

melomag

Free Health Guide!

Issue 13 | 2013

Heart attacks explained

Need for air:
Chronic obstructive
pulmonary disease

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FILE**

Eye myths
and their
truths

Health
benefits of
chocolate!

PREMATURE BABIES

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a Coffee Machine to enjoy
to one lucky reader!
See page 3 for competition
details!


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CONGRATULATIONS!

Well done to **Amelia Hugo**, the winner of the Melomed 5-in-1 travel bag give-away, featured in our previous *Melomag* issue 12. We trust that you will enjoy your prize. Look out for this issue's give-away on **page 3**.



Health Bytes

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

As we look forward with anticipation to spring, a season of rebirth and revitalisation, we reflect on a couple of recent events within the Melomed Group that echo these sentiments of "renaissance".

Melomed Gatesville is thrilled to announce the first in the world installation of the Xero/Agfa Radiology Imaging Solution, allowing our consulting Physicians the freedom to immediately view radiology imaging results anywhere, not just within Melomed Gatesville but indeed the world, using mobile devices such as iPads and smartphones. Details of this milestone are featured in the June 2013 issue of the Medical Chronicle.

Melomed Bellville is equally proud to announce the completion of the very first electrophysiology study procedure at the hospital, performed under the auspices of our resident Cardiologist Dr Neil Hendricks.

Landmark events such as these contribute to Melomed's status as leaders in revolutionising the health care industry in the Western Cape.

Amidst all of this, we wish to welcome our new Specialist to the Melomed Group, Dr Bilal Abdool-Gafoor (Pulmonologist), who joins an esteemed list of specialist medical practitioners at Melomed Hospitals. Dr Gafoor's article on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease features in this issue of *Melomag*.

The Melomed Group's catering department also enjoyed a few highlights, including the implementation of a new menu, and the undertaking of intense chef training for various members of staff. In addition, BSc Dietetics students of the University of the Western Cape are currently training at our hospital kitchens for their placement in Foodservice Management courses.

A member of our Melomed24 team has cause to celebrate: Mr Byiligiro has completed his honours degree in Environmental Health at UCT, graduating cum laude.

We also wish to express our condolences to family and friends at the sad passing of Dr Du Toit, our resident Orthopaedic Surgeon at Melomed Mitchells Plain. Our thoughts are with you in this difficult time.

We convey our best wishes to all those who have been fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. We pray this blessed experience will enhance your physical and mental well-being, and may you emerge from the holy month into Eid-ul-Fitr spiritually renewed and strengthened.



EBRAHIM BHORAT
 CHAIRMAN
 MELOMED GROUP



CREATE MEMORIES

HOST A CUPPA FOR CANSA

- + Why not turn your next staff meeting, tea party, club get-together or social gathering into a Cuppa that cares? Help fight cancer by supporting the Cancer Association of South Africa's (CANSAs) Cuppa For CANSA campaign launching in June at CANSAs Care Homes. This year's theme is 'Care and Support'.
- + Cuppa For CANSA, proudly supported by Shoprite and Checkers, is a fun event that encourages people to enjoy a cup of their favourite beverage and support a great cause by giving a donation to CANSA.
- + Great prizes are up for grabs for the best Cuppa event and host. In order to be a finalist, please send five high-quality photos and share, in no more than 300 words, why your Cuppa event created memories to treasure — send to mscholtz@cansa.org.za by 31 October 2013 or register on our Cuppa mini-site. www.cansa.org.za

HEALTH TIPS

If you love pasta but are afraid it might make you gain weight, learn how to enjoy it without feeling guilty! The secret is in the serving size. The amount of pasta on your plate should be no larger than an "a-ok" sign made with your hand. To make the sign, simply touch your index finger to your thumb to make a circle and keep your remaining three fingers pointing upwards.

| SNIPPETS |

CAPE TOWN IS FITTEST CITY!

In June, Discovery announced the Index rates for each of South Africa's six major metropolitan areas, according to physical activity-related health and infrastructure. Cape Town has taken gold and top spot in the inaugural Vitality Fittest City Index!

Interestingly Cape Town scored the worst when it came to the personal health indicators, which looked at body mass index, waist circumference, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. However, the Mother City overtook the others in the home straight scoring high in self-reported physical activity, transport (low car dependency) and physical activity-related facilities available per 100 000 people. Head of Vitality Dr Craig Nossel said the Index essentially rewarded Cape Town for creating potential for

the citizenry to be active.

Initiatives singled out as contributing factors to keeping Capetonians fit include the MyCiti Bus Rapid Transit System, the cycle path between Paarden Island and Table View, outdoor gyms and the Green Point Urban Park.

Non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, asthma, cancer and high blood pressure account for more than a third of all deaths in South Africa with more than 80% of adolescents not meeting physical activity recommendations.

Source: Anso Thom from Health-e.org.za

THE MORE AFFORDABLE

LITTLE BLUE PILL IS FINALLY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Men suffering from erectile dysfunction finally have a cost-effective way to get their sexual health and their intimate relationships back on track with Pharma Dynamics' more affordable "little blue pill", which tackles ED and gives sufferers their confidence back.

Viagra was first licensed in 1998 and had a 15-year exclusivity period that came to an end at the end of June. This means that other drug companies can now produce their own versions of the drug. Viagra is the brand name the pharmaceutical company Pfizer uses for the drug sildenafil citrate, which is used to treat erectile dysfunction. Although they contain the same active ingredient as the branded product, generic versions of the drug are usually cheaper because the research and development costs have been less. Source: Pharma Dynamics



ENTER TODAY & WIN

GIVE-AWAY

We're giving away a Coffee Machine to one lucky reader!

