

Your Health

2016 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

THE LATEST NEWS AND HEALTH ADVICE FROM YOUR OTUMOETAI DOCTORS

PAIN MANAGEMENT THE KEY TO DEALING WITH PERSISTENT PAIN

Persistent pain can throw people into an awful spiral that sometimes results in severe and even tragic outcomes. The key is pain management.

Consultant Pain Specialist and Anaesthetist at Hamilton's Braemar Hospital, Dr Conrad Engelbrecht, says pain management is a complex area. "Acute pain is the body's warning system. It has a real purpose in warning us that something is not right and needs to be checked out. Once the cause has been diagnosed and treated, unless it is a serious disease, the pain normally goes away within three months. But some pain persists, even when it has outlived its usefulness and has no further purpose."

Dr Engelbrecht says when that happens patients assume something is wrong and begin an endless round of tests and procedures, searching for the cause. "We live in an age when people feel they should be able to find a cause and cure and have pain-free lives. Whereas 30 years ago, we might have accepted we had back pain and nothing much could be done about it, people now spend years – often on Google – searching for the Holy Grail. It's an awful spiral. They get worried and fearful; they become less active, and socialise less; they take more sick leave and may give up work. Their anxiety promotes more pain. Some may even take their own lives."

Giving patients back their quality of life

Pain management, he says, can be the circuit breaker. "It opens the door to acceptance – not resignation – that a person has a health problem for which no cure exists, but which they can manage with good results." A parallel would be a person with diabetes. "They need to have meds, be screened and monitored and make significant changes to their life, but they can still have an incredible quality of life."

Dr Engelbrecht says getting to the root cause of the pain is essential. "It's like peeling away the layers of an onion. It's hard to peel off the layers to get to the core. Pain may be seated in stress that has sensitised the nervous system, heightening tension and contributing to discomfort." An example could be a young labourer on ACC with a back injury, who may be stressed about finances, caring for his family and future work. "If I ask to rank his pain out of ten, he may say 9, because stress is contributing to his pain, whereas his pain may be moderate. Patients often use pain scores to demonstrate their stress."

Controlling the pain and not the other way around

Dr Engelbrecht's aim is to get a person to a place where life expands and pain becomes a smaller component. "Pain can be side-lined. It is no longer central to their lives. This can be achieved through pain relief, medication, pain psychology such as distraction techniques, mindfulness and cognitive behaviour therapy, and physical therapies that get people to move again in a way that doesn't aggravate their pain. You control what you do rather than the pain controlling what you do."

For more information on this topic ask your Doctor or Nurse on your next visit.

(Excerpt edited from Hamilton's Braemar Hospital's Dr Conrad Engelbrecht, MBChB, FANZCA, Consultant Pain Specialist and Anaesthetist)



Dr Jocelyn Bloomfield
Dr John Robinson
Dr Margaret Chavasse
Dr Josh Johnstone
Dr Maria Eastwood (Associate)
Dr Jenny Hill (Associate)
Dr Anna Ryan (Associate)
Dr Jack Drummond (Locum)
Dr Marty Lemberg
Dr Tracy Dixon
Dr Robin Burness

CHRISTMAS HOURS

We wish you and your family a very happy and safe Christmas and holiday and all the very best for 2017.

Our hours over the Christmas and New Year breaks are as follows:

**Friday 23rd December:
OPEN 8am - 12noon**

**Saturday 24th - Tuesday 27th
December: CLOSED**

**Wednesday 28th - Friday 30th
December: OPEN 8am – 5.30pm**

Saturday 31st December: CLOSED

**Wednesday 4th January:
Normal practice hours resume**

During the break, if you require urgent medical attention, please phone 576 2321.



E-MAIL SERVICE

Do you have a computer and an e-mail address? Have you given this address to us to hold on your file?

We have the option of e-mailing our newsletter out to our patients instead of posting.

Please contact us if you would be interested in receiving our newsletter this way. We would be grateful for your comments.



KEEPING YOUR 'NEXT OF KIN' DETAILS CURRENT

In the case of an emergency we may need to contact your next of kin. We recommend that when you are next visiting the Doctor, you ask our receptionist to check your records to make sure that we have an up-to-date record of who is your next of kin.



THE FACTS ON SCHOOL SORES

School sores is the common name for impetigo. It is a highly contagious skin disease common in children that is easily spread. It is generally on the hands and face, especially around the nose and mouth although it can also affect other areas.

