

melomag

Summer 2011 | Issue 03

FREE HEALTH GUIDE!



Back-to-school ailments?

All about pregnancy

Play it safe at school

GIVE-AWAY

Melomed is giving away a portable DVD player to one lucky reader! Details inside!

M E L O M E D
HOSPITAL HOLDINGS LTD

TB: Silent Killer
Find out more

Health news
and views

Nutrition for kids



PathCare

Drs Dietrich, Voigt, Mia
Vennote • Partners

WHAT IS PATHOLOGY?

The word **pathology** strictly refers to the scientific study of the causes and progression of diseases.

Nowadays the term also refers to the practice of diagnostic pathology which concerns itself with laboratory tests on tissues and body fluids mainly requested by doctors to enable them to diagnose and classify diseases accurately and to monitor their progression and the results of treatment.

Diagnostic pathology tests are performed in pathology laboratories which are located either in or outside of hospitals. Private laboratories are

generally owned and run by private pathologists. The practice of diagnostic pathology has become very specialised and the instrumentation and techniques in the laboratories highly sophisticated. Specially trained medical technologists in general conduct the tests in the laboratory while the pathologists interpret the results and act as consultants to the clients, i.e. doctors and patients.

Both pathologists and technologists are responsible for maintaining high standards of quality assurance to ensure the accuracy of tests results thereby protecting the consumer.

PATHCARE - PATHOLOGY THAT ADDS VALUE

You may have been referred to us by your doctor for pathology investigations that will assist with the diagnosis and treatment of your illness. Your doctor or our sister will take a sample of blood, urine, sputum etc from you, for us to perform the laboratory tests.

PathCare comprises of approximately 60 pathology laboratories and 110 specimen-collecting depots, with its head office at NI City, near Cape Town. The laboratories and depots are spread over South Africa and Namibia.

In all the laboratories the specimens are processed by the most technologically advanced and fully automated laboratory equipment. Specimens from hospitalised patients requiring urgent analysis can be dealt with in PathCare laboratories situated within many major private

hospitals throughout the country. Currently PathCare has more than 70 pathologists in South Africa and Namibia. These are all experienced specialists in their respective fields.

PathCare was the first pathology practice in South Africa to be fully SANAS (South African National Accreditation System) accredited (ISO Guide 15189). This is an international accreditation system which ensures that the quality of the results produced by PathCare meets international standards. The accreditation is maintained via annual inspections by the SANAS Accreditation Committee.

The logo of PathCare represents the care that we provide to our patients.

"Pathology that **adds value**"

www.pathcare.co.za
email: clients@pathcare.co.za

PathCare ...

The first syllable "*Path*" symbolises our core business "pathology" whereas the second syllable "*Care*" symbolises our value system, i.e. patient care is our priority.



contents

UPFRONT

- 1 Editor's note
- 2 Health news & views
- 4 Calendar
- 6 First aid – playing it safe at school
- 8 Baby's first year milestones

FEATURES

- 10 Nutrition for kids
- 13 Melomed events
- 14 Back to school ailments
- 18 How to: prepare for pregnancy

FACT FILE

- 22 All about Tuberculosis (TB) – a serial killer lurking
- 24 Recipe – Chicken chilli salad

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Recipe submitted by Melomed Catering Manager Mr Jaco van Heever.



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GIVE-AWAY

Melomed is giving away a portable DVD player to one lucky reader! See **page 13** for competition details.

HAVE A GOOD 2011

We have entered a new year and have carried with us the universal hope that this will bring an improvement in our fortunes in the future.

In reality this hope can only be realised through our efforts in trying to build a better tomorrow.

The Melomed Group has been outstanding in its continuous efforts in building itself to provide a better future for those it serves. Of note is its expansion and improvement of the facilities provided, with some big projects coming on stream in the near future. It has also tirelessly sought to improve the environment in which it operates, which includes, whenever possible, going into partnerships and co-operative projects of mutual benefit to all communities it has contact with. From time to time this magazine will feature and sometimes highlight events as they unfold.

This edition has an article on pregnancy which is of vital importance to every community and which offers some guidelines in an effort to assist those who find themselves engaged and often engulfed by situations involving pregnancy. Our readers are encouraged to read the article.

Melomag looks forward to the unfolding New Year in which it hopes to disseminate a wide variety of medical information which hopefully will widen the medical horizons of its readers while not forgetting those everyday newsworthy events about the Melomed Group which help to build its public profile.

As Chairman of the Melomed Group I feel that this is an appropriate time to wish our readership, on behalf of all those engaged in various Melomed ventures, including its directorship, its management, the staff, all those medical practitioners and institutions associated with it, and myself, everything of the best for this new year, and may it be one in which you will enjoy the best of health.



EBRAHIM BORAT
CHAIRMAN
MELOMED GROUP



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HEALTH NEWS & VIEWS



LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?



A new study concludes that it takes just a fifth of a second to fall in love!

When a person falls in love, a dozen different areas of the brain work together in releasing chemicals that induce feelings of pleasure and joy, including dopamine, adrenaline, oxytocin and vasopressin.

So does falling in love happen in the heart or in the mind? Stephanie Ortigue, an assistant professor of psychology, answers: "I would say the brain, but the heart is also related because the complex concept of love is formed by both bottom-up and top-down processes from the brain to the heart and vice versa. Activation in some parts of the brain can generate stimulations to the heart, butterflies in the stomach. Some symptoms we feel as a manifestation of the heart may be coming from the brain. These results confirm love has a scientific basis," said Ortigue.

The findings may explain why heartbreak can cause such extreme stress and depression.

"By understanding why people fall in love and why they are so heartbroken, researchers can use new therapies and better understand the pain people go through when love fails," Ortigue said.

EXERCISE TIP

**IT'S NOT IDEAL FOR FIGHTING
FLAB BUT SWIMMING IS GREAT
FOR YOUR OVERALL FITNESS
AND MUSCLE TONE!**

YAWN

It's one of the best things you can do for your brain. Afraid to risk rudeness and let out a hearty yawn? Well, here's an excuse to give Miss Manners a hissy fit:

YAWNING stimulates neural movement in certain areas of the mind and regulates brain temperature and metabolism, all of which can increase muscle control, enhance sensuality, and even ward off jet lag.

