

OVENS MEDICAL GROUP

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

2018

CLINIC NEWS

Christmas Closure – the clinic will be closed on the following days only

Christmas Day 25th December
Boxing Day 26th December and
New Year's Day 1st January, 2019

Farewells - We wish Dr Emily Clarke and Dr Nalin Gunawardana all the best as they leave our clinic to and head off on their next travelling/working adventures.

MY HEALTH RECORD

My Health Record will be created for every Australian who wants one after 31st January, 2019.

It's your choice. If you do not want a record created for you, you will need to visit the website www.myhealthrecord.gov.au or call the helpline on 1800 723 471.

Survive the heat tips

Drink plenty of water



- Drink plenty of water, even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Keep a full drink bottle with you.
- Take small sips of water frequently.
- If your doctor normally limits your fluids, check how much you should drink during hot weather.

Never leave anyone in a car



- Never leave kids, adults or pets in cars – the temperature can double in minutes.
- Visit the Department of Education and Training's [Never Leave Kids in Cars](#) for more information on kids in hot cars.

Stay somewhere cool



- Spend as much time as possible in cool or air-conditioned buildings (shopping centres, libraries, cinemas or community centres).
- Keep yourself cool by using wet towels, putting your feet in cool water and taking cool (not cold) showers.
- Block out the sun at home during the day by closing curtains and blinds.
- Open the windows when there is a cool breeze.
- Stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day.
- If you must go out, wear a hat and sunscreen and take a bottle of water with you.
- Dress yourself and those in your care lightly.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing made from natural fibres like cotton and linen.
- Eat smaller meals more often and cold meals such as salads.
- Make sure food that needs refrigeration is properly stored.
- Avoid intense activity like exercise, renovating and gardening.
- Watch or listen to news reports for more information.
- Don't forget your pets – a cool bath, wet towel to lie on, a place next to a fan and plenty of fresh water work just as well for animals.

Plan ahead



- Keep up to date with weather forecasts – watch the news daily, check the [BOM forecast online](#) and read the current [heat health alert on health.vic](#).
- Cancel non-essential outings and plan essential activities for the coolest part of the day.
- Stock up on food, water and medicines so you don't have to go out in the heat.
- Visit your doctor to check if changes are needed to your medicines during extreme heat.
- Store medicines safely at the recommended temperature.
- Check that your fan or air-conditioner works well. Have your air-conditioner serviced if necessary.
- Prepare for power failures - ensure you have a torch, battery-operated radio, fully charged mobile phone or battery back-up, food items that don't require refrigeration, medications, plenty of drinking water and other essential items.
- Look at the things you can do to make your home cooler such as installing window coverings, shade cloths or external blinds on the sides of the house facing the sun.

Check in on others



- Look after those most at risk in the heat – your neighbour living alone, older people, young children, people with a medical condition and don't forget your pets.
- Keep in touch with friends and family who may need help. Call or visit them at least once on any extreme heat day.
- Encourage them to drink plenty of water.
- Offer to help family, friends and neighbours who are aged

over 65 or have an illness by doing shopping or other errands so they can avoid the heat.

- Take them somewhere cool for the day or have them stay the night if they are unable to stay cool in their home.
- If you observe symptoms of [heat-related illness](#), seek medical help.
- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/Survive-the-heat>

CHRISTMAS – TIPS TO REDUCE STRESS

Christmas can be a stressful time of year. The expense of buying gifts, the pressure of last minute shopping, and the heightened expectations of family togetherness can all combine to undermine our best intentions. Some practical suggestions can help you reduce your 'Christmas stress'.

Budgeting for Christmas

For many of us, the Christmas aftermath includes massive credit card bills that can take months to clear. Christmas doesn't have to be a financial headache if you plan ahead. Stress reduction strategies include:

- Work out a rough budget of expected Christmas costs as early as possible. This doesn't just mean presents – remember to include expenses such as food bills and overseas telephone charges.
- Calculate how much disposable income you have between now and Christmas. A certain percentage of this can be dedicated each week (or fortnight or month) to covering your expected Christmas costs. Don't be discouraged if the amount seems small. If you save \$5, \$10, or \$20 per week over a year, it can provide you with a hefty nest egg.
- If your nest egg isn't enough to cover your estimated expenses, consider recalculating your Christmas budget to a more realistic amount.
- If you have trouble keeping your hands off your Christmas nest egg, consider opening a 'Christmas' account.

