

HEALTH MATTERS

ST PETERS FAMILY PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

MAY – AUGUST 2009

ST. PETERS FAMILY PRACTICE
ACCREDITED GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTICE
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PRACTICE PRINCIPAL: DR. ADAM PEDLER
ASSOCIATE DOCTOR: DR. MARGARET TAYLOR
PRACTICE MANAGER: LYN PEDLER
PRACTICE STAFF: DEBBIE CURTIS
EVE CARSON
PRACTICE NURSE: LISA TAYLOR

PRACTICE HOURS:

MONDAY – FRIDAY 8.30 AM – 6.00 PM

AFTERHOURS:

DR. PEDLER PROVIDES PERSONAL AFTERHOURS COVER MONDAY TO FRIDAY, EXCEPT BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10.00 PM AND 7.00 AM WHEN CALLS WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR LOCUM SERVICE. WHEN DR PEDLER IS NOT AVAILABLE, AFTER THESE HOURS OR ON WEEK-ENDS, OUR PAGING SERVICE WILL OFFER YOU A HOME VISIT FROM OUR LOCUM SERVICE.

IN THIS ISSUE

- ***Marie retires.***
- ***Please welcome Debbie Curtis at Reception.***
- ***Latest news on the Swine Flu – what you can do to minimise the risk!***
- ***Meningococcal Infection – our community shocked and saddened at the sudden and tragic loss of Saint Peters College student Jack Klemich.***
- ***Dr. Pedler gives us an update on Women's & Children's health***

FAREWELL MARIE!



After 13 years of loyal and dedicated service Marie is retiring. It will be difficult to say good bye, but it is the start of a new and more relaxing time for Marie as she plans to spend time more with family and precious grandchildren!

Working on reception in a busy general practice is demanding and at times exhausting! Marie's knowledge and expertise coupled with her genuine affection for our patients, has been a wonderful asset to our practice.

We have been very fortunate to have such a generous colleague and friend who has shared so much over

many years. Good luck Marie, you go with our heartfelt thanks for many years of exceptional service. You will be dearly missed.

WARM WELCOME DEBBIE!



We are very fortunate to welcome Debbie Curtis as our new receptionist!

Debbie comes to us from a similar, smaller practice and brings 17 years experience and knowledge in the field of general practice.

Debbie has a warm and engaging personality and this together with her enthusiasm to work as part of our team, will make the transition at reception an easy one for management and our patients!

Lyn, Eve and Marie will work alongside Debbie over the next few weeks as she settles into her new role. We are fortunate to have a committed team with such a depth of experience.

Please make Debbie feel welcome.



UPDATED ADVICE ON SWINE FLU

➤ **Consider having this year's flu shot!**

Although it is unknown if the seasonal flu will provide cross-protection against the new virus, first detected in Mexico, vaccinating as many people as possible may guard against swine flu mutating into a more deadly form.

➤ **Pharmaceutical company CSL is working behind the scenes!**

They have acquired a sample of the virus to develop and manufacture an H1N1 virus vaccine. This should be available within 9 months.

➤ **The Virus is sensitive to antivirals!**

But, Tamiflu and Relenza must be taken within 48 hours after symptom onset.

If you are travelling overseas you should consider packing antivirals, wearing a face mask and avoiding crowded areas.

➤ **The Illness appears to be mild.**

The majority of cases have occurred in healthy young adults. Currently the infectious period is estimated to be from 1 day prior to the onset of symptoms until 7 days after the onset of the illness. Suspected cases will need to stay at home and make contact with your doctor by telephone, as precautions will need to be taken if you come to the surgery.

➤ **Inform our Receptionists if you have been travelling or are at risk!**

If you have febrile, respiratory symptoms we may need to take precautions against spreading infection in the waiting room. Keep one metre distance between yourself and other patients – if we know, we can isolate you.

➤ **What's the best thing you can do?**

Be vigilant about washing your hands and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze. We have signage in the waiting room about cough etiquette.

Please use the tissues, alcohol-based hand hygiene and the masks we are offering, and dispose of them in the bin afterwards.

➤ **Where can you get further advice?**

The situation is constantly changing so for up to date information, please visit:

www.flu.sa.gov.au. We have a Fact Sheet on frequently asked questions available for you to take home at reception.

MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION

Our heartfelt condolences are extended to the Klemich family after the tragic and sudden death of their son, Jack, from Meningococcal Infection. He was much loved. Our local community is naturally very concerned about transmission of the disease and Fact Sheets are available from reception or more information can be obtained from www.dh.sa.gov/pehs/communicable-disease-index.htm

FROM THE DESK OF DR. ADAM PEDLER

I have just attended the Adelaide Women's and Children's Health Update and have many expert opinions to share with you.

There are new guidelines on safe use of the **Oral Contraceptive Pill** and new types are available as well, including a soon- to- be-released contraceptive 'patch'. New pills such as YAZ with a different cycle length are here and "emergency contraception" is now available over the counter at the Chemist in the form of a single pill.

Discussion about **the Menopause** and symptomatic treatment focused on life style factors such as not smoking, exercise half an hour each day, Calcium intake, Vitamin D, alcohol reduction to two standard drinks per day or less and maintenance of optimal weight. The bad publicity HRT took some years ago has been shown to apply only to older women, and early intervention with individualised HRT treatment seems the best. It is important to note that new treatments are safer and can even REDUCE your risk of breast cancer. Also note that it has been shown that Oestrogen can significantly reduce joint pain in post menopausal women. Have a look at www.menopause.org.au.

Susan McLean, an ex Victorian Police Officer, gave an eye opening talk about "**Cyber Bullying**", "**Sexting**" and **Problematic Internet use** amongst our kids.

She suggested that to keep your kids safe you should...never allow the PC/Internet in the bedroom, set Profiles to private, limit identifying information, only add "friends" that you actually know and trust in real life! She went on to say that you should not respond to abusive comments or emails, block or delete any "problem" contacts and do not forget an "online friend" that you do not know in real life is a STRANGER.

Well known **Adolescent Psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg** talked about the "Premature Sexualisation of Girls in the Media-Mental Health Implications". Did you know that 26% of 16-24 year olds suffered a mental illness last year (that's 650,000 people). Sexualisation of young girls leads to eating disorders, low self esteem and depression. Childhood should be a time of innocence, playfulness, fun and spontaneity. He however describes a "developmental compression" where children short circuit the "latency" period between childhood and early adolescence. This is driven by the media, internet and music videos.

His answer to this is for the parents to take more interest and spend more time with their children and to make the parents voice the loudest in the child's ear.

We then had an update on **Osteoporosis** and the new treatments...don't forget the importance of Vitamin D...and Calcium –we have good products available for sale here. The latest treatment for proven Osteoporosis is a once a year infusion and is available now. We have the facilities to administer this here in the surgery.

There are new treatments for Hirsutism and **unwanted hair reduction**; ask me if your interested.

Sexually transmitted Infections are on the rise again, so be careful!

The anti-cervix cancer vaccine has now been trialled in women up to 55 years with good results. Gardasil is funded for females aged 12-26 years on the National HPV Vaccination Program and is available on private script for women aged 27 - 45 years.

Finally, a word on **Breast cancer**. More is being done to unravel the genetic links and advice can be given to families with high risk. MRI scanning of the breast can offer more accurate diagnosis in some cases but is restricted to Specialist referral. Breast cancer detection rates have gone up but mortality has gone down...some good news at last.

