



Bulli Medical Practice

Autumn Newsletter 2018



Baby colic

By Dr Helen Maclean

Having a new baby is an exciting and challenging time in your life. It can be particularly difficult, however, if your baby cries a lot. Crying is a normal response for infants to communicate to their caregivers. It is the way they tell you that they need or want something.

There are babies that cry excessively, and this can lead to significant psychological stress for the family. The phrase “colic” gets mentioned frequently but the definition of colic may surprise you.

According to the current medical definition colic is described as:

- ◇ Uncontrollable and inconsolable crying in an otherwise healthy, thriving infant.
- ◇ Crying is for at least 3 hours at a time, on more than 3 days per week for at least 3 weeks. This generally settles by 4-6 months of age.

It is important to have your baby assessed to ensure there is nothing physically or medically wrong with him/her. The GPs at Bulli Medical Practice are happy to perform a thorough assessment.

Unfortunately the causes of colic are poorly understood. At the recent Women’s and Children’s Health Update in Sydney, a paediatric gastroenterologist offered an interesting new theory.

At birth, an infant’s gut is sterile. This means there are no bacteria within it. It is the same for a baby’s skin. With the first skin-to-skin contact (such as the first attachment to a breast or bottle) the infant’s body is rapidly colonised with bugs.

It is proposed that the infant’s gut is then in a mild state of inflammation for the first 6 months or so as this process occurs. Potentially, some babies find this more uncomfortable than others, and they are often labelled ‘colicky’.

The collection of bugs in our gut is referred to as a ‘biome’. It has also been found that colicky babies have a different biome to non-colicky babies. This is leading researchers to question whether there is a role for probiotics in the treatment of colic. Watch this space!

Local parents will be excited to hear that the new Illawarra Early Parenting Centre is opening at Figtree Private Hospital. This is aimed at parents of children between the ages of two months and two years who are having difficulties with sleep, settling, feeding and adjustment to parenthood.

The centre offers inpatient stay where families are cared for by midwives, early childhood nurses, paediatricians and psychiatrists if required. You will need a referral to attend the new centre, so please discuss with your GP if you think you would benefit from this service.

Staff & community news

- ◇ Farewell to our GP registrar, Melissa Overton, who has moved back to Sydney
- ◇ Farewell to Naomi, a valued member of our reception team over the past three years
- ◇ Welcome back Dr Anna Putnis from maternity leave.
- ◇ Welcome back Brooke from maternity leave. Brooke will resume reception and administration duties on a part-time basis
- ◇ Ben Tedeski will continue as our University of Wollongong Medical Student until June.

Vaccination Update 2018

The 2017 influenza season was severe and there were over 1100 flu-related deaths in Australia. The majority of deaths were among people over the age of 65 years. The 2017 flu vaccination was estimated to only be 10% effective.

To ensure greater protection from vaccination, the 2018 influenza vaccines have been improved to by dose increases (Fluzone) and chemical enhancement (Fluad). These changes are expected to improve the effectiveness of the vaccination by 30%.

The 2018 vaccines are expected to arrive by the end of March or early April. Please contact reception (Telephone: 4284 4622) or check our website and Facebook for details.

We will continue to run nurse-led vaccination clinics as well as offering vaccinations during routine consultations.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the following vaccinations that are available free and recommended:

- ◇ Pneumovax at 65 years to prevent disease including pneumococcal pneumonia.
- ◇ Zostavax at 70-79 years to prevent shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia
- ◇ Meningitis ACWY at 16 -18 years for young people who were unable to access the school-based program available to prevent four strains of meningitis

While we are fortunate to have a comprehensive, free immunisation program in Australia, there is often a lag time before all recommended vaccines are freely available. Most vaccinations, however, are available for private purchase. If you are interested in knowing what vaccinations are recommended and available for private purchase, please talk to your doctor.



Parkinson's disease

April is Parkinson's awareness month. Throughout the month, organisations such as 'Shake it Up' hold events to raise funds for Parkinson's research.

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological condition, which is characterised by both motor (movement) and non-motor symptoms. It is estimated to affect approximately 6.3 million people worldwide. It is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder.

In Australia, an estimated 1 in 350 people have the condition, and more than 30 people are diagnosed daily. Parkinson's is slightly more common in males than females.