To stand a chance to qualify, **SMS your answer to the following question and your name to 34298** (R2 per SMS). Competition closes 10 September 2013. Prize sponsored by Melomed. **Success to Dr Naseera Allie means? (See our Housecall article).**



Features:

- Removable 1000ml water tank
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- Compatible with Nespresso system

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BREASTFED BABIES ARE TOPS

Can breastfeeding your child really have any lasting benefit?

A recent study suggests it can. The UK study looked at the influence of breastfeeding on social mobility. In this paper social mobility was measured by comparing the jobs fathers had with the jobs children grew up to have.

- + The researchers tracked groups of people – children born in 1958 and children born in 1970. Breastfeeding status was reported by mothers and then around 30 years later social class – as defined by their job – was assessed. Cognitive and stress tests were also carried out around the ages of 10-11.
- + They found that in both groups, breastfeeding was associated with an increased likelihood of being upwardly mobile (having a better job than your father) and a corresponding decreased likelihood of being downwardly mobile (having a worse job than your father) compared to people who were not breastfed.
- + Breastfed children also scored better on the cognitive and stress tests, which could possibly explain the results.
- + It is not known whether it is the content of breast milk or the process of breastfeeding itself that is important.
- + While this type of study design can never prove a direct cause and effect, there is a wide range of other evidence about the benefits of breastfeeding. All women who can safely breastfeed their child are recommended to do so.

THE BEST DRY SKIN CURE ...

Extra virgin olive oil. Just add a few teaspoons of it to a bath or buy soap that already contains extra virgin olive oil. It is a quick, easy solution to a very common problem.





HEALTH IQ:

Chocolate

Chocolate - many of us adore it and there's no shortage of research proclaiming its health benefits.

Unfortunately, chocolate as we know it often doesn't contain significant amounts of the ingredients that have been linked with good health. To really enjoy the health benefits of cocoa, you need to consume it as the ancient Aztecs or Mayans did – unsweetened and very bitter.

1 WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS NOT FOUND IN CHOCOLATE?

- a) Tryptophan
- b) THC
- c) Flavanols
- d) Caffeine

2 YOU GET THE MOST FLAVANOLS IN WHICH TYPE OF CHOCOLATE PRODUCT?

- a) white chocolate
- b) dark chocolate
- c) milk chocolate
- d) regular cocoa

3 STUDIES HAVE LOOKED AT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHOCOLATE AND A RANGE OF HEALTH CONDITIONS, BUT WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IDEAS HAS NOT BEEN RESEARCHED?

- a) Eating chocolate regularly lowers your body mass index.

- b) Eating chocolate regularly lowers blood pressure.
- c) A country's chocolate consumption and its number of Nobel Prize winners.
- d) Bathing in chocolate can improve your circulation.

4 HOW MUCH CAFFEINE IS CONTAINED IN A 200G BAR OF CHOCOLATE?

- a) 10 milligrams
- b) 35 milligrams
- c) 20 to 60 milligrams
- d) 60 to 100 milligrams

5 ONE 100G BAR OF CHOCOLATE HAS ROUGHLY THE SAME AMOUNT OF KILOJOULES AS:

- a) Two large apples
- b) Four large apples
- c) Six large apples
- d) Eight large apples

ANSWERS

1. (b) THC

Cocoa contains tryptophan, which your body uses to create serotonin (which in turn has an effect on your mood and sleep). THC however is not found in cocoa or chocolate. THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is the active chemical in cannabis or marijuana.

2. (b) Dark chocolate

When cocoa beans are processed you get cocoa solids and cocoa butter. While heart-healthy flavanols are contained in the cocoa solids, that doesn't mean they're present equally in all types of chocolate. To make chocolate, manufacturers add varying amounts of cocoa solids and cocoa butter, to other ingredients – including other fats and sweeteners (usually sugar). The darker the chocolate, the more flavanols you'll get.

3. (d) Bathing in chocolate can improve your circulation

So much research has been done on chocolate it's difficult to find an association that hasn't been investigated. However, there don't appear to be any studies that suggest there might be a link between bathing in chocolate and improved circulation.

4. (c) 20 to 60 milligrams

The average 200g bar of chocolate contains between 20 to 60 milligrams of caffeine. It's recommended we consume no more than 600 milligrams of caffeine per day.