Christmas presents

If you have a large circle of extended family or friends to buy gifts for, it can be very costly. You might be able to reduce the stress and cost of Christmas for everyone if you suggest a change in the way your family and friends give presents. For example, you could suggest that your group:

- Buy presents only for the children.
- Have a Kris Kringle, where everyone draws a name out of a hat and buys a present only for that person.
- Set a limit on the cost of presents for each person.
- Remember, presents don't have to cost money – you can also give of your time or experience. Offer to help someone with a task they need to do, such as building a garden bed or painting the fence, or offer your services as a babysitter/chauffeur/dog walker/proofreader/financial adviser/birthday cake maker – whatever matches your skill set and the time you have available.
- Arrange with your family to each pass on a book that you have loved but are unlikely to read a second time. Everyone will benefit from each other's recommendations, and there's instant entertainment available for after lunch.

Christmas shopping

Stress reduction strategies for successful Christmas shopping include:

- Make a list of all the gifts you wish to buy before you go shopping. If you wait for inspiration to strike, you could find yourself wandering aimlessly around the shopping centre for hours, or impulse buying and spending more than you planned. Perhaps you could get to know the interests of family and friends to help you when choosing gifts (remember money is also a great gift as it allows people to choose what they want).
- Cross people off the list as you buy to avoid duplication.
- Buy a few extras, such as chocolates, just in case you forget somebody or you have unexpected guests arrive bearing gifts.
- If possible, do your Christmas shopping early – in the first week of December or even in November. Some well-organised

people do their Christmas shopping gradually over the course of the year, starting with the post-Christmas sales.

- Buy your gifts by mail catalogue or over the internet. Some companies will also gift-wrap and post your presents for a small additional fee.

Christmas lunch (or dinner)

Preparing a meal for family and friends can be enjoyable but tiring and stressful at the same time.

Some tips to reduce the stress of Christmas cooking include:

- If you are cooking lunch at home, delegate tasks. You don't need to do everything yourself.
- Consider keeping it simple – for instance, you could always arrange for a 'buffet' lunch, where everybody brings a platter.
- Make a list of food and ingredients needed. Buy as many non-perishable food items as you can in advance – supermarkets are generally extremely busy on Christmas Eve.
- Write a Christmas Day timetable. For example: when to put the turkey in the oven, when to put the pudding on to boil, or whatever suits your catering agenda.
- You may need to order particular food items (such as turkeys) from your supermarket by a certain date. Check to avoid disappointment.
- Consider doing your food shopping online. The store will deliver your groceries to your door. (Keep in mind this option is more expensive than visiting the supermarket yourself.)
- Book well in advance if you plan to have lunch at a restaurant. Some restaurants may be fully booked for months before Christmas, so don't wait till the last minute.
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Relationships at Christmas

Stress, anxiety, and depression are common during the festive season. If nothing else, reassure yourself that these feelings are normal. Stress reduction strategies include:

- Set your expectations realistically. If certain family members bicker all year long, they will probably do so at Christmas too.
- Avoid known triggers. For example, if politics is a touchy subject in your family, don't talk about it. If someone brings up the topic, use distraction and quickly move on to something else to talk about.
- Use relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or focusing on your breath to cope with anxiety or tension.
- Family members involved in after-lunch activities (such as cricket on the back lawn) are less likely to get into arguments. Plan for something to do as a group after lunch if necessary.
- People under stress tend to 'self-medicate' with alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs. Try to remember that drugs can't solve problems or alleviate stress in the long term.

Reducing the stress of Christmas cards and mail

To reduce the stress of the Christmas postage experience:

- Write up a Christmas card list and keep it in a safe place so that you can refer to it (and add or delete names) year after year.
- Plan to write your Christmas cards in early December. Book a date in your diary so you don't forget.
- Mark your Christmas card envelopes with 'Card only' – these can be posted at a reduced rate during November and December.
- Overseas mail at Christmas time takes longer to arrive. Arrange to send cards or presents in the first half of December to avoid disappointments (and long queues at the post office).
- For great savings, buy Christmas necessities (such as cards, wrapping paper, ribbons and decorations) at post-Christmas sales.

General health and wellbeing

Some other ways to keep your Christmas stress levels down include:

- Try to be moderate – it may be the season to be jolly, but too much food and alcohol

is harmful. Drink driving is a real danger and is illegal. If you can't (or don't want to) step off the social merry-go-round, at least try to eat and drink in moderation.

- Get enough sleep – plan for as many early nights as you can.
- Keep moving – keeping up your regular exercise routine can give you the fitness and stamina to make it through the demands of the festive season.

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/christmas-tips-to-reduce-the-stress>

Help Lines

LifeLine 13 11 14

KidsHelpLine (5-25years of age) 1800 551800

SuicideLine Victoria 1300 651251

**OVENS MEDICAL
GROUP
WISHES EVERYONE A
SAFE, HAPPY
CHRISTMAS AND A
HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

