

**FREE!!**  
PLEASE TAKE ONE

# YOUR DOCTOR



**JULY 2015**

## HEALTH HQ

### “Quality Caring”

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### HOURS AND SERVICES

Consultations by appointment.

If you need to be seen urgently or need a long consultation, please ask when you book. Home visits within 5km can be arranged if necessary.

**Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri** 8:30am-5:00pm

**Thursday** 8:30am-6:00pm

**Saturday** 8:30am-12:30pm

### AFTER HOURS CARE

GP & Home Visits: Chevron After Hours  
(07) 5532 8666

Hospital: Pindara Emergency Centre  
(07) 5588 9000

In a serious emergency, call 000.

### VALUABLE WEBSITES FOR QUALITY INFORMATION

[www.travelmedicine.com.au](http://www.travelmedicine.com.au)

[www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au)

## PLEASE DON'T TAKE A SEAT

Being active is hugely important for our health. Sitting down too much is a major risk factor for heart disease, some cancers and a number of other chronic illnesses.

Despite this, Australia remains one of the fattest developed nations in the world, with around 63% of Australian adults being overweight or obese. Not surprisingly, data released from the Heart Foundation shows that Australian workers are less active than ever and are aware of it.

The survey involved Australian workers aged between 25 and 54 years and looked into their activity levels and behaviours. The results showed that around 70% of the participants spent substantial time in front of technology instead of getting active. Forty-two percent of the workers reported preferring to spend the spare time that they did have on their smart phones, tablets, computers etc. Over half of those surveyed reported not getting enough physical activity to be healthy and only 5% met the recommended guidelines for daily fruit and vegetable intake (two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables).

These results are a wake up call to the health and wellbeing of Australians and their employers and sheds light on the change that's required to improve health. Chronic disease comes with a huge social



and economic burden and much of it is preventable with modest lifestyle changes. The Heart Foundation outlines ways in which workplaces can encourage a healthier environment including supplying healthy foods like fruit bowls, having walking meetings, supplying standing work stations and encouraging walking or cycling to and from work or meetings.

There are a number of reasons why people don't get the recommended amount of daily physical activity including hectic schedules, busy personal and social life and not enjoying exercise. There are plenty of ways to get incidental exercise into a busy working day including taking stairs instead of the lift, walking around the office for a couple of minutes each hour and catching public transport or actively commuting to work instead of driving.

For more information or tips to get active visit the Heart Foundation's website: [heartfoundation.org.au](http://heartfoundation.org.au)

## YOUR DOCTOR JULY - INSIDE

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

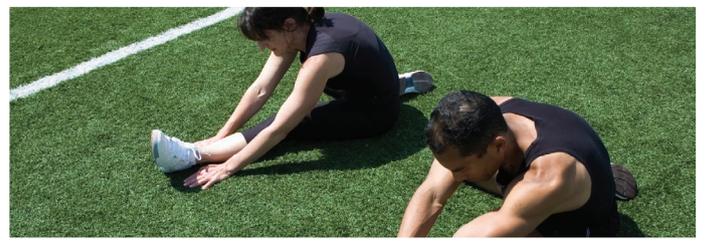
When food is cooked a number of chemical changes occur, many of which are positive by adding flavour to the food and even increasing the bioavailability of some nutrients. There's one chemical change, however, that scientists are looking at for its potential link with disease.

The chemicals are called advanced glycation end-products (AGEs). They occur naturally when food is heated to the point of browning or charring. Accumulation of AGEs in the body can promote oxidative stress and inflammation, two biomarkers of disease and ageing. Researchers investigated the inflammatory effects of AGEs further, looking at their potential effect on the development of dementia.

In animal studies, researchers found that mice who were raised on a diet high in AGEs were a lot more likely to develop symptoms consistent with dementia than those who weren't. A small study in people over 60 years found that those with more AGEs in their blood experienced greater cognitive decline and reduced insulin sensitivity compared to those with low levels of AGE in their blood.

Further research is needed to explore the potential link between AGEs and dementia risk however the results of this study further support the recommendation of a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables. A low AGE diet is in accordance with typical healthy eating guidelines including eating plenty of fruits and vegetables and minimally processed foods, and less over-processed foods, particularly baked and fried goods. It also may be helpful to use lower temperatures when cooking and avoid over browning or charring foods.