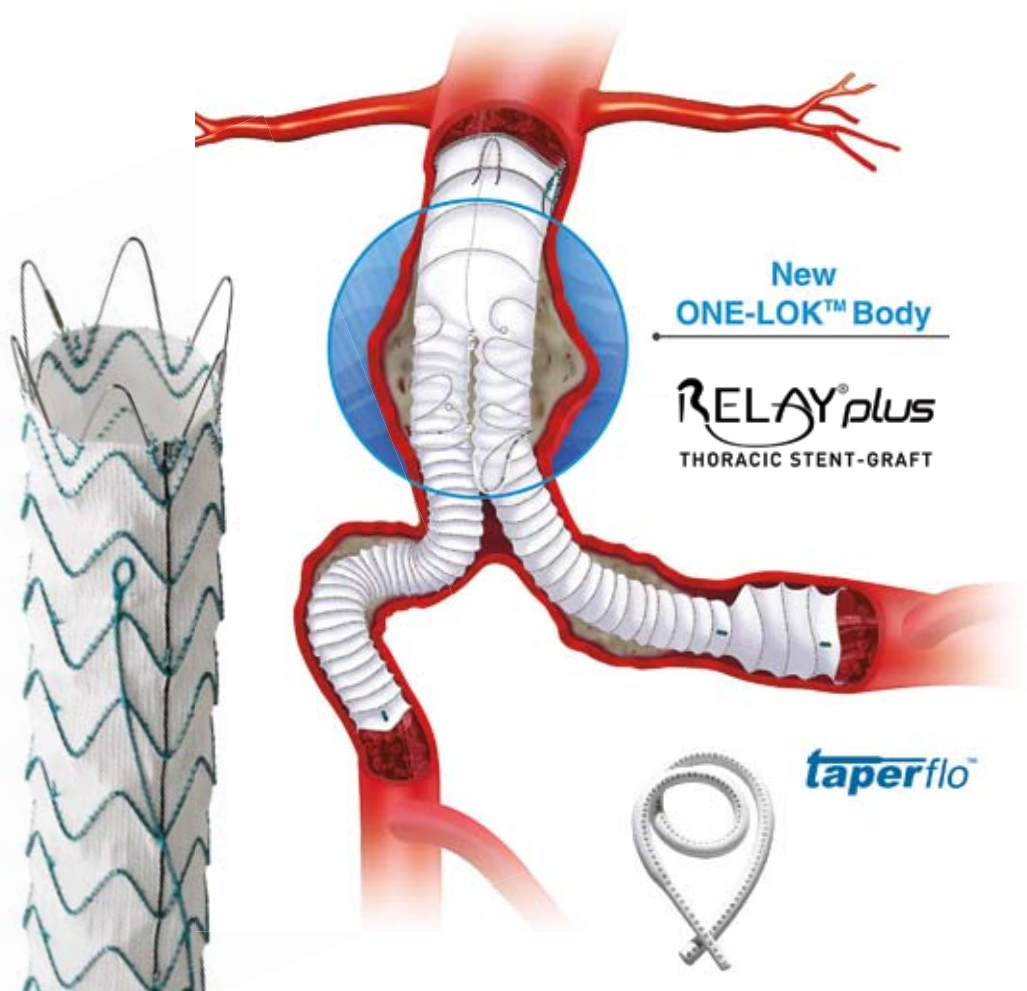
5. (c) Six large apples

Apples have fibre which acts as a natural "appetite brake" because it makes us feel full. But it's easy to consume a lot of chocolate without feeling full and because it's high in fat, even a small amount has a lot of kilojoules. This is one of the reasons health experts caution against eating chocolate to gain health benefits.





Taking care of vascular



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EYE Q:

COMMON
EYE MYTHS &
THEIR TRUTHS

Reading this – no matter how large or small the font size is, no matter how dark

the room is – will not permanently damage your eyes. By Health Bytes Publishers

And the number of carrots you eat isn't likely to affect how well you can read this either.

You may know that crossing your eyes too many times won't get them stuck that way, but you may think that reading in a dimly lit room will put you on the path to early nearsightedness.

It's important to separate fact from fiction, especially when the topic is eyesight. Knowing how to take good care of your eyes is the first step in protecting your sight.

Don't be blind to the facts – below are common myths about vision, along with the true facts.

MYTH 1:

Failure to use proper glasses will hurt your eyes.

FACT:

This statement does have some truth in it for a small number of people. Some children have eye problems that can be corrected, and it is important that they wear their glasses. But vision problems caused by heredity or physical injury do not go away, even with glasses. While corrective glasses or contacts are needed to improve eyesight, using your eyes with or without glasses will not damage your vision further.

MYTH 2:

Using glasses for a long period of time will cause your vision to deteriorate, leading to dependence on corrective lenses.

FACT:

Using the correct pair of glasses for you does not make your vision worse. You don't grow more dependent on them. The myth is based on the misperception that if you were to wear glasses or contact lenses, it somehow changes the physiology of your eye. Natural aging and its effects on the eyes may have played a role in spreading this myth.

With age, people's eyes deteriorate, and someone who needed reading glasses at 40 is likely to need a stronger prescription for them at 50 – whether they've actually been using glasses or not.

In this case, the out-of-focus world that develops over time is ▶▶

There is no evidence to suggest that watching television for too long or sitting too close can damage your eyes.



due to the growing of the lens of the eye – the only part of the eye that continues to grow significantly, and a process that prevents the eye from accommodating as easily as it did when one was younger.

MYTH 3:

Reading in dim light or reading too much fine print will eventually harm your vision.

FACT:

Reading in dim light or reading fine print can cause eye strain, but there is no evidence that it will hurt your eyes permanently. This is one of the most widely held myths about vision.

It's like saying if you take a picture in poor light, then the camera is going to be damaged.

The camera analogy may also explain why vision becomes worse in the dark. In low light the pupil is enlarged, so whatever defects there are in the lens are not corrected. When it's bright, you have a much greater depth of focus. More outside light can certainly help you see better. At the same time, though, your retina is not damaged by the high amount of light that is let in by an expanded pupil in the dark.

Similarly, having to focus on a smaller area is likely to cause strain on the eyes, but not lasting damage.

MYTH 4:

Watching television for too long or sitting too close can damage your eyes.

FACT:

There is no evidence to suggest that watching television for too long or sitting too close can damage your eyes. Young children often sit close to the television screen because they have a greater ability to focus on objects closer to their eyes than adults do. Due to this, children hold their reading material close as well. However, as they grow older, these habits usually change. If not, this may be a sign of myopia (nearsightedness). To detect possible eye problems, children should have regular eye exams.

MYTH 5:

Eating carrots will improve your vision.

FACT:

While it is true that carrots, as well as many other vegetables,

are rich in vitamin A, which is an essential vitamin for sight, only a small amount is necessary for good vision. A well-balanced diet, with or without carrots, provides all the nutrients the body needs. In fact, too much vitamin A, D or E may actually be harmful.

MYTH 6:

Wearing contacts prevents nearsightedness from getting worse.

FACT:

Wearing contact lenses will not permanently correct nearsightedness. Myopia or nearsightedness is usually an inherited condition, and contact lenses can only be expected to improve vision. Contact lenses cannot prevent nearsightedness from getting worse.

MYTH 7:

Cataracts can be removed with a laser.