The most most common age range for diagnosis is 55 - 65 years. While the risk of contracting the condition increases with age, it is not part of the natural aging process. People diagnosed between 21-40 years are considered to have 'Young Onset Parkinson's' and those younger than 21 have 'Juvenile Onset.'

There is no definitive medical test (blood test or scan) to diagnose Parkinson's but there are usually four primary symptoms:

- ◇ Tremor
- ◇ Bradykinesia (slowness of voluntary movement)
- ◇ Muscle rigidity
- ◇ Postural instability.

Most patients will visit their general practitioner as they become aware of the development of symptoms and are often referred to a neurologist or geriatrician. Parkinson's disease is primarily related to a lack of dopamine. This is usually due to degeneration of dopamine producing neurons within the mid-brain.

Most pharmaceutical treatment options for Parkinson's disease attempt to restore the balance of dopamine and other neurotransmitters. Medication needs change as Parkinson's progresses and it important to be reviewed regularly by the medical team of GPs and specialist for dose adjustments.

For more information about Parkinson's Disease visit www.parkinsons.org.au or speak to your GP.

Guide to doctor availability, Autumn 2018

	MON		TUES		WED		THUR		FRI		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Julie Blaze		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	*
Dr Ben Bartlett	✓	✓				✓					*
Dr Nathan Beckman	on 6 months leave from Bulli Medical Practice										
Dr Jemima Grant		✓		✓			✓				*
Dr Saroja Gunasekera	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		*
Dr Jeff Hall	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Michael Hanson	✓**	✓**	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓**	✓**	*
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓			✓	✓	
Dr Helen Maclean	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			*
Dr Anna Putnis	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	*

*Not every Saturday, doctors work on a rotational basis for Saturdays. Please check with reception.

**Every second week. Please check with HotDocs or reception

For more information on our doctors, their qualifications and areas of interest, please visit the website.

We have provided the timetable above as a guide to which doctor works on which days, as this may help you when scheduling your next appointment. Please note, the roster changes regularly, as doctors take holidays from time to time.

For further information regarding doctor availability, please check our Facebook page Bulli Medical Practice and Travelvax Centre.

Biggest Morning Tea

10am, Thursday 24th May

Once again, Bulli Medical Practice will hold a morning tea to raise funds for the Cancer Council and honour patients and families touched by cancer.

Our staff don their aprons and bake for the event, and any donations we receive, Bulli Medical Practice matches dollar for dollar.

If you would like to attend or support our Biggest Morning Tea, please speak with our reception staff or email feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au



Bulli Burn sponsors

Bulli Medical Practice are proud sponsors of the Bulli Burn, an annual event that supports Beyond Blue.

This year, races will be held on the morning of Sunday 27 May.

There are 2, 5 and 10km runs, starting and finishing at the picturesque tip of Sandon Point.

The track follows the coastal strip from Bulli to Thirroul boasting exceptional views of the ocean and escarpment.

The 'Burn' comes from the hill you tackle at the very beginning and again at the finish of the run.

Several Bulli Medical Practice staff members participate in the event. We hope to see you there!

To register, visit www.bulliburn.com



Fees policy

Bulli Medical Practice is a 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 \$41.95 however an increase may occur in November. We accept cash payments and have EFTPOS facilities (debit and credit card: Visa & Mastercard but NOT American Express).

Medicare rebates may be claimed in person at a Medicare office, or can be sent online directly to Medicare and you will have the option of receiving your rebate via cheque or 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.

Looking after your feet

Our feet are an important mode of transport. The average person will walk more than 128,000km in their lifetime. That's the same as walking the circumference of Earth three times!

Bulli Medical Practice is fortunate to have Dean McGregor providing quality podiatry services.

Dean believes that comprehensive assessment, diagnosis and treatment can help improve a patient's overall well-being.

He has broad experience in all areas of podiatry including children's foot problems, sports injuries, biomechanics, diabetic foot care, heel and arch pain and general skin and nail care.

Dean works at Bulli Medical Practice on Saturday mornings and alternate Thursdays. Contact: 4284 4622 for an appointment.



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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 & communication policy are available on request at reception.

Reminders, recalls & results

Please telephone the Practice between 12 noon and 2pm 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 an urgent 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 questionnaire (which you can deposit in the secure box) or by emailing 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.