A NIGHTLY YAWNING RITUAL CAN HELP YOU:

- **Chill out.** A good yawn can relax you more effectively than meditation.
- **Stay focused.** Yawning rids the brain of sleepiness, helping you keep your attention on important ideas and concepts.
- **Be more compassionate.** Studies show yawning stimulates the part of the brain responsible for generating empathy and social awareness.

So intentional yawning may actually strengthen our ability to be kind to others.



SMOKING DOUBLES dementia risk



Heavy smoking during middle age can double the risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia two decades later, says researchers.

SMOKING already causes millions of deaths each year from cancer and heart disease.

A study suggests that heavy smoking in middle age increases the risk of both Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia for men and women across different

racial groups. The new findings show it threatens public health in late life, when people are already more likely to develop dementia.

Alzheimer's, the most common form of dementia, is a **fatal brain disease** in which people **gradually lose their memories** and their **abilities to reason and care for themselves**. It affects more than 26 million people globally.

People who smoked more than two packs of cigarettes a day had a higher risk of both Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia.



How long can a germ live?

The length of time a germ remains infectious depends mostly on the type of germ it is.

A GERM can be either a virus or a bacterium, and each virus and bacterium has a different behavior in the environment. For example:

- The smallpox virus is incredibly durable. A sample stored at room temperature may remain infectious for years. Anthrax is the same. Fortunately, smallpox has been eradicated and anthrax is not very infectious.
- The AIDS virus is fragile. It is only viable for a few hours. Hepatitis B, on the other hand, may survive up to a week.
- Some diseases cannot survive outside the human body. Syphilis and gonorrhea share this trait and depend on intimate contact for transmission.

KISS BAD BREATH GOODBYE

The smile. The kiss. The breath...

BAD BREATH (halitosis) may be common in dogs – but for people, bad breath affects how you feel about yourself, not to mention how others perceive you. In fact, you may not know you have halitosis until a brave friend tells you...

COMMON CAUSES

- 1 Bacteria breed inside your mouth. When bacteria stagnate, they multiply and give off toxins and stinky odors.
- 2 Foods such as onion, garlic, and fish can cause bad breath – even hours after you brush your teeth.
- 3 Any type of smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipe)

or chewing tobacco can leave you with a really nasty taste – and smell – in your mouth.

- 4 Sometimes blood sugar problems or an ulcer can cause bad breath.

NOW FOR THE FIX

- Brush your teeth – and tongue – twice a day and floss once a day.
- Use a fluoride mouth rinse.
- Drink lots of water.
- Reduce upset stomachs.
- Check your sinuses.
- Chew gum with xylitol.
- See your dentist.

calendar

JANUARY

**SunSmart:
Skin Cancer
Awareness
Month**

15 Jan–31 March
Influenza Vaccination
Campaign

30 January
World Leprosy Day
“The joy of a new start”

30



21 March World Down’s Syndrome Day **21**

21–27 March World Salt Awareness Week

22 March World Day for Water

23 March
Rheumatoid Arthritis Day



FEBRUARY

**SunSmart: Skin Cancer
Awareness Month**

Diarrhoeal Disease Focus Month

STI/Condom Month

**Pregnancy Campaign at
Melomed.** Contact Carmen
Loots 021 637 8100 or Tanya
Fester 021 948 8131 or Nuraan
Cader 021 392 3126 for more
information.

4 February World Cancer Day

12–20 February
Pregnancy Education Week
“Child birth education
makes a difference.”

13–20 February
Teen Suicide Prevention Week

14 February Dress Red Day

**Environmental and Nutrition:
Colorectal Cancer**

**Diarrhoeal Disease
Focus Month**

**Intellectual Disability
Awareness Month
(Mental Handicap)**

**“Intellectual Disability
and HIV/AIDS”**

**General Safety Around
Electricity Awareness Month**

8 March
International Women’s Day

10 March World Kidney Day

11 March
International Glaucoma Day

21 March
Human Rights Day

MARCH

23 March
World Meteorological
Day “Climate for you”

24 MARCH
**World
Tuberculosis
Day**



The Melohearts Support Program, in association with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa, is a free support group for patients, their family members and friends who have had a cardiovascular incident.

Anyone and everyone is welcome.

For more information contact
Carmen Loots on 021 637 8100





SAMWU NATIONAL MEDICAL SCHEME

SAMWUMED

Why do our members choose us to look after their families?

- SAMWUMED has a proud history of providing for the specific needs of workers in the local government sector.
- SAMWUMED offers members value-for-money by making sure that its benefits are in line with the contributions that members make.
- SAMWUMED has two comprehensive benefits plans that offer members and their dependants access to a wide-range of day-to-day and hospitalisation benefits.
- SAMWUMED assists members with their chronic conditions through managed care programmes such as the new HIV and Aids management programme.
- SAMWUMED has extensive pharmacy and hospital networks to ensure that members get the best care at affordable rates.
- SAMWUMED has invested in in-house clinics in the Athlone and Mitchell's Plain areas to assist members with dental, general practitioner and optical services.

Contact details:

Tel: 0860 104 117

E-mail: info@samwumed.org

www.samwumed.org

SAMWUMED is a medical scheme **started** by local government employees and **governed** by local government employees.

PLAYING IT SAFE

AT SCHOOL



While playing sports can improve children's fitness, self-esteem, co-ordination and self-discipline, it can also put them at risk. If you're heading for the field, pack your first aid kit, brush up on your skills and enjoy the game.

According to the Red Cross Children's Hospital Trauma Unit, approximately 20% of children treated annually sustain injuries at school.

- + Playground injuries are caused mainly by falls and include fractures, spinal injuries and head injuries. Ensure that your children are supervised at all times, restrict their play to age-appropriate equipment and teach them to use the equipment sensibly.
- + Common sports injuries include bruises, fractures, sprains, strains, joint injuries and nose bleeds. Children should wear ap-

This article provides guidelines on how to handle basic sports injuries – it is not a substitute for training.

propriate protective gear when taking part in sports activities.

- + Treatment depends on the type and severity of the injury. Always see your doctor if pain persists after a couple of days. Some sprains require a cast; others may need surgery if the tissue affected is torn. While self-care may suffice for mild injuries, broken bones (other than broken toes) need immediate medical care.