What causes school sores

Impetigo is a common skin infection caused by two types of bacteria: Streptococcus progenies (strep) or Staphylococcus aureus (staph). Some people carry the bacteria in their nostrils and it can be transferred to the hands and then onto other parts of the skin. When there is a break in the skin, bacteria can enter the body. There it can grow, causing inflammation and infection. Breaks in the skin may occur with any bites (insect, animal or human) or injury to the skin. Impetigo may also occur on skin where there is no visible break.

Recognising the symptoms

Impetigo usually starts as little blisters which then break and start to weep. The weeping patches tend to grow larger. Yellow or brownish scabs then form which can burn or itch. Impetigo can also start as any lesion (bite, damaged skin) that doesn't heal and develops a crusty scab. Sometimes it looks like a rash – which may begin as a single spot, but if a person scratches, it may spread to other areas. You may develop swollen lymph nodes similar to the infection (lymphadenopathy).

Treating Impetigo

As soon as you think your child might have impetigo, bring them to your Doctor. Treatment will depend on the how severe the infection is and may include a course of antibiotic tablets or creams and ointments. Children should be kept away from school or day care until the sores are healed, or as advised by your Doctor.

Preventing Impetigo

Impetigo is very contagious. Follow your Doctor's advice about when your child can return to school or preschool. Make sure you have your own towel, soap and face towels, and never share them (disposable paper towels are useful). Keep bed linen, clothes and towels separate. All family members should use an antibacterial soap – flowing soap pump packs are ideal. Keep fingernails cut short. Avoid scratching or picking at sores. Keep sores covered with a dressing, such as gauze and tape and wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food.

For more information and support talk to your Doctor or Practice Nurse.

APPOINTMENT CANCELLATIONS

We appreciate that there are times when circumstances may change, or when something happens which is beyond your control, and the appointment you may have booked with us is no longer suitable. If you are in this situation, please telephone us as soon as possible before the actual appointment time to cancel.

As you can appreciate our Doctor's appointment slots book up very quickly, and often get fully booked. If a patient fails to arrive for an appointment, this is a missed appointment that could have been offered to another ill person, who would like to have been seen earlier.

Some practices charge for appointments whether or not they are attended. While we prefer not to do this, unless it happens repeatedly, we would really appreciate your help in letting us know if you can't make it.

UNDERSTANDING URTICARIA AND ANGIOEDEMA

Urticaria (also known as Hives) is an itchy rash that can appear like welts, anywhere on the body. These welts come and go in a random manner and can last from hours or days (acute) to months (chronic). Angioedema is similar to Hives, but the swelling occurs beneath the skin instead of on the surface.

What causes Urticaria & Angioedema?

Hives and Angioedema form when blood plasma leaks out of small blood vessels in the skin in response to histamine release. Histamine release can be triggered by a wide range of factors including allergens, foods (fresh foods cause hives more often than cooked foods), food additives and preservatives, latex rubber (this can be gloves, elastic in clothing etc), environmental factors (cold, heat, vibration etc), medicines (eg. aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, codeine to name a few) and our genes (eg. hereditary Angioedema is passed on through families).

Types of Urticaria

Urticaria is common with one out of five people getting it at some stage in their life. 80% of cases of hives occurring in adults are not due to allergy and can come and go any time of the day, often occurring overnight or first thing in the morning. A cause or trigger can only be identified about 50% of the time and treatment tends to include use of non-sedating antihistamines to reduce the histamine response which causes the skin reaction.

There are three main types of Urticaria:

- Acute Urticaria – hives or swelling lasting less than 6 weeks duration, and most cases only last hours to two days.
- Chronic Urticaria – lasts 6 weeks or more, with daily or episodic weals.
- Physical Urticaria – also known as inducible Urticaria, caused by direct physical stimulation of the skin.

The key symptoms of Urticaria are itchy rash, red or white welts/patches or weals of varying size (commonly 1 to 2 cm across), welts are often surrounded by a red flare and may change shape, welts come and go lasting few hours to one day, sometimes longer and new welts may keep appearing with the rash appearing to move around the body.

Key symptoms of Angioedema:

- deeper swelling of eyelids, lips, hands and elsewhere
- rarely this can lead to narrowing of the airway and breathing problems
- Angioedema may occur with or without Urticarial welts (10%).

Warning: Seek medical help right now by ringing 111 if you notice a Urticarial rash within 20 minutes of eating or taking a new medicine, OR your experience rapid swelling of the lips, mouth or airway making it hard to breathe.

