

# OVENS MEDICAL GROUP

## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2015

### **CLINIC NEWS**

Dr Felicity Brettig commences maternity leave at the end of June. We wish her all the best during this special time and hope to see her return before the end of the year.

Dr Byrne is taking Long Service Leave for two months from 15<sup>th</sup> June to 18<sup>th</sup> August. We hope he has a wonderful, adventurous time on his leave.

## BIGGEST MORNING TEA AT OVENS MEDICAL!

During May and June the staff and doctors have been competing in the Master Chef/ Biggest morning tea competition where, after paying a small fee, each plate of food is sampled and judged by fellow work mates. All money from this bake off competition is going to the Cancer Council's biggest morning tea fundraiser.

### **UPDATING INFORMATION**

Ovens Medical Group continually want to provide a good service to our patients but to do this we need your contact details to be up-to-date. Please inform our staff of any change of address or phone numbers as it is difficult to contact you without the right information.

## **INFLUENZA OR FLU**

Influenza or the flu is here early this year. If you feel unwell with influenza and come into the clinic please let the staff know so they can isolate you or give you a mask.

People with underlying medical conditions or reduced immunity are most at risk of catching the flu and have complications, so this group of people can receive the vaccine for free:

1. Anyone aged 65 or over
2. Pregnancy women (at any stage of pregnancy)
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months to under 5 years and 15 years and over.
4. People aged six months or older with heart disease, chronic lung disease (such as asthma) Chronic neurological conditions, Down's syndrome, impaired immunity or blood disorders.
5. People with chronic conditions – obesity, diabetes, alcoholism, kidney disease
6. Residents in nursing homes.

Discuss the flu injection with your GP.

Influenza virus is spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing and speaking.

A person with influenza may be contagious one day before symptoms appear and 3-7 days after the onset of the symptoms.

Children may be contagious for longer than seven days.

Symptoms of flu are similar to those of the common cold but more severe.

- Headache
- Sore throat
- Malaise
- Generalised aches
- Loss of appetite
- Nasal discharge

Flu is not the common cold, flu is more severe than a bad cold. Cold sometimes causes mild fever, flu high fever, cold symptoms last from 2 – 3 days whereas the flu lasts up to a week. Cold treatment – use Panadol if a fever is present. Warm drinks will ease a sore throat, drink lots of fluids.

## **FREE WHOOPING COUGH VACCINES**

For all pregnant women and their partners from the 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2015.

Women are encouraged to receive this vaccine between 28 and 32 weeks pregnant if possible to provide the best protection for their newborn.

Grandparents are encouraged to receive this also but need a script from their doctor. The cost of the vaccine is \$37-\$40.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED BY OUR NURSES**

- Pap Smears
- Wound dressings
- Immunisations
- 75 year old health assessments
- Chronic disease plans
- 4 year old health assessments
- Triage of unwell patients

If you require any of these services please ring and get our reception staff to make an appointment.

## **ASTHMA**

Asthma is a common disease of the airways. Asthma causes the muscles in the airways to tighten and the lining of the airway becomes swollen and inflamed, producing sticky mucous. These changes cause the airways to become narrow and difficult to breathe.

### **What to do during an asthma attack**

An asthma attack can come on gradually (e.g. if a person gets a cold) or quite quickly (e.g. if a person inhales something they are allergic to such as pollen).

The symptoms that you should look out for include:

- Increasing wheezing, coughing, chest tightness or shortness of breath
- Needing to use a reliever again within three hours of last taking it
- Waking often at night with asthma symptoms
- 

An asthma attack can become life threatening if not treated properly even in someone whose asthma is usually mild or well controlled.

### **Always call an ambulance in an asthma emergency**

In an emergency, always call triple zero (000) and ask for an ambulance. Tell the operator that someone is having an asthma attack. The signs of an emergency include when the persons:

- Finds it very difficult to breathe
- Is unable to speak comfortably or if their lips are turning blue
- Has symptoms that get worse very quickly
- Is getting little or no relief from their reliever inhaler.

While waiting for the ambulance, give four puffs of reliever medication every four minutes.

## **WOMEN ARE BEING OFFERED THE PAP TEST OF THE FUTURE**

Ovens Medical Group are about to offer women the opportunity to become part of the Compass Trial which is looking at a better way to screen for cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is caused by certain strains of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Overseas research has shown that screening for this virus is more accurate than the traditional Pap smear for determining a woman's future risk of developing cervical cancer. The Compass Trial will confirm if this is the case for Australian women. It is a major multi-centre trial being conducted by the Victorian Cytology Service (VCS) and the University of New South Wales and will involve recruitment of more than 120,000 women. Women aged between 25 and 69 years of age attending the Ovens Medical Group for their routine Pap smears will be asked if they wish to participate in the trial. The test is taken in the same way as the traditional Pap smear but once it reaches the laboratory (VCS Pathology) it is randomized into one of two groups. One group will be tested in the traditional way (looking at cells) and the other will be tested for the presence of the virus, HPV. In the first group if the test is negative (no abnormal cells seen) women will be asked to come back for a repeat test in two and a half years, instead of the current two years. If the woman is assigned to the second group and her HPV test is negative she will not need another test for five years.

Participation in the trial is voluntary and women are able to take part if they are a resident in Australia, aged between 25-69 years and attending for a routine Pap smear.