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**OPEN** Monday - Friday 8am - 5.30pm  
Saturday 8.30am - 1.00pm

# Your Health

The latest news and health advice from your Otumoetai Doctors

## HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE GASTROENTERITIS

Gastroenteritis is a gut infection that causes stomach cramps, vomiting and diarrhoea. It is very common and is often caused by unclean food or water. Let's take a look at the causes and best treatments.

### The causes:

- A virus passed on by someone who may or may not have symptoms
- Bacteria from food that is not fresh or well-cooked, unclean water, hands, cooking or eating utensils. Bacteria can also be spread by flies. Meat, poultry, dairy products, eggs, shellfish and parboiled rice are the most commonly affected
- Amoebas or parasites
- Poisonous food such as toadstools

### The symptoms:

- You may get cramps, have a gurgly, uncomfortable stomach, vomit and have watery diarrhoea. (If the faeces contain blood or pus you should contact your doctor).
- You may also feel sick, shivery, have a headache and/or fever.

It usually only lasts a few days, but may last longer. If you become very weak, have trouble waking up, have sunken eyes, go very pale, stop passing water or get very dry skin and tongue, you may be dehydrated and need urgent attention.

### The treatment:

There are many options for treatment which can be found readily on the internet, or by talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

### Here's how to protect yourself and others:

- Wash hands when dealing with food and after going to the toilet
- Use latex gloves in commercial environments when dealing with food
- Wash the tops of cans before opening
- Wash all utensils, boards and surfaces used for meat, poultry, etc with hot, soapy water

- If it smells bad or looks dodgy throw the food out
- Buy perishable food only as you need it
- Get perishables home from the shops and stored/refrigerated quickly
- Rewrap poultry or meat in wax paper or glad wrap within two days of purchase to keep fresh
- Thaw frozen food in the fridge, in warm water or the microwave or cook them from frozen
- Place uncooked meat on the bottom shelf of the fridge to avoid cross-contamination
- Cook food thoroughly and to above 65 degrees Celsius
- When travelling in developing countries: don't eat raw food, food from street stalls or peeled fruits; drink only bottled or boiled water or drinks; avoid ice; use water purification tablets

For more information talk to your doctor on your next visit.



## DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE IMPETIGO?

Impetigo is a very contagious skin infection, also known as 'school sores' as it is common in children. Impetigo is found generally on the hands and face, especially around the nose and mouth, but can also affect other areas.

### The symptoms of impetigo:

Impetigo usually starts as little blisters. These then break and start to weep with usually pus, and sometimes clearer liquid. The weeping patches tend to grow larger. Yellow or brownish scabs then form which can burn or itch.

### The causes of impetigo:

Impetigo can be caused by two types of bacteria which make their way into the skin through a cut or scratch, or through skin affected by eczema or insect bites.

Some people carry the bacteria in their nostrils, and this can be transferred to the hands and then onto a break in the skin.

Impetigo can be spread to other people by contact with the sores, especially when there is weeping or crusting in the affected area.

### The treatments:

Usually antibiotic tablets or antibiotic cream/ointment are prescribed. If the child does not get better with treatment or if the sores return contact your doctor as you may need a different treatment or further investigation into the cause.

In some cases the doctor may also prescribe an ointment to rub on the inside of the nostrils for the child and other family members - the bacteria can hide out there and re-infect others. Follow the recommendations of your doctor about caring for the sores.

### The cleaning regimen:

- Keep hands sanitised before and after touching the sores.
- Make sure no cuts or scratches are present, which could harbour the infection.
- Cover the sores with dry dressings. Dressings and the correct tapes to hold the dressing in place can be purchased from pharmacies.
- Seal old dressings before discarding.

Impetigo is very contagious. Follow your doctor's advice about when the child can return to school or preschool. The infected child should not use the same towels, linen or flannels as the rest of the family. Family bathing should be avoided until the sore is healed.

For further information and support talk to your doctor or practice nurse, your local pharmacist, or ask to speak to the public health nurse attached to the school. You can also phone Healthline free (within New Zealand) on 0800 611 116 for health advice.



## 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.



## EMAIL SERVICE

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

We have the option of emailing 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.

## APPOINTMENT CANCELLATIONS

We appreciate that there are times when circumstances change, or something happens beyond your control, and the appointment you have booked is no longer suitable.

If you are in this situation, please telephone us as soon as possible before the actual appointment time to cancel the appointment. 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.

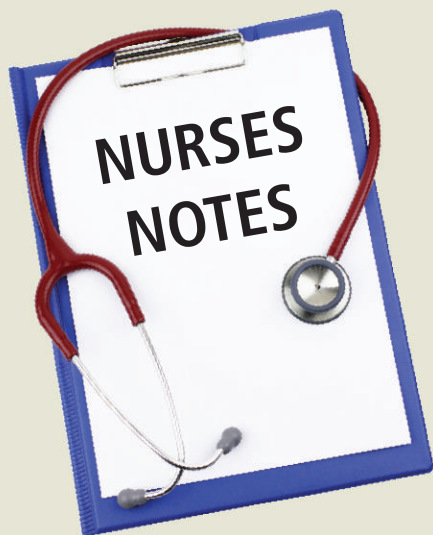
Some practices charge for appointments whether or not they are attended. While we prefer not to do this, unless it happens repeatedly, we would really appreciate your help in letting us know if you can't make it.