**For reference:** Cai, W et al. Oral glycotoxins are a modifiable cause of dementia and the metabolic syndrome in mice and humans. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 2015; 111:4940-4945.



## SAFE IN OUR SKIN

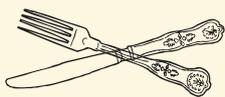
The skin is the largest organ of the human body and the most exposed to the outside world. It helps protect people against the invasion of infections and germs and contains an array of bacteria of its own, which help maintain the health of the skin and also defend against more harmful strains of bacteria that have the potential to cause disease. However, the skin is also subject to chemicals from everyday life including from our clothing, beauty products and chemicals from the outside world like dust, dirt and pollution. Researchers have investigated what chemical residues can be found on the skin and whether or not this affects the type of bacteria that live on the skin.

Two healthy volunteers were asked not to shower or apply any beauty or hygiene products for three days. Swabs were then taken from over 400 places across the surface of the skin and analysed.

Large numbers of chemical residues were found on the skin from shampoos, sunscreens and deodorants. The results showed that the most contaminated areas of the skin were the scalp and upper shoulders. The analysis suggested that the types of chemicals found on the skin could change the bacteria that live there.

Further research is needed to tease out the link between skin bacteria, chemicals and health outcomes however this provides interesting insight into the potential affects of different products on our skin and how this could influence the health of our skin and overall wellbeing.

**For reference:** Bouslimani, A et al. Molecular cartography of the human skin surface in 3D. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* 2015; 112:2120-9.



## Good Health on the Menu

### TOFU SANG CHOY BOW

*A fresh and lightly cooked dish packed with flavour.*

#### Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 500g firm tofu, chopped finely
- 1cm piece ginger, sliced
- 4 spring onions, chopped
- 1 chilli, finely diced
- 2 tbsp diced bamboo shoots

- 2 tbsp diced water chestnuts
- 1 capsicum, finely diced
- 1 cup mushrooms, diced
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp oyster sauce
- Toasted sesame seeds to serve
- ½ cup coriander leaves
- Iceberg lettuce cups

#### Method

1. To prepare the lettuce cups, carefully separate individual whole lettuce leaves and using clean kitchen scissors cut the top of the lettuce cups to make a desirable 'bowl' shape. Keep the lettuce cups in ice water until needed – this will ensure that they stay fresh and crunchy

2. Heat oils in pan and add tofu and ginger, cook for two minutes
3. Add remaining vegetables and sauces and sauté for five minutes
4. Spoon into lettuce cups and sprinkle with sesame seeds



*Enjoy!*

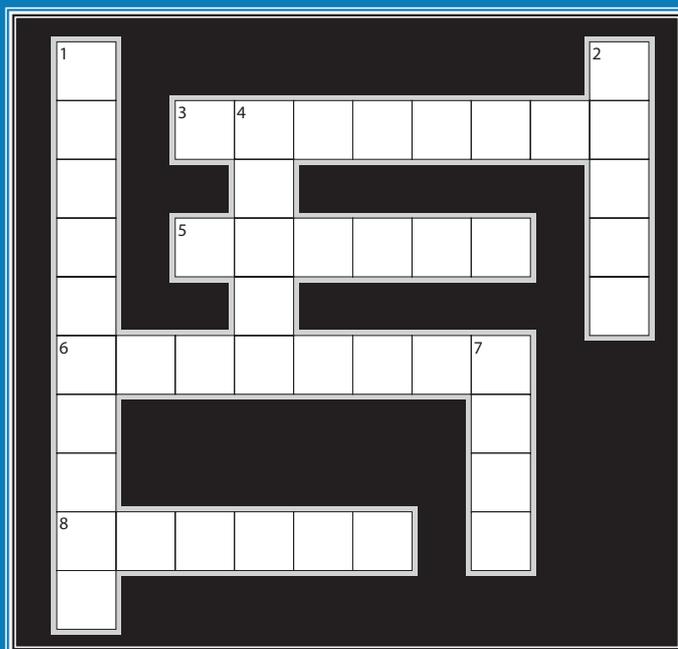
# Clever CROSSWORD

## Down:

1. Around 63% of Australians are \_\_\_\_\_ or obese.
2. Glue ear in children is where what collects in the middle ear?
4. Sitting down too much is a major risk factor for what disease?
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the largest organ of the human body.

