

The Elms Family Medical Centre

Quarterly Newsletter

Keeping you in touch with developments at our Medical Centre

www.theelms.com.au

Winter 2013

It has been a very busy time at The Elms over the last few months, with the move to our newly finished clinic now complete. The renovations mean that we have increased the number of consulting rooms from six to thirteen, as well as expanding the nurse's treatment area to accommodate three beds, one of which is in a dedicated surgical procedure room. The reception and patient waiting areas have been redesigned to create a more functional and open environment.

We would like to thank everyone for their patience during the period of transition and look forward to providing an even better service.

Reception News

There is a new face at our front desk, with Lauren Wright recently starting her medical receptionist traineeship. Being a Bacchus Marsh local, Lauren has the advantage of knowing the town and the services available, which will be a great help to her as a receptionist. She will be receiving instruction from our team of experienced staff and we hope that she settles comfortably into her new role.

Psychologist News

Starting in mid June, we will have an additional psychologist consulting at The Elms. Maria De Virgilio is a registered psychologist who has experience in child and adolescent psychology, as well as anxiety, depression, grief and post-traumatic stress. She has a professional interest in personality disorders and uses a wide range of techniques including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

Maria joins psychologists Louise, Meredith and Laura, and consults on Fridays. Appointments to see Maria can be made by contacting Ranges Psychological Services on 0425 240 021.

Medicare rebates are available to patients who have specific psychological conditions through a Mental Health Care Plan referral. Please speak with your doctor to see if you are eligible.

Services Available at The Elms

Since our expansion into larger premises, our visiting podiatrist, Gerard Zammit, has been able to increase his days of consulting. Gerard now provides his podiatry services on Mondays as well as Tuesdays.

Melbourne Women's Ultrasound, our visiting provider of high quality pregnancy and gynaecological ultrasound scans, has also increased its hours of service. Scans will now be available all day Monday, instead of the previous Thursday morning only.

Immunisation Update

As of the 1st July 2013, a single combined injection covering measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox (MMRV) will be given at 18 months of age, replacing the chickenpox (Varicella) immunisation at 18 months and the measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) immunisation at 4 years. These children will still receive the Infanrix IPV (combined tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria and polio vaccine) at 4 years of age. For children who have previously had the chickenpox immunisation at 18 months, they will still receive the MMR and Infanrix IPV injections at 4 years as per the current schedule.

The Importance of Immunisation

The fall in overall immunisation rates in Australia is a worrying statistic as the first line of defence against the resurgence of many preventable infections is having as few people as possible who are susceptible. There are some who are susceptible out of no fault of their own – babies and children, those with medical conditions that weaken the immune system, those unable to have immunisations due to a genuine allergy to the vaccines, and those who want to be immunised but just don't have the ability to form protective antibodies. Then there are those who choose not to be immunised, be it out of concern about side effects, an expectation that they will be protected by everyone else who have been immunised, or a lack of information to make an informed decision.

Despite the availability of overwhelming evidence to support the effectiveness of immunisation, there still exist groups that are staunchly anti-vaccination, from those claiming medical conspiracy and Government cover-up, to those who have had a serious side effect attributed to immunisation. No doubt there will be those who have had an adverse effect from an immunisation, but a significantly larger number of people would have been spared the consequences of catching the disease by being immunised.

The Crying Baby

One of the biggest challenges with having a new baby is the steep learning curve, coupled with the lack of sleep and the juggling of commitments such as running a household, studying and working. A not infrequent reason for stress in new parents is the crying baby who just does not want to settle, despite all the best efforts and intentions. When a baby cries, it is only natural to want to know why. It may be as simple as being hungry, needing a nappy change, being too hot or too cold, or needing a good passage of wind. However, sometimes that does not solve the issue. Having a thermometer to check baby's temperature can be handy but sometimes even a visit to the doctor may find nothing "wrong". What then?

It is important to realise that crying is a normal form of communication used by babies and it can vary between babies, much like adult personality and temperament. On excluding the common things that can upset a baby, persistent or recurrent crying is very often a normal developmental and behavioural stage all babies go through. As their brain grows, babies form associations with their surroundings and the people around them. This then eventually leads to the baby being able to interact and change its own environment, allowing the baby then to communicate using other means.

Useful information about the crying baby can be found at <http://purplecrying.info> and at <http://raisingchildren.net.au>

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