FACT:

A cataract is a clouded lens of the eye – this procedure cannot be performed by a laser, only by surgery. However, after the surgery, the wrapping around



Everyone should follow proper eye health-care, which includes regular eye exams, whether or not you are having any noticeable signs of problems.

MYTH 8: There's nothing you can do to prevent vision loss.

DID YOU KNOW?

FACT:

More than 90% of eye injuries can be prevented, when simple and relatively inexpensive safety precautions are followed. That means choosing the correct eye safety glasses for the job and wearing them 100%

of the time. Regular eye exams can help save your sight. Early detection of vision problems is crucial to preventing vision loss from many eye diseases — especially diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

the lens (called the casing) is left behind. This casing can become cloudy and cause blurry vision. The casing can then be opened with a laser, but the procedure should not be confused with the surgical removal of the clouded lens.

MYTH 9:

An eye examination is necessary only if you're having problems.

FACT:

Everyone should follow proper eye health-care, which includes regular eye exams, whether or not you are having any noticeable signs of problems. Children should be tested at birth, at six months of age, before entering school and periodically throughout the school years.

For adults, the frequency

depends on your doctor's advice and may be every two years or more often. If you have diabetes or an eye disease, you should go every year for a comprehensive eye exam.





Life's little treasures

BORN TOO SOON



Hearing the words “you are pregnant” can for some be the best days of their lives, while others meet the news with “Oh no!” Whether the pregnancy is planned or unplanned, it is an absolute miracle.

By Dr M Shukri Raban, Paediatrician and Neonatologist at Melomed Gatesville

The *Born Too Soon* report states that 15 million babies are born too soon each year and that premature birth rates are rising. About 10% of South Africa’s babies are born prematurely. However, the possibility of delivering prematurely is something that barely crosses the minds of expectant parents as they dream and excitedly plan for their perfect healthy bundle of joy.

Suddenly and unexpectedly your baby arrives much earlier than anticipated, you are no longer dreaming of your baby, the miracle is right in front of you; much smaller and fragile than you could ever have imagined.

The unexpected premature arrival of your baby can be a frightening experience. In this article we look at why your premature baby is special and

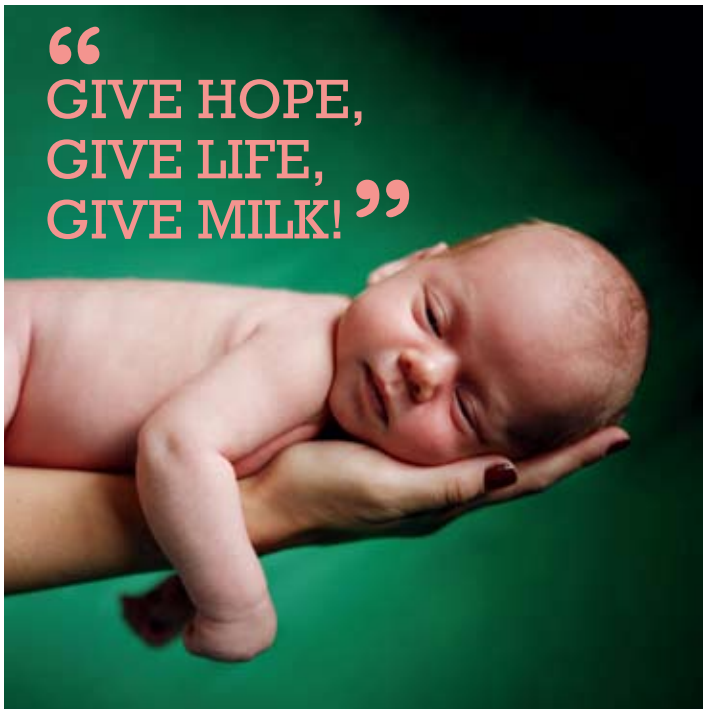
what you may encounter with your little treasure, born too soon.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF PRETERM BIRTH?

Babies are termed premature if they are born alive before

37 completed weeks of pregnancy. 83% are moderate to late premature (32 to <37 weeks), 10% very premature (28 to <32 weeks) and 5% extremely premature (<28 weeks).

“
GIVE HOPE,
GIVE LIFE,
GIVE MILK!”



WHY ARE BABIES BORN TOO SOON?

The reasons for premature birth are varied. Known factors that may increase the risk of premature birth include: having had a previous premature baby, a pregnancy with twins or more, problems with the uterus, cervix or placenta, smoking, alcohol and other recreational drug abuse during pregnancy, infections of the amniotic fluid and lower genital tract, high blood pressure, diabetes and physical injury or trauma. In certain cases the cause is unknown.

Avoiding premature birth is dependent on the cause. Medical conditions presenting before or during pregnancy must be managed well by the obstetrician or other appropriate specialist.

WHERE AND WHO WILL CARE FOR MY BABY?

Depending on the premature baby's age, weight and specific needs, the baby may need to be taken to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). This is the best place for your baby to receive the support and care required.

It is normal to feel anxious about your baby's stay in NICU.

Don't be afraid to ask questions of the doctors and nurses, so that you understand your baby's condition, the various equipment and alarms. This will allow you to feel more relaxed.

It is preferable that premature babies be managed by a neonatologist. A neonatologist is trained to handle the most complex and high-risk situations involving newborn health problems, espe-

cially those related to premature babies, providing the best care for newborns.

GOING HOME

Premature babies are ready to go home when they can breathe on their own, maintain their body temperature, have reached a certain weight and are able to feed well. This is a big day! Be well prepared.

LONG-TERM PROBLEMS

Premature babies are at risk for developmental problems. Always attend your follow-up visits with your clinic sister, paediatrician or neonatologist.

You have been blessed with a miracle, remain positive on this journey, embrace it and love your little bundle.

What to expect?

