

# OVENS MEDICAL GROUP WINTER NEWSLETTER 2014

## **STAFF**

We welcome Dr. Alex Burgansky to our practice for the month of June. Dr. Burgansky is completing his diversity component of his training through the Bogong Regional Training Program.

## **OVER 75 YEAR OLD HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

Ovens Medical Group invites our over 75 year old patients the opportunity to have an annual health assessment completed. This is a bulk billed service.

### **What is an over 75 H.A.?**

An over 75 year old Health Assessment is a comprehensive assessment of your health and your physical, psychological and social function. It helps to assist in the early identification of care needs.

### **What happens during a H.A.?**

A nurse will visit your home and ask you some questions and perform some simple tests. This will include the following:

- vision check
- Blood Pressure
- medication review
- immunisation check
- questions about your
  - nutrition/diet,
  - social activities/support
  - daily activities

A detailed record of the assessment is recorded in your file. An appointment is made with your usual doctor who will perform a physical examination including a skin check, height and weight.

A copy of your assessment will be offered to you at the completion of this visit.

Below is part of a letter received by two of our patients who have had an over 75 health assessment

*"The in house assessment conducted by the nurses is friendly, non-intrusive and professional. A doctor's appointment to complete the assessment follows. There is no intention to guide, suggest or recommend that we change or alter our current accommodation in any form what so ever. We cannot praise the girls too highly for their practical and personal attention. The fact that both appointments are at no cost to us is just another reason to recommend the service. We feel we are being very well looked after".*

## **INJECTION APPOINTMENTS**

Please be aware that all injections require an appointment with the nurse and doctor, including all routine injections. Please book these appointments to avoid showing up at the clinic and not being able to be seen for the injection in a timely manner.

## **ADVANCED CARE PLANS**

### **Summary**

Advance care planning can help the people close to you and those caring for you know what is important to you about the level of healthcare and quality of life you would want if, for some reason, you are unable to participate in the discussions. Having the conversation and writing down your wishes for future care will help the person you choose as your substitute decision maker to feel more comfortable about the decisions they make on your behalf.

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## **A guide to advance care planning**

It is recommended that you take several steps to make sure your wishes are known if you become sick and unable to make your own decisions.

These include:

1. Think about your wishes for future care.
2. Have the conversation.
3. Consider appointing someone to make decisions for you.
4. Write your wishes down.
5. Give your advance care plan to others.
6. Review it regularly or when anything changes.

A substitute decision maker (also known as an enduring power of attorney (medical treatment)) can make medical decisions when you are unable to participate in the decision making. Consider choosing someone who is close to you, has a clear understanding of your wishes and can be a strong advocate for you

## **HEALTHY AGEING – STAY MENTALLY ACTIVE**

Growing older does not mean that your mental abilities will necessarily be reduced. There's a lot you can do to keep your mind sharp and alert. Researchers believe that many of the supposed age-related changes that affect the mind, such as memory loss, are actually lifestyle related. Just as muscles get flabby from sitting around and doing nothing, so does the brain.

A marked decline in mental abilities may be due to factors like prescription medications or disease. Older people are more likely to take a range of medications for chronic conditions than younger people. In some cases, a drug (or a combination of drugs) can affect mental abilities.

Certain diseases that are more common to old age, such as Alzheimer's disease, can also be the underlying cause of declining mental abilities. It is

worth checking with your doctor to make sure any cognitive changes, such as memory loss, aren't associated with drugs or illness.

Physical fitness is important.

Eat a healthy diet.

## **Improve your mental fitness**

Researchers at Stanford University (USA) found that memory loss can be improved by 30 to 50 per cent simply by doing mental exercises. The brain is like a muscle - if you don't give it regular workouts, its functions will decline. Suggestions include:

- Keep up your social life and engage in plenty of stimulating conversations.
- Read newspapers, magazines and books.
- Play 'thinking' games like Scrabble, cards and Trivial Pursuit.
- Take a course on a subject that interests you.
- Cultivate a new hobby.
- Learn a language.
- Do crossword puzzles and word games.
- Play games that challenge the intellect and memory, such as chess.
- Watch 'question and answer' game shows on television, and play along with the contestants.
- Hobbies such as woodwork can improve the brain's spatial awareness.
- Keep stress under control with meditation and regular relaxation, since an excess of stress hormones like cortisol can be harmful to neurones.

## **Boost your memory**

Good recall is a learned skill. There are ways to improve a failing memory no matter what your age. Suggestions include:

- Make sure you're paying attention to whatever it is you want to remember. For example, if you're busy thinking about something else, you mightn't notice where you're putting the house keys.

# DON' T GO ON A DIET !

Looking to lose weight? Start with these five common sense tips:

## 1. Set realistic goals

It's tempting to set ambitious goals but making them too difficult could set you up to fail. Instead, take it one step at a time: if you have recently been putting on weight then set a goal to stop gaining weight as a starting point.

## 2. Keep a diary

Keep a simple log of what you eat, drink and your level of activity. This will help you see where you can make improvements besides what is already working well.

## 3. Make a few small changes

Healthy eating for weight loss is about making sure you're still getting all the nutrients you need while reducing the amount of energy (kilojoules) you take in. Our healthy eating tips can get you started and our healthier recipes will convince you that healthy eating can be enjoyed not endured!

## 4. Get active!

Good news: you don't have to spend a fortune on a gym membership. Joining a walking group is a perfect solution if you aren't sure where to start. Or, choose another activity you enjoy as you'll be more likely to stick to it. Remember, thirty minutes of activity on most or all days is great for your health and wellbeing, regardless of your weight.

## 5. Slow and steady wins the race

Don't jump on the scales everyday: let your clothes and how good you feel tell the story. Although you might be keen to do it all at once, it's best to do things gradually. Small and easy changes really do help healthier habits to become the norm for you and your family.

# IT'S EASY TO KEEP MOVING AT WORK

We all know the type. They race off on their lunch break, do a long run or boot camp and arrive back at their desks an hour later, red faced, sweating and eating a sandwich. However, there are plenty of ways to fit activity into your day that are not quite so frantic if that's not your style.

Here are some ideas to try:

**Walk and Talk** – do you have a regular catch up with someone in your team? Why not make it a walking meeting and talk along the way? You won't be able to do this for every meeting but if it's a general "what's on your mind/how are you going?" sort of catch up, you'll probably find you can walk and talk. Write the key points down once you get back to your desk.

**Stand up and Stretch** – it may seem minimal but simply standing up and stretching a couple of times a day can really help. Make efforts to stand up and walk every hour too – breaking up your time sitting can really impact your heart health.

**Lunchtime leisure** – Make better use of your lunch breaks. For many of us that means actually taking a break! Organise a lunchtime walk with workmates or go to a class together, such as yoga or Pilates. Make it a regular thing and put it in your calendar.

**Meditate** – Find a meditation group near your work at a gym or wellness centre and organise to go one evening a week with workmates. Clearing your mind and focusing on yourself for one hour a week will help you achieve your overall goal of being more active in general.

**Share.** Talk to your colleagues about how you're fitting more activity into your life and how it's making you feel. Hearing your real-life experience may be enough to inspire others to start making small changes.