FIRST AID FOR SPRAINS, STRAINS AND JOINT INJURIES

Joint dislocations and broken bones are painful and may cause long-term complications if not handled in time.

Treat all serious arm and leg injuries as broken bones and always apply the **R.I.C.E.** method:

- + **Rest** the injured area as much as possible for 24 to 48 hours.
- + **Ice** the injured area as soon as possible. Apply to the injured area for 10 to 15 minutes every two hours for the next 48 hours.
- + **Compression** – Apply a snug elastic bandage to the injured area. Numbness, tingling or increased pain means it's too tight. Remove the bandage every three to four hours and leave it off for 15 to 20 minutes each time.
- + **Elevation** – Whenever possible, elevate the injured area above the level of the patient's heart.

ALL BROKEN BONES NEED SWIFT MEDICAL TREATMENT. CALL AN AMBULANCE.



FIRST AID FOR FRACTURES

All broken bones need swift medical treatment. Call an ambulance.

The general rule is to keep the patient still, as this reduces pain and the likelihood of further injury. Pad either side of the injured arm or leg with rolled up towels or blankets. Anything rigid and straight can be used to support a limb – even a magazine.

DO NOT try to straighten a broken limb.

DO NOT give a child who has broken a bone anything to eat or drink in case he

needs general anaesthetic for surgery.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Immediately call an ambulance if any of the following injuries occur or are suspected:

- + Prolonged loss of consciousness
- + Neck or spine injuries
- + Broken bones
- + Injuries to the head or face
- + Eye injuries
- + Abdominal injuries

Unless this is absolutely necessary, **DO NOT** move the child at all if any head, neck or spinal injuries are suspected.

Melomed 24 Emergency Services

Melomed 24 Ambulance Services was launched in November 2003 to address the key issue of providing immediate and reliable emergency services for the Cape Flats and surrounding areas of the Cape Town Metropole:

- 24-hour access to the Melomed emergency call centre
- Dispatch of emergency response vehicles
- Emergency telephonic advice
- Information hotline
- Medical transportation
- Inter-hospital transfers
- Medical repatriation
- In-hospital medical monitoring
- Compassionate visits
- Repatriation of mortal remains
- Motor vehicle accidents and Special events standby

The Ambulance unit boasts fully equipped ambulances as well as a rapid response vehicle and therefore has the ability to deal with any medical emergency 24 hours a day.

Trained paramedics manage and operate the ambulance service. Our paramedics are trained to offer Basic life support, Intermediate life Support, and Advanced Life support.

Melomed 24 caters for all Medical Aids and Private patients, Injury on Duty (WCA/COIDA) and also offers standby events.

**Emergency
NUMBERS**

**Melomed 24
Ambulance:**
0800 786 000

**Melomed Gatesville
Trauma Unit**
021 637 8100

**Melomed Bellville
Trauma Unit**
021 948 8131

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



Great Expectations: Baby's First Year Milestones

Caring for an infant can be exhausting, but there's so much to look forward to...

Smiles

After two months of sleepless nights and round-the-clock soothing. Maybe you've spotted a fleeting smile, but then again, it could have been gas. By around 2 months of age, your baby will smile in response to you!

Laughs

If the frequent sound of baby's crying has you on edge, take heart. By 4 months, you can look forward to another sound — your baby's laughter.



2 months



9 months

Waves "Bye-Bye"

Waving "bye-bye" is not just a cute trick — it is an actual expression of language. By 9 months most babies begin to make the link between sounds, gestures, and meaning. They understand that waving is connected to the phrase "bye-bye."

Sleeps All Night

While it is unrealistic and unhealthy to expect a newborn to sleep all night, by 4 to 6 months, most babies are capable of sleeping through the night.

Sits Up

How different the world looks when you're not stuck on your belly! Around 5 or 6 months, most babies can sit up with support — either by resting on their hands in front of them or by leaning on pillows or furniture.



Crawls

By 9 months, most babies crawl using both hands and feet, though some babies never crawl, preferring to creep or wriggle instead. **Crawling is not an essential baby milestone,** and infants who choose to scoot or creep still tend to reach other milestones on schedule.

Stands

By 12 months, most babies begin to stand briefly without support. They also take small steps while holding onto furniture or other objects, an activity called "cruising".

Takes a Step

Not all babies walk by their first birthday. The normal range is anywhere from 9 to 17 months, with most babies taking at least a few steps by about 13 months.



12 months

SAYS A WORD

"Mama! Dada!" There's nothing like hearing your baby call your name, and it usually happens right around the one-year mark. By this time, most babies can say at least one real word and actively try to imitate others.



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Nutrition for Kids



Ensure your kids are bright-eyed and bushy tailed by feeding them right.

Good nutrition is essential for growing kids – not just for strong muscles and healthy bones, but also for concentration in class. We show you where to start.

A GOOD START

Breakfast is essential. It kickstarts the metabolism, and a good breakfast will ensure stable blood sugar levels (essential for concentration and staying awake) until snack time. Some children struggle to eat in the morning. Keep healthy snack bars and fruit at hand in case time runs out and your child has to eat in the car.

TRY ONE OF THESE HEALTHY BREAKFAST IDEAS:

- + Wholewheat breakfast cereal with fresh fruit and

low-fat yoghurt

- + Wholewheat toast and cottage cheese or peanut butter
- + Scrambled eggs on wholewheat toast with baked beans
- + Fruit smoothie made with low-fat yoghurt and fresh fruit, sprinkled with muesli
- + Oats porridge
- + Wholegrain waffles topped with peanut butter, fruit, or ricotta cheese
- + Wholewheat pita stuffed with sliced hard-boiled eggs
- + Hot cereal topped with cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, or cloves
- + Peanut butter on a bagel with fresh fruit (banana or apple wedges) and low-fat milk
- + Vegetable omelette with a bran muffin and orange juice
- + Bran muffin and yoghurt with

berries

- + Cream cheese and fresh fruit, such as sliced strawberries, on a bread roll
- + Grated cheese on a wholewheat tortilla, folded in half and microwaved for 20 seconds and topped with salsa.

LUNCH IDEAS

You need to **avoid your child from getting caught in the tuck shop trap**, so plan and pack a lunch box. While you need to keep it healthy, remember you can't force your kids to eat things they hate, so bear their likes and dislikes in mind.