## Across:

3. \_\_\_\_\_ activity improves physical health, mental wellbeing and helps reduce the risk of a number of diseases.
5. The risk of skin what, may be lower for those with darker skin, but can still occur?
6. Nighmares are vivid, unsettling dreams that tend to induce negative what?
8. Advanced glycation end-products (AGEs) occur naturally when food is what?



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF YOUR DOCTOR. ANSWERS ARE SHOWN ON THE TOP RIGHT OF THE BACK PAGE.

## FIT IN THE MIDDLE

Physical activity is wonderful for our health. It improves physical health, mental wellbeing and helps to reduce risk of a number of diseases.

Research has linked increased levels of physical activity to reduced risk of some cancers including colon and post-menopausal breast cancer. Risk factors for cancer often develop over time and relate to years of lifestyle behaviours. Given this, researchers investigated at what stage of life physical activity is linked to later-life cancer risk.

They looked at lifestyle data from almost 14,000 men with an average age of 49. The researchers then reviewed the medical records of the same men when they were 65 years or older. The results showed that those who were fit in middle age had a lower risk of developing both lung and colon cancer. Furthermore, of the men with cancer, those who were fit in middle age had a lower risk of dying from it compared to their unfit peers.

This study shows a strong association between middle-aged fitness levels and risk of cancer later in life. While the results do not prove that the two are linked, it adds further weight to the benefits of physical activity. Exercise at any age is beneficial to one's health and it's never too late to start. Remember to talk to your doctor before starting any new types of exercise.



**For reference:** Lakoski, SG et al. Midlife cardiorespiratory fitness, incident cancer, and survival after cancer in men: the Cooper Center Longitudinal Study. *JAMA Oncology* Epub online March 26, 2015; doi: 10.1001/jamaoncol.2015.0226

## ≡ DID YOU KNOW? ≡ FATIGUE AND DEPRESSION: THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES



Nightmares are vivid, unsettling dreams that tend to induce negative emotions. They can wake people up in the middle of the night and the lingering fear they can leave may prevent people from getting back to sleep afterwards. They are thought to occur in the same stage of sleep as normal dreams, known as the Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep stage. Nightmares are most common in children but affect adults as well. Some have no cause and some might be associated with a traumatic event in one's life. People suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, a mental health condition that can develop in people who've experienced a traumatic event, are more likely to have nightmares. Nightmares are also commonly found in people with sleep disorders like insomnia or excessive fatigue.

Researchers have looked further into nightmares in adults and their relationship to sleep and mental health. They found that the two biggest predictors of nightmares were depression and insomnia. Around one third of people with depression had frequent nightmares.

Researchers haven't determined whether depression and insomnia cause nightmares however their findings reinforce the link between nightmares and mental health and wellbeing. Improved management of conditions like depression and insomnia may assist people in getting a better night's sleep. If nightmares are a result of a traumatic event, seeking help from a health professional like a counselor may assist in dealing with the issue.

**For reference:** Sandman, N et al. Nightmares: Risk factors among the Finnish general adult population. *Sleep* 2015; 38: 507-513.



**Dr Norman Swan**

## A MATTER OF HEALTH

Glue ear in children is where fluid collects in the middle ear, that's the tiny compartment of air behind the eardrum, which transports sound waves to the inner ear for transmission to the brain.

One of the more common operations in childhood is called tympanostomy with tubes, where the surgeon makes a hole in the eardrum and inserts a tube, or grommet, to drain the middle ear and allow air in. The question for parents is when is the right time to have the operation because it's not free of risk or cost?

US researchers have reviewed the evidence in children who don't have developmental problems like Down syndrome and don't have severe hearing loss because of the fluid.

Fluid in the middle ear is almost normal with 80% of kids experiencing it before the age of 10, so most get better by themselves with no treatment. For kids who've had a glue ear for three months with some hearing loss that's not severe, having grommets inserted helps them over the short term but over longer periods, there's no difference compared to children with glue ear who haven't had grommets.

So what can you do instead? Well decongestants and antibiotics don't help much if at all but exercises that your doctor can show you to push air into the middle ear can be useful.

The important thing is to watch carefully with your doctor in case things change.



## MYTH VS FACT: MORE CANCER MYTHS DEBUNKED

We've had previous stories in Your Doctor looking into common myths about cancer. The Cancer Council has a website which addresses cancer myths and explores their validity. We look at a couple of the questions below.

