

## DECEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2025 EDITION

**FREE TO TAKE HOME!**



Breast Cancer

### ● PRACTICE DOCTORS

#### Dr Robert Palmer

MBChB, DRANZCOG Advanced FACRRM  
Special Interests: Women's Health, Obstetrics, Family Practice, Sports medicine, Minor Skin Surgery, Menopause Management

#### Dr Herman Kruger

### ● PRACTICE MANAGER

Jodie

### ● MEDICAL PRACTICE ASSISTANT

Jodie & Gail

### ● PRACTICE NURSES

Caroline RN, Donna EEN, Jess EEN, Ash RN & Netty RN

### ● RECEPTION STAFF

Deb, Debbie, Emily, Ange & Brett

### ● SURGERY HOURS

Monday to Thursday  
**8.00am - 5.00pm (Closed for lunch 1pm-2pm)**

Phones are operational from 9.00am-12.00pm and 2pm-4.00pm on these days

Friday - Sunday.....Closed

### ● A/HRS & EMERGENCY

Outside of surgery hours medical Care is available by phoning Inverell District Hospital on **02 67219500** where nursing staff will attend to your call.

For all medical emergencies telephone **000** and ask for an ambulance.

### ● BILLING ARRANGEMENTS

We offer a discount to Pensioners who bring a current entitlement card. We are a private billing practice. Information about our fees and services are available at reception. Payment at the time of consultation is required.

Payment can be made by cash, credit card or EFTPOS.  
DVA patients are fully Bulk Billed.

### ● HOTDOC AVAILABLE

We are now using Hotdoc for bookings. Download the app now.



### ● SPECIAL PRACTICE NOTES

**Telephoning Your Doctor.** Although most problems are best dealt with in consultation, a doctor will always be available during normal surgery hours for emergency advice. Our staff are experienced in helping you decide whether the matter requires an appointment, a return phone call from the practice, or urgent advice.

**St Elmo Medical Practice has an email available.** Patients are able to make contact via this method of communication. We aim to provide prompt attention to your requests.

**Patient Details.** Please advise us of any changes to your mobile or phone number and your address. We must have an emergency contact registered for each patient.

**Management of Your Personal Health Information.** Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of this 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. Patients can obtain access to their own personal Health Record via eHealth registration.

**Suggestions & Complaints.** If you are unhappy with any aspect of the care you receive from this practice, we are keen to know about it. Feel free to talk to the doctor or manager about any problems you have with your service. We believe that problems are best dealt with, within the practice. However, if you feel there is a problem you wish to take up outside, you may prefer to contact the Health Complaints Commission. Locked Bag 18, Strawberry Hills, NSW 2012. Free call: 1800 043 159

**Patient Privacy.** This practice protects your personal health information to ensure it is only available to authorised staff members for the intended purposes and to comply with the Privacy Act. To obtain a copy of our Privacy Statement or your medical records, please ask.

**Reminder system.** Because our practice is committed to preventive care, we may send you an occasional reminder regarding health services appropriate to your care. If you wish to opt out of this, please let us know.

**Test Results.** Results are reviewed by the doctors and acted on in a timely manner, with your health in mind. We will contact you if necessary.

### ● APPOINTMENTS

**Consultation is by appointment.** Urgent cases are seen on the day.

**Home Visits.** If you require a home visit for special reasons, please request this first thing in the morning.

**Booking a long appointment** is important for more complex problems – insurance medical, health review, counselling, a second opinion, etc. This may involve a longer wait. Please bring all relevant information.

**Please notify us if you are unable to attend an appointment, well in advance.**

**If more than one person from your family wishes to see the doctor at the same time,** please ensure a separate appointment is made for each family member.

**Time is valuable to all of us.** If you fail to attend appointments without adequate explanation, we cannot guarantee your future booked appointments.