THE IDEAL LUNCHBOX WILL HAVE:

- + Protein to keep children alert
- + Complex carbs for slow-

Source: Clicks, Heart Foundation

Quick breakfast solutions

- + Low-fat fruit yoghurt and a banana
- + Wholewheat or brown sandwich with mashed banana/peanut butter
- + Fruit or muesli bar
- + Dried fruit
- + Trail mix

Trail mix recipe

Whether you're going for a long walk or just playing with friends, this easy and hearty snack is a great one to eat at home or pack for the road!

INGREDIENTS:

- + 1 cup unsweetened cereal

GOOD IDEA

- + 2 tbsp raisins
- + 2 tbsp dry-roasted unsalted peanuts

DIRECTIONS:

- + Pour cereal into a zip-lock bag.
- + Add raisins and peanuts, other nuts, or seeds.
- + Zip the bag closed and shake, shake, shake until well mixed.

REMEMBER:

Make sure the food you pack won't spoil. Try these tips:

- + Wash your hands before preparing food.
- + Use a thermos for hot foods.
- + Use cold packs or freeze some foods and drinks overnight.
- + Wash out lunch boxes every day or use brown paper bags that can be recycled.



- release energy
- + Calcium for growth, healthy bones and teeth
- + Fruit and vegetables for vitamins and minerals
- + Protein
- + Make sandwiches or salads with chicken, egg, ham, tuna or cheese.

CARBOHYDRATES

Complex carbohydrates release calories slowly and help to keep up energy levels and concentration. In contrast, refined carbohydrates (found in white bread, biscuits or cakes) only provide instant, short-lived energy. Choose complex carbohydrates such as wholewheat bread, pasta, Ryvita or rice. Pasta or rice salads make a nice change from sandwiches, while home-made popcorn is a healthy treat.

CALCIUM

Make sure they get plenty of full-cream dairy to build up their bones. Cheese, yoghurt, yoghurt drinks, smoothies and milkshakes are all excellent sources of calcium.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Provide five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. Try cutting fruit into chunks and threading it onto skewers or thin straws. Otherwise go for dried fruit, but only if you provide plenty of water.

COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES RELEASE CALORIES SLOWLY AND HELP TO KEEP UP ENERGY LEVELS AND CONCENTRATION.

After-school snacks



- + Even with good breakfasts and healthy packed lunches, kids often get home from school roaring hungry. It's important to have healthy food available. Don't expect kids to cut up their own veggie sticks. Keep these in the fridge, and make sure you always have at least some apples and bananas handy.
- + Given the ingredients and some simple instructions, older kids often like making their own snacks. Salads are a good idea, especially as something to snack on while you're cooking dinner.
- + Other good snack options include trail mix, nuts, low-sugar cereal and dried fruit. These are especially good as afternoon snacks for children who play sport.
- + What if your child comes home to an empty house? Again, be prepared. Leave healthy food in the fridge or on the kitchen counter. What hungry kids want is easy food – it's up to you to ensure it's healthy.

(Eating dried fruit without drinking water at the same time leads to constipation.) Most children will eat carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes or sugar-snap peas. Remember, avocado and tomato make great sandwich toppings.

DRINKS

Water is the best option, but unsweetened fruit juice, iced tea, drinking yoghurt and flavoured milk are also good, as long as you don't provide them too often. Most flavoured drinks contain a lot of sugar.

PHYSIOTHERAPY



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Dr. Rafiq Khan

MB ChB(Natal), B.SOC SC(HONS) (UCT), MCFP (S.A), DCH (S.A), M.Fam.Med (U.S), F.C.Paed (S.A) Practice no. 0127884

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DENTAL SURGEON



Dr. Shamima Bhorat

BChD (Stell) Practice no. 0163627

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T: Bellville: 021 948 6350 | **F:** 086 669 5135

E: sham_darso@mweb.co.za

We offer: Aesthetic/Cosmetic dentistry, restorative dentistry, white fillings, crowns, veneers, tooth whitening, dentures, root canal treatment, paediatric dentistry – child friendly environment, conscious sedation for anxious patients.

GENERAL SURGEON



Dr Craig Stanley

M.B.Ch.B, M.Med, Chirg (Stell)

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A general surgeon with special interest in gastroenterology, endoscopy (both diagnostic and interventional), oncology, laparoscopic surgery, as well as breast and thyroid surgery.

PSYCHOLOGY



Karen November

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PHYSIOTHERAPIST



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We are an in-hospital and out-patient based practice. For treatment of all conditions, including neuro-musculoskeletal, sports injuries and neuro (rehabilitation) with a special interest in orthopedic and respiratory physiotherapy.

Photo for visual purposes only, prize may differ from the one pictured and does not include headphones.



MELOMAG GIVE-AWAY

We're giving away a portable DVD player to one lucky reader!
To stand a chance to qualify, SMS the "Melomed24 Emergency telephone number" (the number is displayed in the magazine) and your name to 34298 (R2 per SMS). Competition closes 11 March 2011.

For terms and conditions please visit our website: www.melomed.co.za

MELOMED EVENTS



MELOMED GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Friday 22 to Sunday 24 October Engen Santos hosted the under-17 Knockout tournament at the Stephen Regal Sports Ground in Mitchells Plain, an annual event that attracts local talent from various clubs in Cape Town. Melomed 24 Ambulance Service is the medical team for the PSL senior team and was there in full swing and is proud to be associated with the youth of today.



Diabetes awareness was celebrated at Melomed Hospitals – free glucose testing was done.

The life of baby Nizole Mgwai was saved on 27 October 2010 due to the medical intervention received by resident Paediatrician, Dr M.R.Khan. Dr Khan celebrated Nizole's first birthday on 3 November 2010 and treated all the children in the ward with a toy and a party pack.



Eye Awareness Month – Melomed Corporate Social Responsibility

A cataract operation was performed by Dr. M. Saloojee for Imam B Saban who is well known for his splendid service in the Muslim Hospital Welfare Society.



OF BACK-TO-SCHOOL ailments

Returning to school means your child is exposed to hundreds of other children – and a myriad of viruses and bacteria. Melomed explains the most common ailments and how to treat them.



