

GASTROENTERITIS

Currently in Alice Springs there have been a number of nasty diarrhoeal illnesses with increasing presentations to both the Emergency Dept at the local hospital and to our clinic. Here are some simple tips on managing the potential symptoms you might experience—remembering diarrhoea may be happening for very different reasons at times. Your bowels need a rest—they are often cramping, you feel washed out and you must remember to rest and limit unnecessary activities. You also might be contagious and therefore if you “soldier on” at work you may contribute to the entire workplace catching your virus! For the cramping pain, Buscopan is a smooth muscle relaxant and can be very helpful—this is available over the counter from chemists. Be mindful of your fluids and maintaining your hydration. As doctors we often talk about maintenance fluids for the 24 hours plus the losses, which would be mostly the vomits and/or poos. The actual amount may vary from the age and weight of the patient, plus pre-existing medical conditions but patients often don't keep up with their fluids. Avoid dairy products, bland your diet, and initially you may legitimately feel everything you eat “goes straight through”. Your gut cannot absorb the nutrients—let it rest and perhaps have soup and dry toast only.

Nausea can be settled with simple remedies like ginger, chamomile, peppermint or Vit B6 and doctors can prescribe medications for those > 12 yrs to settle nausea. Avoid OTC products that slow or stop diarrhoea—if really infectious you are stopping the natural process the body has of trying to get rid of the virus, bacteria or parasite and can potentially get very sick— they have a role to play perhaps to get home from overseas but are short term only.

HEALTH GUIDE FOR GLOBE TROTTERS

This is a fantastic app for any patient who likes to travel. **Fit2Travel** by GSK is a practical smart phone guide for healthy safe travel. It proves travel tips and area-specific advice, including possible disease threats for travellers. The app provides an interactive map, so when you click on a country you get advice about recommended vaccines. It also contains a checklist for planning safe travel as well as information about items to include in a travel medical kit.

As our clinic is linked to TMA we stock 2 different sized travel kits that would retail much less than what separate scripts cost once added up. It is also in a handy, re-usable, zippable bag, making it easy to squeeze into your luggage. As it contains numerous medications, we can only dispense these products after a consult face to face with a patient to ensure no allergies or interactions.

Also remember that all information you see on the internet, apps or as advised by your travel agent is just a guide, and if you have a complicated itinerary ASFMC Management would strongly advocate a longer appointment to discuss all potential travel related health issues. Don't spend lots of money on a fantastic overseas, once in a lifetime trip, only to have it ruined by something easily preventable.

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Entry via Kekwick Ave

For more information about our medical centre visit

www.alicefamilymedical.com.au



ALICE SPRINGS
FAMILY MEDICAL

NEWSLETTER

EDITION 26
AUGUST/SEPT 2013

DOCTORS

Dr Deb Mitchell + locums

Dr. Gaurang Prajapati—GP Registrar

PRACTICE NURSE

Susie Leister RN

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Practice Manager—Susie Leister
Receptionists— Charlotte Thompson

Lynlee Sleep, Lyn Schultz

PRACTICE HOURS

Monday to Friday 8:15am—5:30pm
Saturday 9:00am—12:00pm



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WHAT'S NEW?

ASFMC Management would like to inform patients our 3 year accreditation cycle AGPAL visit is looming closer . As part of this we will be asking patients to anonymously answer questions specifically about Dr. Mitchell's consulting style. The form has been used for our registrar Dr Prajapati earlier in the year and is totally confidential.

Dr Deb Mitchell and Susie Leister will be heading off overseas for a family wedding in late August and will be away for 6 weeks. During that time Dr Jenny Connor will be locuming for 3 weeks and then Dr Stacey Seakins will be joining our team part-time until the end of the year. Therefore leading up to mid August Dr Mitchell's availability may be challenged by extra demands prior to her annual leave. Remember, we do not book more than 2 weeks in advance but you should still have your pick of appointments prior to her leave if organised.

As our son is now 33 months old and spending close to 40 hours a week in childcare Dr Mitchell is reducing her hours slightly to have more time in the afternoon with Joshua. This is deliberate for our family's balance and we hope that patient's can understand the rationale. Afternoon appointments with Dr Mitchell will therefore be less available and after the next few months this will be revisited as to what is both working for our family and also patients. We sincerely hope our core patient population can appreciate this decision.

FIT BIT

After numerous patients showing me the FitBit and all doing so well with both weight loss plus general wellbeing I am now the proud owner of one as well. It is compatible with iphone or ipad, plus personal PC to track your planned 10,000 steps a day, plus other measurements. As some days end with only 2000 steps accrued for the entire work day it has made me better at getting incidental exercise in, including at times a lunchtime walk, or God forbid, an early gym class before work. Retailing at \$119 through Harvey Norman I would highly recommend it to those who have a fairly sedentary or office based job to challenge your perception of how many steps you actually get in a day.

LIFT FOR LIFE RESISTANCE TRAINING

It is back!!! - But unfortunately the Commonwealth funding the ASTC received has expired and all been used up. Get Physical—next to old Memo club on Todd St are continuing the programme and our clinic is very passionate about letting appropriate patients know all about it, as we highly recommend it for those with diabetes, or at risk of developing diabetes or other chronic health conditions.

A GP's referral is recommended but you can also self refer. It is a 6 month programme divided into 3 eight week blocks. The cost of \$120 for an 8 week block means that the classes are close to \$5 per class which is very competitive with usual gym fees. Taking into account your particular health requirements an personalised programme is created just for you.

Call 8952 3233 or 0419 419 001

Tips for controlling your appetite

1. Don't skip meals: you should be eating 3 main meals a day plus at least one snack and trying to space your meals throughout the day aiming to not go longer than 4 hours without eating. This tends to keep your blood glucose levels and hunger hormones stable.
2. Drink lots of water: when you feel you are starving pour yourself a big glass of water
3. Sleep!!! 2 hormones, leptin and ghrelin, regulate our appetite and both are directly affected by how much sleep we get. Getting 8 hours of quality sleep each night helps the hormones work properly, which in turn curbs your appetite
4. Examine your hunger: the next time you are "starving" between meals consider the last time you ate. Is this real physical hunger or perhaps an emotional response?
5. Think about what beside eating, soothes you: Steer yourself towards positive feeling of self-worth and you'll choose activities and behaviours that inherently contradict self-destructiveness
6. Don't panic if you have a bad day with food; remember exercise, especially high intensity interval training. It's about long term health.