



# newsletter

AUTUMN 2023

## COVID-19 Winter Booster

The [Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation \(ATAGI\)](#) have updated their recommendations on the use of booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine in 2023.

ATAGI recommends a 2023 COVID-19 vaccine booster dose for adults in the following groups, if their last COVID-19 vaccine dose or confirmed infection (whichever is the most recent) was 6 months ago or longer, and regardless of the number of prior doses received:

- ◊ All adults aged 65 years and over
- ◊ Adults aged 18-64 years who have medical comorbidities that increase their risk of severe COVID-19, or disability with significant or complex health needs.

ATAGI advises the following groups should consider a 2023 booster dose if their last COVID-19 vaccine dose or confirmed infection (whichever is the most recent) was 6 months ago or longer, and regardless of the number of prior doses received, based on an individual risk benefit assessment with their immunisation provider:

- ◊ All adults aged 18-64 years without risk factors for severe COVID-19
- ◊ Children and adolescents aged 5-17 years who have medical comorbidities that increase their risk of severe COVID-19, or disability with significant or complex health needs.

ATAGI advises that a booster dose is not recommended at this time for children and adolescents aged under the age of 18 who do not have any risk factors for severe COVID-19.

The table below summarises ATAGI's advice regarding 2023 COVID-19 Booster:

AGE	AT RISK	NO RISK FACTORS
<5 years	Not Recommended	
5-17 years	Consider	Not Recommended
18-64 years	Recommended	Consider
65+ years	Recommended	

## How do I book my booster appointment?

Please book online via the COVID-19 Vaccine Nurse via the website, or via HotDocs.

## Flu Vax + COVID-19 Booster

COVID-19 vaccine can be co-administered with influenza and other vaccines.

Bulli Medical Practice has not yet received the 2023 influenza vaccines but as soon as these are available, we will provide advice via the website and social media ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)).



Australia's National Skin Check Day (ANSCD) is held every year on the last Thursday in Summer.

ANSCD is a national action day for our national cancer! [Mates Against Melanoma](#) has created ANSCD to raise public awareness and to increase community participation rates for the early detection of melanoma and related skin cancers.

Drs Berlinda Png, Jeff Hall, and Michael Hanson (pictured below) performed skin checks on the day. Don't worry if you missed out on getting a skin check on the day. It still serves as an important reminder to book in your skin check another time soon.

**"DON'T DELAY BOOK YOUR SKIN CHECK TODAY"**





# Endometriosis awareness

**By Dr Victoria Beyer**

Endometriosis is a chronic condition that affects at least 1 in 10 Australian women, girls, and people who are gender diverse. The condition usually starts in adolescence and diagnosis is often delayed.

Endometriosis occurs when endometrial tissue, which normally lines the uterus, is found in abnormal sites around the pelvis and other parts of the body. Every time menstruation occurs, these endometrial tissue deposits also bleed, causing a chronic inflammatory reaction and scar tissue formation.

## Symptoms

People can have endometriosis without experiencing symptoms, but the most common symptoms include:

- Painful menstrual cramps which worsen over time
- Chronic pelvic and back pain
- Pain during or after sex
- Digestive problems including constipation, bloating, or nausea
- Difficulty falling pregnant

## Diagnosis

If you are concerned about menstrual problems or endometriosis, your GP should be the first port of call. They may conduct a physical examination and recommend investigations including blood tests, a cervical screening test or an ultrasound to rule out other conditions and check for signs of endometriosis such as ovarian cysts.



If your GP feels you may have endometriosis, you may then be referred to a gynaecologist to have a laparoscopy. This is a keyhole surgery during which endometriosis can be accurately diagnosed.

## Treatment

Currently there is no cure for endometriosis but there are different treatment options including:

- Medical treatments - pain medications, hormone treatments such as the contraceptive pill, IUD or implants.
- Surgery - during a laparoscopy, endometriosis deposits and scar tissue can be removed via excision (cutting it out) or ablation (burning it off).
- Allied health treatments (physiotherapy, psychology, alternative medicine).

You can discuss the different treatment options with your doctor. There are advantages and disadvantages for each and you may need to try a few before finding what works for you.

Endometriosis is a common and debilitating condition, and the earlier it is diagnosed, the easier it is to treat. Severe period pain is not normal and can be treated so if you are in doubt, chat to your GP.

	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Victoria Beyer	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Julie Blaze		✓	✓		✓	✓					*
Dr John Deady			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Hayley Glasson	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			*
Dr Rebecca Goodman	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			*
Dr Saroja Gunasekera			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			*
Dr Jeff Hall			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	*
Dr Michael Hanson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Helen Maclean	✓	✓	✓				✓				*
Dr Meaghan Miller-McConochie			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Berlinda Png			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Dr Nikita Robins	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	*

## Fees Policy

Bulli Medical Practice is not a bulk billing practice. It is our policy that payment for consultation is made at the time of your appointment.

Please see our website or ask at reception for our full fee schedule. The out of pocket expense for a standard Level B consultation (15 minutes) is \$49.25.

We have EFTPOS facilities (debit and credit card: Visa & Mastercard but NOT American Express).

Medicare rebates will be sent online directly to Medicare and you will receive your rebate via direct deposit into your nominated bank account.

If payment cannot be made on the day, an account can be issued incurring an administration fee of \$15 which is not Medicare rebatable.

## Privacy & Medical Records

Your medical record is a confidential document.

It is the policy of the practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff.

The Practice adheres to the national privacy principles. A copy of our privacy policy is available at reception and on our website.

## Bulli Medical Practice

74 Park Road, Bulli NSW 2516

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm

Saturdays 8am - 12 noon

Closed Sundays.

If you need to see a doctor outside of hours, call:

Wollongong Radio Doctors 4228 5522  
or the GP Helpline 1800 022 222.

In an emergency call 000.

New patients always welcome!

**Book online today:**

**[bullimedicalpractice.com.au](http://bullimedicalpractice.com.au)  
or call 4284 4622.**

 **Bullimedicalpractice**

## Other Practice News

Amy Jordan has left the reception team to start her registered nursing career at Wollongong Hospital Emergency Department. We wish Amy all the very best and will miss her!



## Reminders, Recalls & Results

Please telephone the Practice after 10am weekdays to find out the results of any tests that have been ordered by our doctors.

Patients that require immediate action in relation to test results will be contacted by the Practice to arrange a consultation so that they can discuss the test results with a doctor.

We are committed to providing preventative health care and participate in government reminder systems and registers.

We offer a SMS reminder system. If you would like to receive SMS reminders please inform reception and ensure they have your current mobile telephone number. If you do not wish to be a part of this system, please notify reception.

## Feedback & Continuous Improvement

We value your feedback and encourage you to complete a general feedback form (which you can deposit in the secure box at reception) or by emailing [feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au](mailto:feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au).

We endeavour to respond to your suggestions as soon as possible and to continuously improve our service. From time to time we might also ask you to complete a confidential evaluation as part of AGPAL accreditation.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the care that you receive then please let us know. Talk to either your doctor or reception staff and we will try our best to help. We believe problems are best resolved within the Practice as this helps us to continuously improve.

If however, the problem is not resolved, you may wish to contact the NSW state government authority for dealing with medical complaints. The address is: Health Care Complaints Commission Locked Bag 18, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012.