## EXTENDED APPOINTMENT TIMES

In our Annual Practice Questionnaire some of you asked about the possibility of having more time in your consultation with your doctor.

Doctor appointments are 10-15 minutes 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.



## WE'RE PROUD TO ACTIVELY PROMOTE ...SMOKE FREE

### LET'S START WITH THE FACTS

- 5000 people die in NZ every year of smoking relating illnesses?
- Smoking kills and we want NZ to be **Smoke-Free** by 2025
- 80% of people who smoke say they would rather be smoke-free
- Smoking is addictive and it is the nicotine that is responsible for the addiction.

Tobacco smoke contains nicotine and 4000 + toxic chemicals. It is these chemicals which cause the harm related to tobacco smoke, not the nicotine. More than 60 of these chemical found in cigarettes have been identified as cancer forming.

Smoking damages your lungs coating them with tar, like soot in a chimney. Over time, less air can get into your lungs affecting your circulation. That is why a lot of smoker's get cold fingers and toes.

The chemicals from smoking get into your blood stream, muscles and brain. They increase your heart rate and blood pressure, and narrow small blood vessels.

Blocked blood vessels in your heart and brain can cause heart attacks and strokes.

Becoming **smoke-free** means immediate and long term health benefits.

Stopping smoking is one of the best things that you can do to improve your health. Fortunately, people who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk of disease and premature death. Although the health benefits are greater for people who stop at earlier ages, cessation is beneficial at all ages.

#### **Becoming smoke-free is associated with the following health benefits:**

- Giving up smoking lowers the risk for lung and other types of cancer.
- Being **smoke-free** reduces the risk for heart disease and stroke. Coronary heart disease risk is substantially reduced within 1-2 years of quitting.
- Stopping smoking reduces respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. The rate of decline in lung function is slower among people who quit smoking than among those who continue to smoke.
- Being **smoke-free** reduces the risk of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Women who stop smoking during their productive years, reduce their risk of infertility. Women who stop smoking during pregnancy also

reduce the risk of having a low birth weight baby.

- Being **smoke-free** means your children and family are more likely to be, and stay, healthy.
- Being **smoke-free** will help you have a longer and healthier life.
- Stopping smoking will greatly reduce your risk of developing diabetic complications.

It can be hard to quit smoking on your own but there are a number of options for support to help you become smoke-free.

1. NRT (Nicotine replacement therapy) provides nicotine in a clean, safe delivery system. It relieves you of the symptoms of withdrawal from nicotine, helping to make it easier to become **smoke-free**. NRT comes in patches, gum and lozenge form. They have very little side effects and are always safer than continued smoking.
2. Medications such as Zyban or Champix. These are prescribed by your doctor.
3. Behavioural support either individually or as a group.

Combining medication with ongoing behavioural support has the best outcomes for people trying to quit smoking.

We can support you to become **smoke-free**.

Please call and arrange an appointment with any one of our fantastic and helpful nurses, who can help you along the path to becoming smoke-free on 576 2321.

### PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS

If you require a repeat prescription to be written, please telephone the practice nurse **between 9am - 4pm Monday to Friday**. She can have it prepared and then faxed to a pharmacy of your choice. **Please allow 24 hours for your prescription to be prepared.**

## PREVENT FALLS IN YOUR HOUSE

A fall at any age can be dangerous, but falls become increasingly common and far more likely to cause injury after the age of 55.

Approximately one in three people over the age of 65 will fall in any one year, 4% of these 'fallers' end up in hospital and 1% suffer a hip fracture.

Protect yourself by getting regular eye checks, eat a balanced, nutritious diet for energy, and make sure you get enough calcium for bone strength.



## "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 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 does not know you.

Our "URGENT" system allows us to briefly see our patients who need to be seen urgently to deal with an immediate 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.)

## TRAVEL HEALTH & VACCINATION ADVICE

Dr Marty Lemberg is a member of MASTA of New Zealand. MASTA is the Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad. He is able to give up to date advice on vaccination requirements, malaria prevention and latest health news with support from Worldwise Travel Health Vaccination Centres.

Dr Lemberg can provide travel health reports specific to your itinerary and can provide medical kits, water purifying tablets, insect repellents and mosquito nets. We are also a Yellow Fever vaccination authorised centre.



## MINOR SKIN SURGERY

We have several doctors 'accredited' under the Western BOP PHO and DHB Skin Surgery programme, to do minor skin surgery approved by the PHO.

If you would like to discuss this further and see if you qualify for this funded service, please mention it to your doctor when you are next seen.

## OUR ONSITE SERVICES

Phone (07) 576 2321

**Otumoetai  
Doctors**  
Ltd

Phone (07) 576 7290

the  
**healthy  
chemist**

Phone (07) 577 9798

Bay  
Physiotherapy  
Centre

Bryce P. Hamer & Associates

Ph/Fax (07) 570 1041

**COUNSELLOR**

Children, Adolescents, Adults

**ROSEMARY DIPROSE**

Suite 5, 506 Otumoetai Road, Tauranga

Phone (07) 579 5333

AvenuePodiatry  
PROFESSIONAL FOOT CARE

Phone (07) 576 0085

OTUMOETAI  
OPTOMETRISTS

David Parlane Optometrist

Phone (07) 576 2735

or 027 384 3351

**newlook**  
Weight Loss Coaching

Success through Losses

Maria McNeil Consultant

Phone (07) 576 4895

the  
**dentists**

Alastair Miller BDS (Otago)