TRY THIS!

DIY ORAL REHYDRATION FLUID:
ADD EIGHT LEVEL TEASPOONS OF SUGAR AND HALF A LEVEL TEASPOON OF SALT TO ONE LITRE OF WATER. GIVE SMALL SIPS OF LIQUID REGULARLY.



FOR AIRWAYS

UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION (THE COMMON COLD)

Rhinovirus, adenovirus, and influenza A, B and C cause colds and flu that affect the throat, nose and sinuses. Children typically have six to eight colds a year with more severe and longer-lasting symptoms than adults.

Home treatment

If the child is generally healthy, his/her own immune system will overcome the virus. Antibiotics have no effect.

- + Keep the child at home.
- + Give plenty of fluids.
- + Give an antipyretic like paracetamol (e.g. Panado) or mefenamic acid (e.g. Ponstan) every six hours if necessary for headache, pains and fever. Many combination cold medications contain fever-lowering drugs. Do not over-medicate.

- + Clear nasal secretions with a saline (salt water) solution. Decongestants are only necessary when nasal obstruction interferes with feeding/sleeping: Nose drops/sprays containing oxymetazoline 0.025% (e.g. paediatric Iliadin, or Drixine) are effective. Don't use for longer than five days because of the danger of rebound congestion.
- + Oral decongestants can contain sedating anti-histamines, which might lead to drowsiness. Others contain pseudoephedrine, which can make children over-active. Ask your pharmacist for advice.

INFLUENZA (FLU)

Fever, headache, muscle ache/pain and respiratory signs are typical flu symptoms in older

children. In younger children it can present as a runny nose, wheezy chest or even lung infection. Highly contagious, flu spreads by direct contact with respiratory secretions from infected individuals.

Home treatment

Same as for a common cold.

Prevention

The annually updated flu vaccine can protect against the most likely strains. Best time for immunisation is March/April.

ASTHMA

Asthma is a lifelong, chronic inflammatory disorder that



Why do children get sick so often?



Childhood illness may not affect your family until your child starts daycare or school. After that, though, it may seem as if he (or she) is sick all the time. This is normal: your child is simply building a robust immune system. Resistance to infection develops only after exposure to a multitude of germs.

blocks airflow in and out of the lungs. Common symptoms include:

- + Shortness of breath when exercising or exerting yourself
- + A high-pitched whistling sound or wheezing when breathing
- + A cough that goes on for more than 10 days
- + Tightness in chest
- + Frequent respiratory infections lasting for more than two weeks.

Prevention

An acute asthma attack often results from failure to comply with the prescribed treatment, or preventative medication being stopped as soon as the

child feels better.

Avoid and manage asthma triggers, including:

- + Upper respiratory infections
- + Allergens (animal hair, house dust mites, pollen, foods)
- + Environmental conditions (very cold air/low humidity)
- + Vigorous exercise
- + Airborne substances (cigarette smoke, strong perfumes, car exhaust fumes)

Make sure your child's teachers/carers know about:

- + Substances that may trigger your child's asthma, particularly any food sensitivities
- + An emergency plan to follow if an asthma episode becomes serious.



FOR BOWELS

GASTRO-ENTERITIS (STOMACH FLU)

Parasites, viruses or bacteria can all cause gastro-intestinal infections. The Rotavirus is the most common cause of acute diarrhoea, which is usually preceded by crampy abdominal pain and vomiting, generally lasts a few days and causes dehydration.

Signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- + Decrease in urine output/ dark yellow urine
- + Thirst and dry mouth
- + Sunken eyes
- + Weakness/lethargy.

Professional treatment

- + Blood and mucus in stools suggest Shigella infection or other dysenteries that will need antibiotic treatment.
- + Diarrhoea is often associated with an infection elsewhere (e.g. otitis media/ ear infection, a respiratory infection).
- + Projectile vomiting or severe abdominal pain implies a possible surgical cause. Contact your doctor.

Home treatment

- + Use oral rehydration solutions (Rehidrat or Hydrol) to replace lost fluid, minerals and salt.

- + Probiotics (Reuteri, Culturelle or Probiote) are essential in replacing the good flora in the gut (gastro-intestinal system).
- + In viral gastro-enteritis, antibiotics are not indicated and may even prolong diarrhoea.
- + Anti-emetic agents are not recommended. Vomiting during gastro-enteritis usually gets better rapidly and will often abate once the child is rehydrated.

Note: If the child stays lethargic and does not keep up with fluid balance, he/she must be admitted for intravenous rehydration.

Prevention

- + Hand washing is the most effective
- + Rotarix, a newly launched vaccine for Rotavirus, can be administered from age six weeks.



FOR CONTAGIOUS

VARICELLA ZOSTER (CHICKENPOX)

This is one of the most common children's diseases and highly contagious. Peak age of occurrence is five to ten, and peak seasons are late winter and spring. Chickenpox has a characteristic itchy rash, which



How long should a sick child stay at home?

Children can generally return to school when they:

- + have no fever
- + are rested and alert enough to pay attention in class
- + have completed any period of medically recommended isolation.

forms blisters that become scabs in four to five days. The rash may be the first sign of illness, sometimes coupled with fever and general malaise. It is contagious from one to two days before the rash appears, to seven days after the onset of the rash when all the blisters have formed scabs. Do not scratch – it can cause scarring!

Home treatment

- + Give an antipyretic to ease fever, but remember, aspirin is not recommended for lowering the temperature as it can cause gastric upsets and should not be used in children under 16 in a viral illness because of potentially serious side effects, in particular Reye Syndrome.

Alleviate the itchiness with a topical lotion (calamine lotion).

Prevention

Varilrix, a chickenpox vaccine, can be administered from nine months.

MUMPS

A viral infection that causes swelling of the parotid gland, but can also affect other organs. Spread by direct contact and air droplets, it affects both sexes, while 85% of infection occurs in persons younger than 15. Epidemics are most common in late winter and spring. Mumps can be transmitted a day before until three days after parotid swelling. Other symp-

toms include fever, muscle pain, headache and malaise, which last three to seven days. Orchitis occurs in 15% to 35% of adolescents, but complications of infertility are rare.

