to absorb before adding the next.
5. After 15 minutes, stir in asparagus, peas, and zucchini. Continue adding stock and stirring for another 5–7 minutes until vegetables are tender and rice is creamy.
6. Remove from heat and stir in butter, Parmesan, and lemon zest. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Serve warm, garnished with fresh herbs and extra Parmesan if desired.

Enjoy this fresh, comforting meal with a crisp green salad or crusty bread for the perfect spring dinner!

WORD SEARCH

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- **OTHER SERVICES**

- **4Cyte Pathology**
  Mon-Fri.....8.30am till 4.00pm
  Saturday.....9.00am till 12.00pm
- **Nursing home and hospital visits**

Practice professionals are experienced in the broad range of health problems affecting all age groups. The practice is fully accredited to national standards.

- **SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES**

Medical record confidentiality. This practice protects your personal health information to ensure it is only available to authorised staff members for the intended purposes and to comply with the Privacy Act. Please read our Confidentiality Statement and make sure we have your signature scanned into your Medical File.

Your comments on our medical services are always welcome. We strive to improve for your benefit.

Please direct any queries or complaints to the Practice Manager. manager@sandringhammedical.com.au
If you wish, you can register your complaint with the Health Services Commissioner T: (61 3) 8601 5200, Email:hsc@health.vic.gov.au, 30th Floor, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

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