### ● OTHER SERVICES

- \* On-Site Coagulation Testing
- \* Telehealth conferencing with specialists
- \* Travel Vaccination/Q fever vaccination
- \* Preventative Health Program
- \* Exercise Physiologist / Physiotherapist
- \* Laverty Pathology Collection Centre
- \* Hot Doc Reminder Service
- \* Dr Anthony Leslie - Vascular Surgeon
- \* Cryotherapy
- \* Pelvic Floor Chair
- \* Yellow Fever Vaccination
- \* Minor Surgery
- \* Family Planning
- \* Obstetrics
- \* ECG/Spirometry



Vitamin B6



School Holidays



New Year's Resolutions

**Health News wishes you a very Merry Xmas and Happy New Year!**



# Understanding Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women worldwide, with millions diagnosed each year.

It occurs when cells in the breast grow uncontrollably, forming a malignant tumour that can spread to other parts of the body. Although the exact cause of breast cancer is unknown, certain risk factors increase its likelihood. These include age, family history, genetic mutations (such as BRCA1 and BRCA2), lifestyle factors like obesity, and hormonal influences.

Early detection is crucial in the fight against breast cancer, as it significantly improves treatment outcomes. Regular breast self-exams and awareness of any changes, such as lumps, pain, nipple discharge, or changes in breast shape, are essential first steps. Mammograms, an X-ray of the breast, is recommended annually for women over 40 or earlier for those at high risk, as they can detect cancer at an early stage when it is most treatable.

Treatment for breast cancer varies depending on its stage and type and may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or targeted therapy. Advances in medical research have led to more personalised treatments, increasing survival rates and improving patients' quality of life.

Beyond treatment, support for breast cancer patients and their families is vital. Support groups, counselling, and community resources provide emotional and mental assistance during recovery. With continued research and awareness efforts, breast cancer outcomes are improving, giving hope to millions. Early detection, a healthy lifestyle, and regular screenings are key steps in reducing the impact of this disease and improving survival rates.



## Vitamin B6

As the wellness trend continues to surge, millions worldwide have incorporated over-the-counter vitamins into their daily routines. While vitamin supplements are generally safe when consumed as directed, excessive intake can lead to adverse side effects.

Vitamin B6 is commonly found in many multivitamins and mineral supplements available without a prescription in supermarkets, health food shops, and pharmacies. Excessive vitamin B6 intake is associated with peripheral neuropathy, which can result in symptoms such as tingling, burning, or numbness, typically in the hands and feet.

In March 2023, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) mandated that products containing vitamin B6 in daily doses above 10 mg require a label warning. This previously applied to products containing over 50 mg per daily dose.

Dr David Kanowski, a chemical pathologist at Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology in Brisbane, says "Many people may unknowingly consume high doses of vitamin B6 by taking multiple supplements. For example, vitamin B6 (as pyridoxine hydrochloride) is often included in magnesium supplements, with each tablet containing up to 60 mg. A patient taking two magnesium tablets per day could be unintentionally consuming 120 mg of vitamin B6, far exceeding the recommended dietary intake for adults in Australia and New Zealand, which is 1.3–2.0 mg/day with a maximum of 50 mg/day. As pyridoxine hydrochloride has a half-life of up to 30 days, repetitive small doses taken over months can accumulate to high blood concentrations."

It is important to be vigilant about vitamin B6 intake and to consult healthcare professionals if you have any concerns about supplement use.







## Keeping Children Engaged During School Holidays

School holidays offer a great opportunity for children to relax and enjoy a break from structured learning, but keeping them engaged and productive can be a challenge for parents. Balancing free time with structured activities can help ensure they stay busy, learn new things, and enjoy themselves.

A great way to start is by planning a range of activities that mix fun with learning. Creative projects, like arts and crafts, help children express themselves and develop fine motor skills. Reading is another excellent activity; a holiday reading list can keep their minds sharp while exploring new topics and stories.

Outdoor activities are vital, too. Parks, nature trails, or even backyard playtime allow children to get exercise, enjoy fresh air, and burn off energy. For rainy days, indoor games, puzzles, or even educational apps can provide entertainment and stimulate problem-solving skills.

Enrolling kids in holiday programs or day camps is another way to keep them engaged. These programs often offer a variety of sports, arts, and social activities, letting children make new friends and learn new skills.

Involving children in household activities, like cooking or gardening, can also be enjoyable and teach valuable life skills. By balancing free play, structured learning, and family time, parents can create a holiday routine that keeps children happy, active, and engaged throughout the break.



## New Year's Resolutions: A Fresh Start

New Year's resolutions offer a chance to set fresh goals and make positive changes. Each January, millions of people commit to resolutions, whether it's to eat healthier, exercise more, quit smoking, or focus on personal growth. These resolutions reflect our desire to start the year on a positive note, motivated by a sense of renewal and self-improvement.