Home treatment

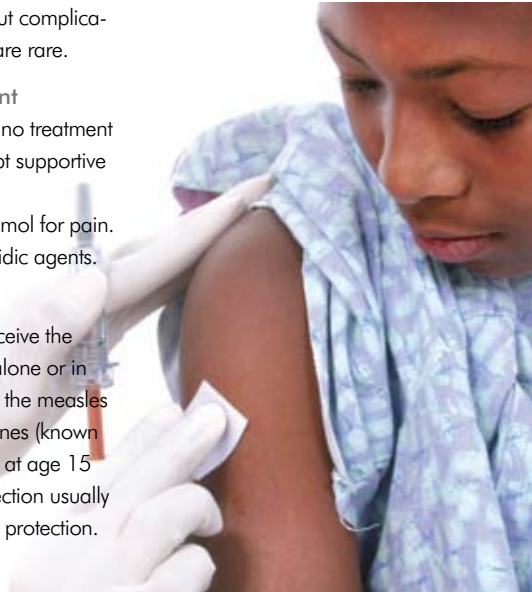
Currently there is no treatment for mumps, except supportive care.

- + Give paracetamol for pain.
- + Avoid sour/acidic agents.

Prevention

Your child can receive the mumps vaccine alone or in combination with the measles and rubella vaccines (known as MMR vaccine) at age 15 months. One injection usually produces lifelong protection.

PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BEST: GET YOUR FAMILY VACCINATED TODAY



Medical DICTIONARY

Antipyretic: An agent that reduces fever or quells it.

Anti-emetic: A drug taken to prevent or treat nausea and vomiting.

Decongestant: A drug that shrinks the swollen membranes in the nose and makes it easier to breathe.

Diarrhoea: A familiar phenomenon defined as unusually frequent or soft or watery bowel movements.

Orchitis: Inflammation of the testes, leading to red,

swollen, tender testes.

Probiotic: A microbe that protects its host and prevents disease. The best-known probiotic is *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, which is found in yoghurt, acidophilus milk and supplements.

Parotid gland: The largest of the three major salivary glands, located in front of and below the ear and behind the jaw bone. The other two glands are the submandibular (submaxillary) and sublingual.

Rebound (congestion): A rebound effect is the

worsening of symptoms when a drug is discontinued – in this case, congestion.

Intravenous: An injection into a blood vessel allows a drug to take effect very quickly. It enters the bloodstream directly and is rapidly circulated to the organ/tissue where it is needed.

Mefenamic acid: A common non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug.

Bacterial infection: A large group of diseases is caused by bacteria entering the body and multiplying too fast to be destroyed by the immune system.

Some types of bacteria also release powerful poisons, known as toxins, that rapidly damage tissues. In the past, bacterial diseases were a major cause of death; today most serious infections can be treated effectively with antibiotics.

Viral infection: Infection caused by a virus. Some of the most familiar minor illnesses, such as coughs, sore throats, and attacks of diarrhoea and vomiting, are often caused by viral infections. However, it can also be responsible for fatal diseases such as rabies, HIV infection and AIDS.



Preparing for

the journey of

Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a journey, a long-haul journey. And like all long haul-journeys, you have to prepare for it. In this article,

I highlight how you can make sure that you reduce some of the avoidable risks that are common in pregnancy.

By Dr Howard Manyonga: Specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist in private practice at the Melomed Bellville Private Hospital.

AVOIDING TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The transition from childhood to the reproductive age for girls seems to be getting lower over time. This early transition combined with early sexual debut in young girls has resulted in increased teenage pregnancies, certainly in the Cape Flats. The use of condoms should be encouraged to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Parents should assess the risk of their teenage children to decide on how to prevent precocious pregnancy.

BEFORE PREGNANCY

For older women in stable relationships who are planning to conceive, there is overwhelming clinical evidence for:

+ Maintaining an ideal weight for height:

There is a relationship between being overweight and pregnancy complications, including high blood pressure, miscarriage, diabetes during pregnancy, having a big baby and experiencing difficult child birth due to the size of the baby. Consultation with a dietician or a general practitioner is necessary if one is overweight.

MANY WOMEN EXPERIENCE MORNING SICKNESS AND TIREDNESS IN THE FIRST FEW MONTHS OF PREGNANCY. THANKFULLY, THE MORNING SICKNESS USUALLY STOPS BY THE THIRD MONTH.

- + **Taking a vitamin called folic acid:** This vitamin prevents developmental abnormalities of the brain and spine, which are a leading cause of abnormalities in the newborn. We recommend that this multivitamin is started at least three months before conception and continued throughout the pregnancy.
- + **Cessation of smoking and consumption of alcohol:** The highest risk to the developing fetus is during the time when the organ systems are being formed. This corresponds to the first half of pregnancy. Smoking is associated with increased risk of miscarriage and reduction in the growth rate of the fetus that could lead to pre-term delivery, low birth weight, and, after birth, sudden infant death.
- + **Screening for diseases:** The tests include screening for HIV, a sexually transmitted infection called syphilis and a viral infection of the liver called hepatitis. All these infections can be transmitted to the fetus. If one is found to have syphilis, this can be easily treated by administration of

antibiotics. If one is found to be HIV-positive, the specialist will recommend further investigations to determine how far the immune system has been affected and will usually share the care and management planning with an HIV specialist. Babies of mothers shown to be carriers of hepatitis are vaccinated at birth against the virus to reduce the risk of infection. The objective is to reduce the risk to the fetus.

DURING THE PREGNANCY

The onset of pregnancy is a time of many changes. Many women experience morning sickness and tiredness in the first few months of pregnancy. Thankfully, the morning sickness usually stops by the third month.

SCREENING FOR ABNORMALITIES

Between weeks 11 and 13, a special scan measurement of the skin thickness behind the baby's neck called the nuchal fold is combined with blood tests to calculate the risk of the baby having the learning disability called Down's Syn-

drome. A further test called an amniocentesis, during which fluid is extracted from the pregnancy sac, may be necessary if your baby is found to be at risk. **If you miss the opportunity between 11 and 13 weeks, a blood test can be carried out between 15 and 20 weeks that can also determine the risk to your baby.**

Detailed scans to assess the baby's anatomy are carried out between 18 and 22 weeks. During such a scan, the specialist will assess the baby's organ systems including the brain and skull, the face, the heart, the abdomen, limbs, internal organs and the spine. Any abnormalities identified will lead to a detailed discussion of the options available to you and your partner. ▶



The booking visit

- + It is vitally important that when you miss a period, you should have a pregnancy test. The earlier the scan, the more accurate the dating of the pregnancy is. Blood tests carried out include a blood count, infection screen (HIV, syphilis, hepatitis, German measles) and blood type. The doctor will usually prescribe multivitamins which you should take throughout the pregnancy.