Diagnosis of Hives & Angioedema

The key to finding out the cause of Hives or Angioedema is a careful history and examination of your skin for any rash or welts and your face/body for any swelling. Skin tests and blood tests may be performed if the symptoms are on-going or more severe.

Is acute Urticaria serious?

While the rash of Urticaria can be very itchy and annoying, it usually settles within a day and causes no harm. However, there are times when Urticaria may be more serious and indicate a serious allergic reaction, drug reaction or even life threatening anaphylaxis.

Treatment of Urticaria (Hives)

Treatment can range from administering a cool cloth, bath or shower to antihistamines and topical lotions. In severe cases if the rash is widespread or you have any swelling of your mouth or airways, seek medical help right now. You may need steroid tablets and admitting to hospital to identify the cause and prevent life threatening reactions.

For more information and support talk to your Doctor or Practice Nurse.

WHEN FAT IS GOOD

Fats are a group of compounds that make an important contribution to our nutrition, despite their bad press. Fats are major sources of energy and the only way in which the body can store energy for a long period of time. One part of eating for a healthy heart and brain is eating more foods that contain unsaturated fats (like nuts, seeds, avocado, healthy oils, oily fish), and less foods that contain saturated fats (animal fats).

Fats are important because they help control body temperature, give some protection to internal organs, supply essential fatty acids (those that can't be made by the body), make up the structure and function of cell membranes, ensure absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins, fill us up and make some foods taste better.

Getting the right balance of how much and what type of fat to eat is important. It's better for our heart and our brain to eat plant-based fats and oils (except coconut and palm oils) instead of animal-based fats and oils, ie, butter and meat fat.

What happens when we eat too much of the wrong type of fats?

Too much fat can cause us to gain weight especially if you don't exercise enough, even if you choose the 'healthy' fats. Eating too much saturated fat and trans fats can increase cholesterol levels and our risk of heart disease and a number of other diseases. With nearly one quarter of New Zealanders having high cholesterol, we need to start changing the type of fat we eat.

A typical New Zealander's diet contains around 35% of total energy as fat, whereas the goal is 20-25% and our saturated fat intake is 15% of total energy, instead of 12%. Remember, we all need some fat in our diets – so it's best to choose the healthy ones!

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT FATS

Saturated fats

These are considered the 'bad' fats because of their link to heart disease and should be eaten in small amounts. They come mostly from animal products, especially fatty meats and dairy products, like butter, full-fat milk and cheese, but also from coconut and palm oil. Fast foods are also major contributors.

Eating saturated fat increases both good (HDL) and bad (LDL) cholesterol levels. Controlling your LDL cholesterol level is the best-known way of lessening your risk of coronary heart disease, so eating fewer of the foods that contain large amounts of saturated fat is an important way to do this.

Trans fats

These are not needed in our diet at all. Although they are unsaturated, when food manufacturers 'hydrogenate' them to make them firm, they become more like saturated fats in their effects on blood cholesterol. Not only do they increase our levels of bad (LDL) cholesterol, but they also decrease our levels of good (HDL) cholesterol. Mostly these fats come from manufactured foods, like some margarines and peanut butters, biscuits, crackers, cakes and potato chips. However, most spreads now available in New Zealand and Australia only contain a small proportion of trans fats. Check food labels to see if what you are buying contains trans fats.



Unsaturated fats

These are often referred to as the 'good' fats as they don't have the same effect on blood cholesterol levels as saturated and trans fats. As a result, they are not as much of a concern to our health as they don't increase the risk of heart disease. They are still a type of fat and all fats when eaten in quantities greater than our bodies need can lead to weight gain. Unsaturated fats include monounsaturated and polyunsaturated. Omega-3 fats are a type of polyunsaturated fat.

For more information on this topic ask your Doctor or Nurse on your next visit.



NURSE'S PEN 'TRAVEL CLINIC'

Are you thinking of travelling overseas soon? Make sure you are up to date with all recommended vaccinations at least 4-6 weeks before you travel. We invite you to make an appointment with Gill our Travel Nurse.

Some types of travel, especially to developing countries and rural areas, may have higher health risks. These risks depend on –

- Where you are travelling
- Your specific activities while travelling
- Your health
- Your vaccination history

BOOK IN TO OUR DEDICATED NURSE LED TRAVEL CLINIC
Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

In the Clinic we will discuss:

- the risks of infection for your destination
- safety with food and water
- how best to avoid mosquito bites
- whether you need malarial prophylaxis
- what vaccinations are required

This consultation will help you to be more prepared for your international travel so you can travel smart and stay healthy.

PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS

You can request your repeat prescription by emailing a nurse from our website, www.ohcdoctor.co.nz Please be sure to put your name, date of birth, and which Chemist you would like your prescription sent to, on the email message.

Alternatively you can telephone the practice nurse **between 9am - 4pm Mon - Fri**.

The Practice Nurse will have the prescription prepared then faxed to a pharmacy of your choice – unless you are due for a doctor's appointment. **Please allow 2 working days for your prescription to be prepared – so please be sure to check when you prescription is due to run out, so that your request can be processed in time.**

The cost for a prescription to be prepared by the Doctor is \$19 and \$10.50 for children under 13yrs. You are welcome to book a doctor's appointment for these children which continues to be free of charge.

Please be sure to pay all your accounts here before the end of the month, to ensure you are not charged an administration fee for the preparation, printing and posting of your account to you.



“URGENT APPOINTMENTS” INFORMATION

In our Annual Practice Questionnaire some of you asked about our urgent appointment system, and how this works.

Otumoetai Doctors provides a service for our enrolled/registered patients who may need to be seen for “URGENT” medical attention, when there are no appointments available, because we are fully booked.

An “URGENT APPOINTMENT” is not an allocated appointment time, so is under time pressure. It means you are likely to be seen by a Doctor other than your own, a Doctor who may not know you.

Our “URGENT” system allows us to briefly see our patients who need to be seen **urgently** to deal with an **immediate emergency situation**. It does not allow time for extensive background reading of patient files.

We make every effort to have you seen as soon as possible. For your information the following is the process of events that will take place:

The Practice Nurse is required to assess your medical condition to ascertain whether your condition requires “URGENT” medical attention. She will ask you a number of questions about your condition. She will then advise you either:

** you will be seen as an “URGENT” appointment – as per above,*

OR

** that the matter you presented with today does not require “URGENT” medical attention, and that a booked appointment with your Doctor at a later date would be a better way to help you.*

NB: please note there is a \$5 surcharge for patients seen in our URGENT Appointment system.



EXTENDED APPOINTMENT TIMES

Doctor appointments are 10-15minutes in length. If you would like a longer appointment at any time, please mention this to the receptionist who will be happy to arrange this for you. Please note a double appointment has a double fee.



The staff of
Otumoetai Doctors

*wish you
all a healthy,
happy & safe
Christmas.*

SATURDAY MORNING CLINIC

This clinic is generally reserved for urgent/acute consultations and therefore we are not able to pre-book general appointments days in advance. However we do pre-book the first hour of our Saturday clinic. Please phone anytime during the week if you would like to request an appointment in the first hour.

Whilst we do not pre-book the rest of the Saturday clinic, to keep it available for acute/urgent appointments, we do appreciate there are patients with exceptional circumstances. If you are unable to make it to see your Doctor during the week due to out of town work commitments or other extenuating circumstances, do please call us and we will do our best to find an appointment time during our Saturday morning clinic for you.

NB: Please note there is an extra surcharge of \$5 for seeing us on Saturday mornings.

DOCTORS WORKING DAYS

As each of our Doctors work different hours and days, if you would like a copy of the latest “Surgery Hours” pamphlet, please ask our receptionists when you are next in the surgery. Listed here is an overall summary of the Doctors’ working days:

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORS’ WORKING DAYS					
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Dr Bloomfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dr Lemberg	✓	✓	✓		✓
Dr Robinson	✓		✓	✓	✓
Dr Chavasse	✓		✓		✓
Dr Dixon	✓	✓			✓
Dr Johnstone	✓	✓	✓		✓
Dr Ryan	✓	✓		✓	
Dr Hill		✓		✓	
Dr Burness		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Eastwood			✓	✓	
Dr Drummond			✓	✓	

OUR ONSITE SERVICES

OTUMOETAI DOCTORS

(07) 576 2321



Unichem Otumoetai Pharmacy

(07) 576 7290



BAY PHYSIOTHERAPY

(07) 577 9798

Bryce P. Hamer & Associates



ANNA ROSE KENDALL PODIATRIST

0800 11 11 50



OTUMOETAI OPTOMETRISTS

(07) 576 0085

David Parlane Optometrist



THE DENTISTS

(07) 576 4895

Alistair Miller BDS (Otago)