However, despite good intentions, many people struggle to keep their resolutions. Studies show that by February, a large percentage have already given up. One reason is that people often set unrealistic goals or try to make drastic changes overnight. Without a clear, manageable plan, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and lose motivation.

The key to a successful New Year's resolution is setting realistic, specific goals and breaking them into small, achievable steps. Instead of saying, "I want to lose weight," try a more specific goal like, "I'll exercise for 20 minutes three times a week." Making resolutions measurable and attainable increases the likelihood of success. Additionally, tracking progress and celebrating small victories along the way can keep motivation high.

Support from friends, family, or online communities can also be a powerful motivator. Sharing your goals with others not only provides accountability but can also offer encouragement during challenging times.

Ultimately, New Year's resolutions should be about positive change rather than perfection. Embrace the journey, allow room for mistakes, and celebrate the effort you put in. With patience, persistence, and a clear plan, resolutions can be a wonderful tool for personal growth and improvement.

## Overindulging at Christmas Time



Christmas is a time for celebration, good food, and quality time with loved ones. However, the holiday season often brings an abundance of rich foods, sugary treats, and indulgent drinks that can lead to overindulgence. While enjoying festive food is part of the holiday spirit, consuming too much can leave you feeling sluggish, bloated, and unwell.

Overindulging in high-calorie, high-fat foods can strain your digestive system and lead to weight gain. The festive season also often comes with an increase in alcohol consumption, which can impact liver health, sleep quality, and overall mood. For people with health conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, excessive eating and drinking can be especially harmful.

To avoid these pitfalls, consider pacing yourself throughout the season. Opt for smaller portions, savour each bite, and balance indulgent foods with healthier options. Drinking plenty of water, maintaining some physical activity, and getting enough rest can help counteract the effects of overindulgence. Remember, you can still enjoy the holiday treats without going overboard. Moderation is key to feeling good and making the most of the Christmas season. Enjoy the festivities while staying mindful of your health.



## CLASSIC CHRISTMAS GINGERBREAD COOKIES

These delicious gingerbread cookies are perfect for the holiday season. They're easy to make, fun to decorate, and fill your kitchen with warm, festive aromas.

### Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- For Decoration: Icing, sprinkles, or any decorative toppings

### Method

1. Prepare the Dough: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg.
2. Mix Wet Ingredients: In a large bowl, cream the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, molasses, and vanilla extract until smooth.
3. Combine Ingredients: Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, mixing until combined. Divide the dough in half, wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
4. Bake: Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Roll out the dough to 1/4-inch thickness and use cookie cutters for your desired shapes. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 8-10 minutes.
5. Decorate: Let cookies cool completely before decorating with icing and sprinkles.



**MERRY  
CHRISTMAS**



# St Elmo

MEDICAL PRACTICE

## • MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide the highest standard of patient care whilst incorporating a holistic approach toward diagnosis and management of illness.

We are committed to promoting health, wellbeing and disease prevention to all patients. We do not discriminate in the provision of excellent care and aim to treat all patients with dignity and respect.

## • MINOR SURGERY

At St Elmo Medical Practice we offer minor surgery to remove lesions, warts, moles and skin tags. Please book a double appointment with the doctor and the nurse if you require minor surgery.

## • ON-SITE COAGULATION TESTING

We offer on-site coagulation testing for those people on Warfarin treatment. A quick finger prick is all it takes and our doctor will advise you of your result and new instructions for dosing. Tell reception staff when booking that you require an INR.

## • TELEHEALTH CONFERENCING WITH SPECIALISTS

Our practice uses teleconferencing for patients to consult with specialists (via Skype on our computer) from all over Australia. This saves patients time, travel and money. Your telehealth consult will be organised by reception staff when your GP refers you. The GP will be present at the start of your telehealth consultation.

## • SMS TEXT REMINDERS

If you have an appointment you will receive an SMS text the day before your appointment to remind you. To make this possible we will need to have your mobile phone number and consent to send SMS reminders. Please call at reception to update your phone details and give consent.

## • DO YOU HAVE AMBULANCE COVER

If you don't have a Health Care Card or Pension Card you need Ambulance cover. Ambulance transport is expensive so if you don't have cover you are responsible for all costs incurred for transfer via ambulance.