Sometimes babies are born before their bodies are ready to leave the womb. These are some of the complications that may be encountered.

- + The skin is immature, resulting in an inability to control body temperature. Premature babies are placed in plastic bags with only the face exposed to keep them warm till they are stabilised in a warm incubator in the NICU.
- + The lungs of premature babies lack a substance called surfactant, which results in breathing problems. There are various ways the lungs can be supported while they continue to mature. Premature babies can also have long pauses in their breathing, called apnoea.
- + The two most common problems with the heart are a patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), which is a persistent opening between the

two major blood vessels leading from the heart. Usually the ductus arteriosus closes spontaneously but occasionally it remains open, making it difficult to wean the baby off a ventilator or oxygen. In these cases the PDA has to be closed either medically or surgically. The other problem is low blood pressure which needs to be corrected.

- + Premature babies <32 week gestation are at risk of brain haemorrhage as their brains are immature and soft. Most bleeds are mild and resolve without any impact on brain development. Larger bleeds can cause permanent brain damage.
- + Feeding is a challenge in premature babies. All mothers must endeavour to provide breast milk for their babies. It protects the baby from infection, especially necrotising enterocolitis (NEC). Providing breast milk for your baby is THE biggest

contribution to your baby's wellbeing! The sucking and swallowing reflex only develops at 35 weeks, till then the baby is fed via feeding tube placed in the stomach.

- + Preterm babies are vulnerable to infection. The most cost effective method to protect them from infection is hand washing and providing breast milk to your baby.
- + You can also assist by doing Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC), also known as skin-to-skin, which is essential for good bonding, promotes better growth, temperature regulation and breast feeding. KMC can commence while your baby is in NICU.
- + Remember ... the NICU management of a premature baby and weight gain is a slow and steady process.



**FACT
FILE**

Need for AIR



CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)

By Dr Bilal Abdool-Gafoor, Physician and Pulmonologist at Melomed Gatesville

COPD is a major contributor to the burden of lung disease in South Africa. The condition

is now considered to be a multi-system disease with effects that extend beyond the lungs

to affect other organs. It is one of the fastest-growing causes of death worldwide.

Cigarette smoking is a well known cause of COPD. Exposure to secondary smoke is just as harmful. The lung is an elastic organ involved primarily in gas exchange. There are several toxic compounds in cigarette smoke that induce damage to the lung. A smoker's lung is markedly inflamed with excessive mucus production. The airways of the lung are damaged and swollen, causing them to lose their elasticity or stretchiness. The lung is mechanically impaired and characteristically

collapses easily on breathing out. Hence its primary function is markedly impaired and breathing becomes difficult. In addition there is damage to the air sacs and vessels that are important in gas exchange.

COPD encompasses a number of lung diseases, most commonly emphysema and chronic bronchitis. The disease is progressive and worsens with time, especially if the individual continues smoking. In addition the disease is characterised by frequent exacerbations often due to recurrent chest infections.

Although cigarette smoking is a major contributor to COPD; there are several other causes that are less well recognised. Included in this is previous tuberculosis; marijuana use; occupational exposures to dust and mining; genetic abnormalities; air pollution; HIV and the use of biomass fuels (e.g. wood, coal, etc.) for cooking. It is notable that almost half of South Africa's COPD is due to causes other than cigarette smoking.

Common symptoms of COPD include shortness of breath, especially on exertion,

chronic cough with mucus production, wheezing, recurrent chest infections and weight loss. Commonly, patients with previous tuberculosis may have persistent shortness of breath and develop COPD. Other conditions also related to smoking include cancers of several organs, osteoporosis, depression and ischaemic heart disease. The lung disease in COPD may also affect the heart and can result in heart failure.

The condition is often misdiagnosed as asthma because of the symptom of wheezing. Not all wheezing is due to asthma and one should seek a professional opinion to obtain a correct diagnosis. Often this requires a test of pulmonary function and radiological investigation. Thereafter one may be staged based on severity. This allows a correct diagnosis and the initiation of correct treatment. Too often do we manage

medical conditions when there is already a complication too far advanced to offer a meaningful treatment. It is best to practise preventative medicine before complications arise.

There are many treatment options but the most beneficial would be cessation of smoking. There are several benefits to stopping smoking, including improvements in taste, smell, lung function, shortness of breath and improvement in the lung's immune defenses. Cessation of smoking requires a determined individual as the focal starting point. Medications and counseling are adjuncts to assist the determined smoker.

Other treatments would include specific inhalers that would improve shortness of breath and prevent recurrent chest infections.

It is important that patients with COPD prevent chest infections as these promote progressive damage to the lung. Important in this regard are specific inhalers and an annual flu vaccine. Unlike asthma, inhaled steroids play less of a role in controlling the disease in its early stages.

Summary

COPD is not limited to cigarette smokers and may be the result of several factors often unknown to the patient. Previous tuberculosis, secondary smoke exposure, HIV and occupational exposures are important causes of COPD in South Africa. Often there are multiple causal factors of an individual's COPD. The symptom of breathlessness is most distressing to patients; so much so that often patients limit their daily activities to avoid the symptom of breathlessness. This creates a vicious cycle and renders them unfit and physically incapacitated, and promotes several other metabolic complications. There are treatment options available early in the disease.

(Source: www.who.int)

Key facts

- + Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a life-threatening lung disease that interferes with normal breathing – it is more than a “smoker’s cough”.
- + An estimated 64 million people had COPD worldwide in 2004.
- + More than 3 million people died of COPD in 2005, which is equal to 5% of all

deaths globally that year.

- + Almost 90% of COPD deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- + The primary cause of COPD is tobacco smoke (through tobacco use or second-hand smoke).
- + The disease now affects men and women almost equally, due in part to increased

tobacco use among women in high-income countries.