MONITORING THE PROGRESS

Your specialist will see you on regular intervals during which your blood pressure, urine and fetal growth are checked. Ongoing counselling will be offered to you regarding the danger signs that you should watch for. These include bleeding, reduced fetal movements, drainage of fluid from the womb and vaginal discharge.

PREPARING FOR THE BIG DAY

Your doctor will discuss with you what to expect when you finally go into labour. It is advisable that you confirm with your health scheme that your pregnancy benefit will cover you for the facility you choose to deliver in. To that end, you should get authorisation well in advance because it is not possible to predict the date and time when you may need hospitalisation. In addition, we advise that you ask to visit the unit where you will deliver and get pre-admitted, because the last thing you want to be doing when you are in labor is to get lost and start filling in forms.

THE JOURNEY IS EASIER FOR THE PREPARED.

DID YOU KNOW?

Despite its name, morning sickness can occur at any time of the day and can vary from mild nausea to vomiting. The worst time, however, seems to be first thing in the morning when your stomach is empty, although nausea can also be triggered by strong smells, certain foods and cigarette smoke. Symptoms usually disappear after the first trimester.

WHAT TO DO

- + Eat several small meals throughout the day; have some plain or ginger biscuits first thing in the morning.
- + Avoid high-fat foods, too many spices and all foods that make you feel ill.
- + Drink plenty of fluids; teas like ginger, peppermint or camomile may also help.
- + Try to get a lot of rest.



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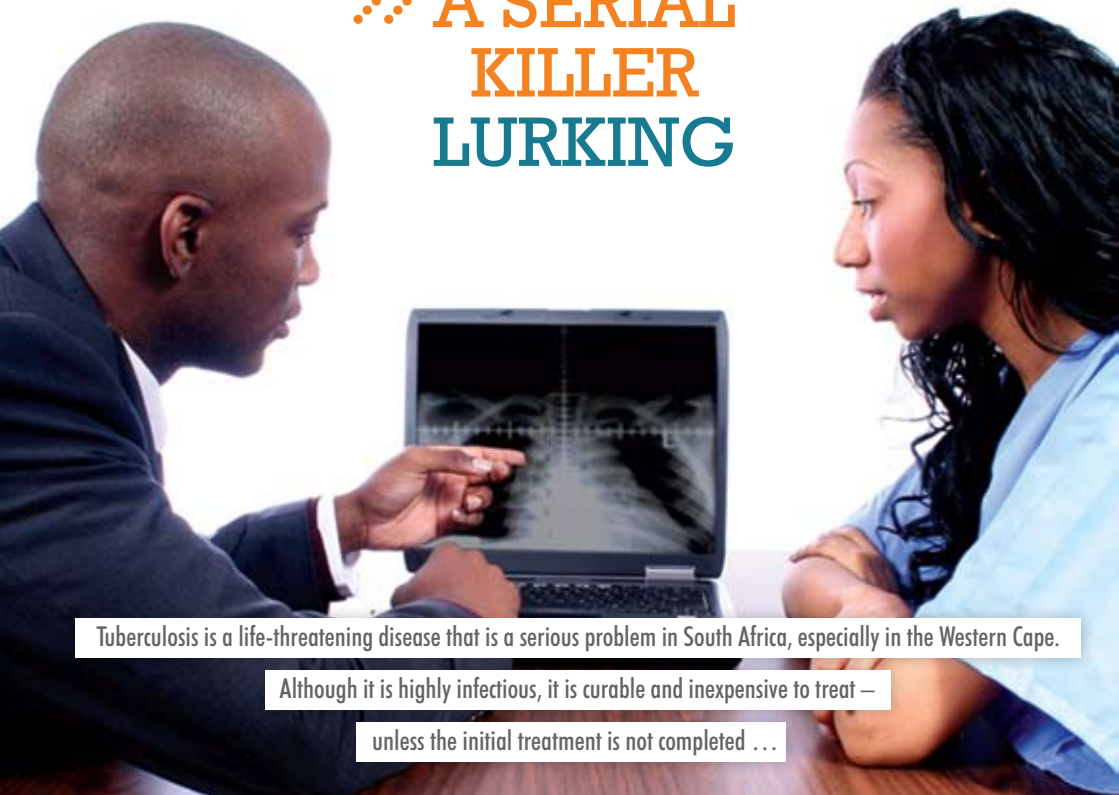
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MELOBABES



TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

❖ A SERIAL KILLER LURKING



Tuberculosis is a life-threatening disease that is a serious problem in South Africa, especially in the Western Cape.

Although it is highly infectious, it is curable and inexpensive to treat –

unless the initial treatment is not completed ...

TB Treatment

Medication for the first-line treatment of TB is widely available and cheap at all state hospitals and clinics.

However, because antibiotics are prescribed, TB can be cured only if the full course of treatment (six to eight months) is completed. This is a very long period, but it is essential that patients take their medication faithfully throughout. People who stop treatment prematurely are likely to develop multi-

drug resistance, making the TB more difficult and more expensive to cure.

Treatment occurs in two phases:

The intensive phase – four different drugs combined in one tablet, given five days a week for two to three months.

The continuation phase – two drugs given five days a week for four to five months. If the medication causes side-effects, the patient must return to the clinic. Uninformed or illiterate patients

who do not understand the treatment and do not complete their course of antibiotics pose an enormous problem. Often, people feel so much better after a few weeks of treatment that they stop their medication. Not only would they not have been cured of the infection but they would also continue to infect others and run the risk of developing drug resistance (see MDR TB below). In order to stop TB in South Africa,

over 80% of sufferers must be cured at the first attempt, so that they do not infect others.

