

Try to stress less this festive season

By Dr Jeffrey Hall

While many of us think of the holiday season as a time of celebration and joy, for some it can be fraught with stress, anxiety, social isolation and family tension or conflict.

Celebrations often come with unrealistic expectations, and aspirations to have the perfect meal, decorations, gifts and family interactions. But these rarely run to plan. It is important to set realistic expectations and focus on what matters to you most.

For those who don't have family or who have limited social connections, the holiday season can be a time of increased loneliness. Try to seek out companionship within your local community. Look out for local events and celebrations you can be part of and consider volunteering to help others at this time.

For some people, the season can be a time of increased stress caused by social interactions. This may have been compounded by Covid-19 restrictions over the past two years, as some people are simply out of the habit of socialising or still feel fearful of the risk of Covid-19 infection.

It often helps to set boundaries to keep stress and anxiety in check. You can limit the number of people you see and the number of events you attend.

You don't have to do everything you've done in previous years, especially high-stress rituals (such as queuing for Santa photos, excessive gift buying, preparing elaborate feasts or battling the Boxing Day sales). Prioritise what is most important to you and give yourself a break.

With high inflation rates, financial stress is predicted to be greater this season so set realistic spending limits to stay within your budget. Try to engage in activities that reduce stress such as meditation, going for a walk or swim, getting out into nature or listening to music.

Also try to maintain your normal healthy habits including eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and drinking alcohol in moderation. If you do have the occasional set-back, remember to be kind to yourself.

Christmas/New Year Opening

- Saturday 24th December 8am - 12 noon
- Sunday 25th December closed
- Monday 26th December closed
- Tuesday 27th December closed
- Wednesday 28th 8am - 6pm
- Thursday 29th December 8am - 6pm
- Friday 30th December 8am - 6pm
- Saturday 31st December 8am - 12 noon
- Sunday 1st January closed
- Monday 2nd January closed
- Tuesday 3rd January resume normal hours



Wishing all our patients and their families a happy festive season and best wishes for a healthy year in 2023.



Time for a spot check?

By Dr Berlinda Png

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. About two in three Australians will be diagnosed with some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. Have you ever wondered if the mole on your body is cancerous?

Types of skin cancer

There are three main types of skin cancer, named after the type of skin cell they start from: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma skin cancer.

Basal cell carcinoma

- Most common form of skin cancer but the least dangerous.
- Appear as round or flattened lump or scaly spots.
- Red, pale or pearly in colour.
- May become ulcerated, bleed and fail to heal.
- Grows slowly over months or years.
- Usually found on the upper body, head or neck.

Squamous cell carcinoma

- Less common, but more dangerous than basal cell carcinoma.
- 1-2% can spread and cause death.
- Look for scaly red areas that may bleed easily, ulcers or non-healing sores that are often painful.
- Grows over a period of months.
- Often found on lips, ears and scalp.

Melanoma skin cancer

- Least common but most serious form of skin cancer.
- Can appear in a new or an existing spot, freckle or mole that changes colour, size or shape.
- Grows over weeks to months anywhere on the body (not just areas that get lots of sun).
- If untreated, cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body.

UV damage to the skin

The following conditions are not cancer but may predispose you to skin cancer or be a warning sign that damage to the skin has occurred.

Dysplastic naevi: Odd-shaped moles usually with uneven colouring that may indicate a greater risk of developing melanoma.

Solar keratoses: Hard, red, scaly spots on sun-exposed areas of the skin, commonly occur on the head, neck and the backs of the hands.

Prevention

Skin cancer develops when a cell in the skin goes through a series of changes. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main factor that causes skin cells to become cancer cells.

Remember to protect your skin in five ways and book in for regular skin checks with your doctor.

For more information, read about the Bulli Medical Practice [Skin Check Clinic](#) on our website or visit the Cancer Council: <https://www.cancer.org.au/>.



Moderna Bivalent Booster now available for 18+

The Moderna Bivalent covid booster vaccine is now available at Bulli Medical Practice for patients over 18 years.

Please note, at this stage, patients cannot book this vaccine online. You will need to contact reception on 4284 4622 to make an appointment for the SPIKEVAX booster.

Moderna's bivalent COVID-19 vaccine, elasomeran/imelasomeran (SPIKEVAX Bivalent Original/Omicron) is the first bivalent COVID-19 vaccine approved for use in Australia.

The vaccine was approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in August.

The vaccine should be administered at least 3 months after the primary series and/or previous booster dose with SPIKEVAX or other authorised COVID-19 vaccine.

For more information on Covid 19 booster doses, please visit our website or the National Prescribing Service. <https://www.nps.org.au/covid-19-booster-doses>

GP Availability Summer 2023

The table (page below) is a guide to which doctor works on which days. This may help when scheduling your next appointment.

The roster changes regularly and doctors take holidays from time to time. Your best guide to availability is via online booking (via our website) or call us on 4284 4622. Please note:

- Dr Michael Hanson works alternate Mondays and Fridays every 2nd week.
- Dr Jeffrey Hall works Mondays every 2nd week.
- * Doctors alternate on Saturdays as part of a roster. Please ask at reception.

Parent and bub consults

Welcoming a new baby into the family is a time of great joy. It is also a steep learning curve which may come with unforeseen challenges. When emotions are running high, common issues such as establishing breastfeeding, infant sleep and cry-fuss behaviour can be extremely difficult.

Parents often hear advice that is outdated, contradictory and biased. This can result in confusion, anxiety and stress for parents and their families. Knowing what is 'normal' infant behaviour, and where to find appropriate help and support is essential during this difficult period.

[Dr Hayley Glasson](#) has recently completed extra training and accreditation to become a Neurodevelopmental Care (NDC) practitioner. She also obtained Diplomas in Childhood Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, as well as her own personal experience as a mother of two.

What is Neurodevelopmental Care (NDC)?

[NDC \(or Possums\)](#) was developed by Australian GP, Dr Pamela Douglas, in 2011. NDC is an evidence based, scientifically valid approach covering breastfeeding, sleep and cry-fuss behaviours.

It is family focussed, aiming to empower parents with the extra knowledge and confidence to care for their newborn in line with their own values and goals.

There is a focus on flexibility, experimentation and workability. It aims to de-medicalise sleep and cry-fuss concerns, and promotes responsive care-giving.

What are parent and bub consults?

A parent and bub consult is a one hour face-to-face appointment with Dr Hayley Glasson (booked as 30 minutes each for mum and baby) which allows a holistic, comprehensive and thorough assessment of specific concerns including (but not limited to):

- Infant feeding issues
- Maternal feeding issues
- Infant weight concerns
- Infant sleep concerns (note. NDC is not 'sleep training')
- 'Unsettled' infants
- Parent/infant bonding
- Parental mental health.

Parent and bub consults are separate to your baby's routine vaccinations and six week postnatal visit. If your baby's vaccinations are due, these may be able to be done at the same time (please notify staff).

How much do parent and bub consults cost?

Total cost of appointment (what you will pay on the day) is \$350.00 with \$111.50 Medicare rebate.



	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
or call 4284 4622.**

 **Bullimedicalpractice**

Other Practice News

Welcome to Dani our new registered nurse who is working two days per week.

Welcome to Amanda our new assistant in nursing who is working 1 – 2 days per week.

Congratulations to Alex (pictured below) on her recent wedding!



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.

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.