- + COPD is not curable, but treatment can slow the progress of the disease.
- + Total deaths from COPD are projected to increase by more than 30% in the next 10 years without interventions to cut risks, particularly exposure to tobacco smoke.



PREVENTING rotavirus

Have you had your baby vaccinated yet?

Compiled by Health Bytes

Rotavirus causes vomiting and diarrhoea in babies and toddlers, and all young children become infected before their third birthday. The effects can be serious – about 600 000 children die due to the virus each year (mainly from dehydration), but vaccination can save lives.

SYMPTOMS

Although in some cases no symptoms are seen, the usual signs are:

- + Fever
- + Nausea
- + Vomiting
- + Abdominal cramps
- + Diarrhoea and, in some cases, a cough and runny nose.

The most dangerous effect is dehydration. Severe dehydration can lead to death, so get to a doctor immediately if you see any of the following:

- + Lethargy
- + Cold pale extremities
- + Extreme thirst
- + Sunken eyes or sunken fontanelle (the soft spot on a baby's head)
- + A dry or sticky mouth and tongue
- + Absence of tears when crying
- + Dry, cool skin
- + Fewer trips to the bathroom to urinate
- + A dry nappy for several hours
- + Irritability
- + Convulsions

ROTAVIRUS: THE FACTS

- + Other than total isolation, vaccination is the only way to prevent rotavirus.
- + Vaccinations are administered from six weeks of age onwards, at intervals of at least four weeks. Rotarix requires two doses and RotaTeq three.
- + There are different strains

of rotavirus, and multiple infections by different strains may occur.

- + Rotavirus infection is highly contagious.
- + Rotavirus illness typically takes three to nine days to resolve on its own, however, always seek advice from a doctor.



HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Rotavirus is highly contagious, therefore it often spreads at crèches.

The virus passes in faecal matter even before rotavirus symptoms can be seen. It can also be air-borne. This is why it is vital that children wash their hands after visiting the bathroom, and before eating. Rotavirus can survive for days on hard and dry surfaces, and it can live for hours on human hands.

WHAT IF MY CHILD GETS IT?

If your child has diarrhoea and your doctor suspects rotavirus, he or she might run blood, stool or urine tests in severe cases. If

rotavirus is the culprit, the first form of treatment is increasing fluid intake to prevent dehydration – in severe cases a drip in hospital will be necessary. This is also the treatment for other forms of infectious diarrhoea.

Your doctor may recommend home treatment. In that case, follow his or her advice on what to give your child to eat and drink.

PREVENTION

Rotavirus is everywhere, so vaccination is imperative. The vaccines Rotarix and RotaTeq have been found to prevent approximately 75% of cases of rotavirus infection and 98% of severe cases.

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BUSTING THE HUBBLY BUBBLY MYTH

We watch with growing alarm as water pipes, also known as hookahs or hubbly bubblys, become increasingly popular among smokers and non-smokers alike. By Health Bytes Publishers

“There’s a misconception that the water pipe offers a harmless way of sharing a recreational drug that has no side effects,” says Sue Janse van Rensburg, CEO of CANSA. “The truth is that water pipe smokers and second-hand smokers are at risk of the same kinds of diseases that are caused by cigarette smoking, including cancer, heart and respiratory diseases, as well as adverse effects during pregnancy.”

IT’S TIME FOR THE TRUTH

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the smoke that emerges from a water pipe contains several toxins known to cause lung cancer, heart disease and other diseases. It delivers the addictive drug nicotine and, as is the case with other tobacco products, more frequent use is likely to result in addiction.

In addition, the charcoal burned in the pipes often produces its own toxins, including high levels of carbon monoxide and cancer-causing chemicals. This means that all people

exposed to the smoke produced by a water pipe inhale a double dose of toxins.

MORE POTENTIAL FOR HARM

The WHO has found that a water pipe smoking session, which typically lasts between 20 to 80 minutes, may expose the smoker to more smoke (and its harmful effects) over a longer period of time than when smoking a cigarette. The water pipe smoker may therefore inhale as much smoke during one session as a cigarette smoker would inhale consuming 100 or more cigarettes.

IT’S A TOBACCO PRODUCT

In South Africa, water pipes and their related tobacco products fall under the definition of ‘tobacco product’ as indicated in the Tobacco Products Control Amendment Act (2007). This means that its use and sale have to comply with the regulations that apply to a tobacco product in the country. This includes the prohibition of the sale of hookahs and their products to anyone under the age of 18.



QUITTING WITH EKICK BUTT

CANSA is helping people addicted to tobacco with its eKick Butt programme – a unique online smoking cessation programme – at no charge. Through a series of emails, surveys and downloads, the smoker is guided and mentored as they quit smoking and non-smoking becomes a lifelong habit, not merely the time interval between two cigarettes. The programme supplies a series of handy tools – tried and tested – to help quit for good.



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WHAT IS a Heart Attack?

The symptoms of a heart attack can vary from person to person. Some people can have few symptoms and are surprised to learn they've had a heart attack. It is important for you to know the most common symptoms of a heart attack. By Health Bytes Publishers

A heart attack occurs when one of the arteries that supplies blood to the heart is blocked. The underlying cause is coronary heart disease (CHD). Risk factors for CHD include smoking, high blood cholesterol, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and increasing age. To perform its duties, the heart muscle needs a generous supply of oxygen and nutrients, which it receives from blood pumped through the two coronary arteries and their branches.

A heart attack occurs when a blood clot blocks one of the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. The medical term for a heart attack is acute myocardial infarction (AMI). The underlying cause of a heart attack is coronary heart disease (CHD). CHD occurs when fatty deposits (called

plaque or atheroma) slowly build up on the inner wall of the coronary arteries and cause the arteries to become narrow.