### Do people with dark skin not get skin cancer?

People with darker skin are less likely to get burnt than people with lighter skin. Darker people have a larger amount of melanin (pigment) in their skin, which gives it a darker appearance. The melanin also offers some protection against the damaging effects of ultraviolet light from the sun however it doesn't block 100% of the sun's light. Therefore while the risk of skin cancer may be lower for people with dark skin, it can still occur and the Cancer Council outlines that unfortunately skin cancers in darker people are often not found until a later, more advanced stage. People with dark skin should take the recommended precautions to protect their skin including

using sunscreen, wearing protective clothing like sunglasses, hats and long sleeved shirts and avoiding exposure to the sun during the hottest times of the day.

### Do foods high in saturated fat cause cancer?

The occasional treat is not going to give you cancer however regular consumption of foods high in saturated fat increases risk of overweight and obesity, both of which are risk factor for some cancers. The cancers with risk most commonly associated with diet are bowel, stomach and oesophageal cancers. Other cancers for which obesity is a risk factor are breast (in post-menopausal women), endometrial and kidney cancers. A healthy diet can help reduce risk of cancer as well as a number of other chronic diseases. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and limit intake of foods high in saturated fat. Plenty of physical activity also helps reduce risk of some cancers.

In order to get the best health outcomes it's important to have all of the correct information based on the latest scientific evidence.

To find out more or to submit a question about something you've heard visit the Cancer Council's website [iheard.com.au](http://iheard.com.au)

Across: 3. Physical; 5. Cancer; 6. Emotions; 8. Heated.  
4. Heart; 7. Skin.  
Down: 1. Overweight; 2. Fluid;

## TO CROSSWORD ANSWERS

## PRACTICE UPDATE

### SERVICE

Our mission is to provide the highest quality care and service using evidence based medicine to ensure the health of our patients. "Quality caring" means we excel in our work, products, and environment and show concern for and interest in our patients' needs. Further information about our practice policies can be obtained by asking one of our friendly receptionists.

### PRIVACY

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 staff members. You can make a request in writing for a copy of your records to be transferred to another GP.

### COMMUNICATION

Information regarding appointments, investigations, results, scripts, referrals may be shared with your consent as required for your care. Patient requests requiring action are attended to promptly, based on level of urgency. You will be notified if there is any charge for the service.

### FOLLOW-UP OF RESULTS

Your doctor will decide with you how to inform you of test results (e.g., phone call, follow-up appointment, etc.). All results are reviewed by the ordering doctor. For any results requiring urgent action, you will be phoned. If you have not been contacted regarding your results, call and ask.

### FEEDBACK

Our goal is to provide a quality, caring service. If you have any concerns or suggestions, please let us know. We genuinely wish to hear from you. If we have not satisfied your concerns, please contact the Health Quality and Complaints Commission on 1800 077 308 or [info@hqcc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@hqcc.qld.gov.au).

### FEES

Consults \$60 gap. Welfare \$45 gap. Extra for Travel vaccines and medication. Skin Check for HCC/ Pension card Holder's \$10 gap. New HCC/Pension patients one of \$20 gap. DVA bulk-billed. Scripts and referral letters \$20 (bulk-billed if collected by patient). Saturday: No concessions. 3% surcharge for American Express and Diners Club payments.

### SKIN HQ

P: (07) 5591 4844 • [www.skinhq.com.au](http://www.skinhq.com.au)  
Remember to book your next skin check with Skin HQ. Ask about our laser, IPL and PDT treatments. Anti-wrinkle and volume enhancement treatments are also available.

### VASECTOMY VENUE

Gold Coast Circumcisions  
P: (07) 5531 1170 • [www.vasectomyvenue.com.au](http://www.vasectomyvenue.com.au)  
[www.gccircumcisions.com.au](http://www.gccircumcisions.com.au)  
Dr Michael Read provides "no scalpel" vasectomies as permanent contraception for men. He also performs circumcisions for boys and men, as well as babies.

### TRAVEL HEALTH DOCTORS

P: (07) 5526 4444 • [www.healthhq.com.au](http://www.healthhq.com.au)  
A member of the Travel Medicine Alliance, The Travel Health Doctors at Health HQ receive daily updates from worldwide sources to give you accurate, personalised advice based on your itinerary. We carry almost all vaccines and other travel requirements. We work with your GP in caring for you in a specific area.

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FLU QUADRI VACCINE.**