In an effort to help people persist with the treatment and comply with the prescribed regimen, some doctors and clinics use a programme called Directly Observed Therapy (DOT). This means that a nurse or other healthcare professional administers your medication so that you don't

VITAL STATISTICS

Tuberculosis (abbreviated as TB for Tubercle Bacillus) kills nearly two million people all over the world every year. Approximately two billion people are currently infected with TB, with one new infection occurring every second. One out of 10 people develops tuberculosis, and if not treated, the infectious person can affect 10 to 15 other people in a year.

WHAT IS TB?

TB is caused by an infection with the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which usually affects the lungs, but can also affect the brain, kidneys or spine. In the latter cases the disease is not infectious.

General signs and symptoms of active pulmonary TB include:

- + A cough that lasts two or more weeks, may produce bloody sputum and gets progressively worse
- + Unintended weight loss
- + Slight fever and night sweats

have to remember to take it on your own. An important element of the strategy is the support and encouragement offered to TB patients for the entire six- to eight-month treatment period. In an attempt to prevent TB, all babies should be immunised with the BCG vaccine. Unfortunately this vaccine is not very effective for adults. Readers should rather take note of the symptoms of TB and have themselves tested if they suspect that they might have been in contact with someone who has active TB.

- + Chills
- + Loss of appetite
- + A general sense of tiredness and weakness.

Symptoms of TB in other parts of the body depend on the area affected. TB is spread by droplets expelled by people with the active disease of the lungs when they cough, sneeze, speak or spit. Fortunately TB bacteria die within seconds when exposed to the sun or heat. To be at risk, therefore, one has to be exposed to the bacteria for a lengthy period.

DIAGNOSING TB

Clinics and hospitals across South Africa perform tests for TB and multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB free of charge. The patient is examined and asked to give a sputum sample on two consecutive days. The results are available in 48

TB: A CURABLE DISEASE – BUT IT KILLS TWO MILLION PEOPLE EVERY YEAR!

hours, and only one sample needs to be positive to indicate TB infection.

An X-ray may also be taken, or the patient might undergo a tuberculin skin test where a small amount of testing fluid, called tuberculin or PPD, is

DID YOU KNOW?

- + In *Finding Neverland*, Kate Winslet's character suffers and later dies from TB.
- + In *Moulin Rouge* the prostitute Satine, played by Nicole Kidman, contracts TB and dies.
- + In 1849 pianist Frédéric Chopin died of pulmonary TB at the age of 39. Historical records indicate episodes of haemoptysis during performances.

injected beneath the skin of the lower arm. A small lump at the injection site is a positive reaction and usually indicates TB infection, but not necessarily active, infectious TB. Most people with positive tuberculin tests do not have active TB.

MDR TB

Multidrug-resistant TB develops as a result of partial treatment – either because people skip doses, don't finish the entire course of medication or are given the wrong treatment regimen. This gives bacteria time to develop mutations that can resist treatment with first-line TB drugs. Because MDR TB is spreading rapidly and could potentially make all TB incurable, some experts believe that ineffective treatment is ultimately worse than no treatment at all.

Chicken chilli salad

Recipe submitted by Melomed Catering Manager Mr Jaco van den Heever

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 2kg** Chicken breast, deboned and cut into strips
- 1** Red onion sliced into rings
- 40g** Chicken spice
- 100g** Mayonnaise
- 150g** Sour cream
- 150g** Sweet chilli sauce

- 1** Large iceberg lettuce
- 1** Packet of fancy lettuce
- 3** Tomatoes sliced and halved (half moons)
- Half** a cucumber sliced in angles
- 10** Slices low-GI brown bread sliced in triangles
- 80ml** oil

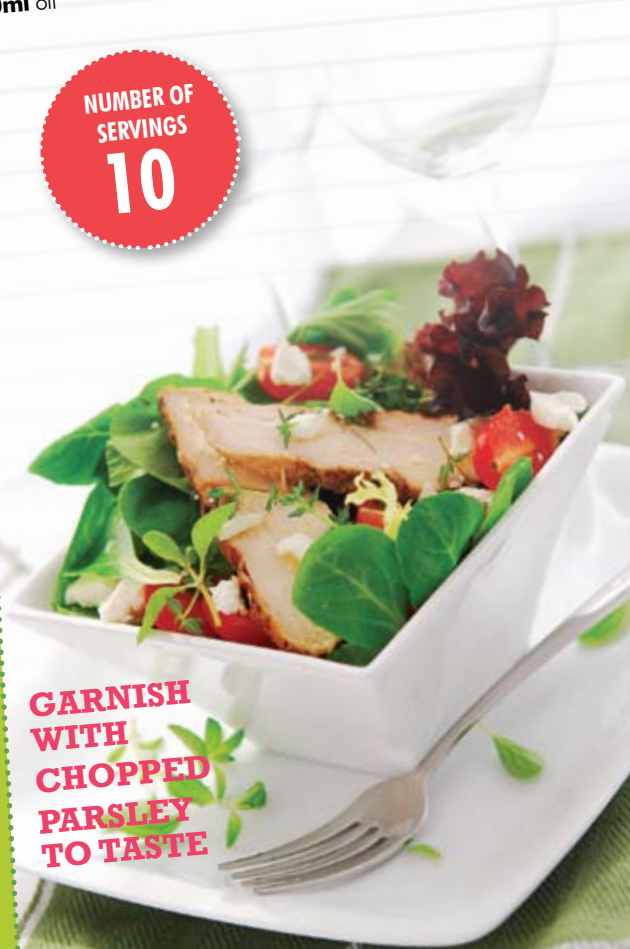
METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Spice the chicken strips with chicken spice and fry in oil until cooked and golden brown. Let it cool.
2. Combine the mayonnaise, sour cream and sweet chilli sauce.
3. Wash and break lettuce into bite-sized pieces (about the size of a cookie).
4. You need 5 half-moon tomatoes per plate and 5 cucumber slices per plate
5. Place lettuce in the centre of a plate.
6. Dip chicken strips in sauce. Ensure that it is covered but not drippy (shake off extra sauce).
7. Arrange the tomato and cucumber alternatively around the base of the lettuce. Arrange the chicken strips on the open part of lettuce.
8. Arrange the red onion on top of the chicken strips.
9. Place two triangles of bread on the side of the plate.
10. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with a smile.



NUMBER OF
SERVINGS
10

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