If a blood clot forms in the narrowed artery and completely blocks the blood supply to a part of your heart, it can cause a heart attack. The severity of the heart attack depends on how much heart muscle is permanently damaged.

A less common cause of heart attack is a severe spasm (tightening) of a coronary artery. The spasm cuts off blood flow through the artery. Spasms can occur in coronary arteries that aren't affected by atherosclerosis.

A HEART ATTACK IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Call an ambulance immediately if you or someone you are with experiences the warning

signs of heart attack.

WARNING SIGNS OF HEART ATTACK

Warning signs vary from person to person and they may not always be sudden or severe. Although chest pain or discomfort is the most common symptom of a heart attack, some people will not experience chest pain at all,



DIAGNOSIS

Tests to help diagnose a heart attack include:

- + **Electrocardiogram (ECG)** — a reading of the heart's electrical impulses. Sometimes, this test is done while you are exercising on a bike or treadmill, which is called an exercise or stress ECG.
- + **A blood test** — to measure levels of substances released into the blood when the heart muscle is damaged.
- + **Coronary angiogram (or cardiac catheterisation)** — a special x-ray of your coronary arteries.



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Melomed Bellville Trauma Unit
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Melomed Mitchells Plain Trauma Unit
021 392 3126



A heart attack occurs when a blood clot blocks one of the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. ”

while others will experience only mild chest pain or discomfort.

When having a heart attack you may experience pain, pressure, heaviness or tightness in one or more parts of your upper body, in combination

with other symptoms. People have described this as “like an elephant sitting on my chest”, “a belt being tightened around my chest”, “bad indigestion” or “feeling not quite right”. You may have a choking feeling in your throat. Your arms may feel useless and heavy.

The warning signs of a heart attack include pain, pressure, heaviness or tightness in your:

+ Chest

- + Shoulder(s)
 - + Neck
 - + Arm(s)
 - + Jaw
 - + Back
- You may also:
- + Feel nauseous
 - + Feel dizzy or light-headed
 - + Have a cold sweat
 - + Feel short of breath
 - + Have a rapid, weak pulse ▶▶

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It is always better to go to hospital and be told it's not a heart attack than to stay at home until it is too late.

A SHARP STABBING PAIN IN THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CHEST IS USUALLY NOT HEART PAIN!

You may have just one of these symptoms or you may have a combination of them. Symptoms can come on suddenly or develop over minutes and get progressively worse. Symptoms usually last for at least 10 minutes.

If you have warning signs of heart attack that are severe, get worse quickly or last more than 10 minutes, call an ambulance immediately!

- + The trained operator will decide if you need an ambulance.
- + You will receive treatment as soon as you phone.
- + You will receive advice on what to do while waiting for the ambulance to arrive. Ambulance paramedics are trained to use special lifesaving

equipment and to start early treatments for heart attack inside the ambulance. Early treatment can reduce the damage to your heart.

The ambulance is the safest and fastest way to get you to hospital. It gets you medical attention straight away. Attempting to drive to hospital in a private vehicle can be dangerous for the occupants of your vehicle and other road users.

It is always better to go to hospital and be told it's not a heart attack than to stay at home until it is too late.

TREATMENT FOR A HEART ATTACK

Treatments may include:

- + **Medicines** to dissolve a blood clot – for example, one that is blocking a coronary artery.
- + **Angioplasty and stent implantation** – a procedure to open up a blocked coronary artery using a balloon at the point of narrowing. Once the artery is open, a special expandable metal tube (stent) is left in place to

keep it open.

- + **Bypass surgery** – an operation in which blood flow is redirected around a narrowed area in one or more of your coronary arteries. It is also called coronary artery bypass graft surgery (often shortened to CABG).
- + **Long-term use of medicines** – to lower the risk of further heart problems. Be advised by your doctor, but medicines may include a small, regular dose of aspirin, a statin (a type of cholesterol-lowering medicine), a beta-blocker and an ACE (angiotensin-converting enzyme) inhibitor.
- + **Implantable cardiac defibrillators (ICD)** – a small device that is sometimes implanted near the heart to manage abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) that may occur after a heart attack.

RISK FACTORS FOR CORONARY HEART DISEASE

You can reduce your risk of developing coronary heart disease and having a heart attack by removing or reducing risk factors.

CHANGING YOUR LIFESTYLE CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEART ATTACK.

These include:

- + Smoking – either being a smoker or inhaling other people’s smoke (passive smoking)
- + Having high blood cholesterol
- + Being physically inactive
- + Unhealthy eating
- + Being overweight or obese
- + Having high blood pressure
- + Having diabetes
- + Depression, being socially isolated and not having quality social support.

Other factors that can increase the risk of developing coronary heart disease include:

- + Getting older
- + Being male
- + Having a family history of early death from coronary heart disease, such as a first-

degree relative younger than 60

- + Being a post-menopausal woman.

Changing your lifestyle can reduce your risk of heart attack.

Addressing the lifestyle factors that contribute to coronary heart disease can help reduce your risk of heart attack. Things you can do include:

- + Take medicines as prescribed
- + Be smoke-free and avoid exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke
- + Enjoy healthy eating
- + Be physically active
- + Manage your blood pressure
- + Manage your cholesterol



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- + Warning signs differ from person to person.
- + No two heart attacks are the same.
- + Knowing the warning signs of heart attack and acting quickly can reduce the damage to your heart muscle and increase your chance of survival.
- + A heart attack is an emergency. If you experience the warning signs of heart attack, get help fast.

and blood lipid levels

- + Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.
- + Develop good social support networks and join groups.

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Meet one of our dedicated Specialists, **Dr Naseera Allie** who is an Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Melomed Gatesville.



VITAL STATISTICS & QUESTIONS



I am ... 30-something!

Where were you born? Cape Town.

Who do you share your house with?

My husband and daughter.

If you weren't doing what you do, you would be a

... gym instructor, a stress-free job with flexi-time!

I can't go a day without ... chocolate!

My friends and I like ... going for hikes.

What music are you listening to?

Rihanna, Justin Timberlake and Pink.

Perfect happiness is ...

sleep and a good book.

Success to me means ... happiness.

Everything in moderation BUT ...

cake!

“ One of my life mottos is: Why worry about things you have no control over? ”

LIKES ✓

Shopping, eating and sleeping

DISLIKES ✗

Being late



MY BEST PLACES: Bukhara, Olive and Oil and Baïa

Spicy red lentil & veg soup

Serves 6 – 8: Remember that red lentils cook in 20 minutes, making this a quick soup.

What you will need

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 tbsp (15 ml) sunflower oil | 2 potatoes, peeled and grated |
| 2 large onions, chopped | 2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped |
| 2 cm piece fresh ginger, grated | 1 tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh mint |
| 1 tbsp (15 ml) ground coriander | 1 tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh parsley or coriander |
| 4 tsp (20 ml) ground cumin | ½ tsp (2,5 ml) salt |
| 2 tsp (10 ml) curry powder or to taste | lemon juice and black pepper to taste |
| 8 cups (2 litres) water | |
| 1 cup (250 ml) uncooked red lentils | |
| 3 carrots, coarsely grated | |

Method of preparation

1. Heat oil in a large pot and fry onions, ginger and spices.
2. Add water, lentils, carrots and potatoes.
3. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer with a lid for 20 minutes or until the lentils are tender.
4. Add tomatoes, herbs, salt and heat through.
5. Season with lemon juice and pepper and remember not to add extra salt at the table.



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Edries Adams, B.Pharm-University of the Western Cape, South Africa MBA-University of Stellenbosch, South Africa



COLDS AND FLU

A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

Influenza (flu) and the common cold are illnesses that present in the lungs, throat and the nose. By Melomed Bellville Pharmacy Manager Edries Adams

With flu being the more dangerous of the two, presenting the most complications such as bronchitis, pneumonia and hospitalisation, both are however caused by viruses. Thus antibiotics won't treat the actual condition and will only assist in reducing or eliminating secondary bacterial infections. Flu symptoms have a sudden onset and include myalgia (muscle pain), definite fever, cough and sore throat. People at higher risk of secondary complications due to the flu are those over 65 years of age, expecting mothers and those with serious medical conditions such as heart disease.

Flu vaccinations are the best protection against contracting the flu. The flu vaccination for children and expecting mothers can be considered safe if it is

made from an inactivated virus, however the decision should be informed by your medical doctor. Some side effects experienced a couple of days after administering the vaccine include increased body temperature and muscle pains.

The flu vaccination does not protect one entirely from the flu, however it drastically reduces the probability of contracting flu and its severity. The flu vaccination composition changes annually given the ability of viruses to mutate and increase its resistance to vaccines. The flu vaccination does not protect against the common cold.

The common cold takes about two to three days to present symptoms such as coughing, sneezing and aching throat. Fever very rarely presents in the common cold and usually does

not cause severe health problems. The proper washing of the hands and the covering of the mouth when coughing and nose when sneezing helps reduce the risk of spreading the disease. Zinc preparations and vitamin C in the proper doses may reduce the length and severity of the common cold.

Living a healthy lifestyle is the best way to avoid catching the flu or common cold or the severity of these diseases. There is no effective vaccine against cold viruses. Adequate fluid intake is important as the flu and common cold cause dehydration which in turn may create states of fatigue. Coffee and alcohol can increase the degree of dehydration. Speak to your pharmacist for proper over-the-counter medication advice in reducing the symptoms of the flu and common cold.

Multi-tasking making you ill?

Doing many tasks concurrently has become part of our everyday lives, and we often pride ourselves at being efficient, but this attitude undoubtedly takes a toll on our health and well-being.

By Health Bytes Publishers



I wish I could clone myself and have two of me around. Now wouldn't that be convenient.

The concept of multi-tasking has originated to describe a computer that can run more than one programme at a time. Only one processing unit is involved, but it switches from one programme to another so quickly that it gives the appearance of executing all the programmes at the same time.

Women seem to be more efficient at multi-tasking than men. According to bestselling author Allison Pearson, in *I Don't Know How She Does It*, men and women are wired differently. Studies have indicated that women use both hemispheres of their brains, while men use only specified areas, being more focused and compartmentalised, or single-minded.

Research has indicated that multi-tasking might even be detrimental to our health, well-

being and productivity. Switching between different modalities in the mind all the time and coping with different mental demands could stress the brain. Continuous stress can break down the immune system.

Dr David Meyer, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan who specialises in cognition and perception, says: "Chronic multi-tasking over the years poses a strong risk for ultimate brain damage. As we force ourselves to bounce from task to task, we generate stress.

The body and the mind gear up to cope by releasing adrenaline. This powerful medicine is good for a crisis – but on an ongoing basis, it's hard on the brain and the body."

Shifting mental gears in multi-tasking costs time, compared to being focused on one task at hand, but multi-taskers are actually losing their ability to concentrate, Dr Meyer observed.

Researchers measured a 20 – 30% loss in the time it took for subjects to complete two separate problems when they switched back and forth mentally between the tasks.

No wonder there is such a rediscovery of "slow living" – experiencing quality of life and being happy now. It's time to smell the roses again. Less truly seems to have become more.

So how do you start reclaiming that quality of being?

1. Determine what is important.
2. Give important projects quality time.
3. Control distractions and persevere with the task.
4. Learn to say NO.
5. Develop an external memory, e.g. diary or notepad.
6. Refresh your system by taking some quality time with your children, etc.
7. Maintain an appropriate diet, rest and sleep regimen for better performance.

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