

# melomag

Autumn 2011 | Issue 04

**FREE**  
Health  
guide!

Smoking  
and the  
danger to  
your lungs

Drugs on  
the street  
– know  
the signs

## All about epilepsy

Soothe your  
headache naturally

  
MELOMED  
HOSPITAL HOLDINGS LTD

Health news  
and views | 2 |

Animal bites  
and the risks | 6 |

Handy medical  
directory inside | 10 |



# 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](http://www.pathcare.co.za)  
email: [clients@pathcare.co.za](mailto: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

- 2 Health news & views
- 4 Calendar
- 6 First aid – animal bites
- 8 Soothe a headache the natural way
- 10 Medical directory
- 12 Samwumed medical scheme information
- 14 The dangers of smoking
- 16 Drugs on the street
- 20 Dealing with epilepsy
- 23 Melomed events
- 24 Recipe – Pasta fungi



## CONTRIBUTORS



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FCCP. See page 14 for his  
article on the dangers of  
smoking.



Recipe submitted by  
Melomed Catering staff  
member, Maymoena  
Rykief. See page 24 for  
her easy-to-cook recipe,  
perfect for the cooler  
autumn evenings.

## GIVE-AWAY

We're giving away  
a tablet,  
"BambooFun" to one  
lucky reader!  
See page 11 for  
competition details.

# WELCOME TO 2011

2011 has commenced with great

expectations for the Melomed Group.

The highlight of the year so far has been the opening on 25 January 2011 of the new southern wing at the Melomed Gatesville hospital. This state-of-the-art development with a large ICU, a highcare area, new medical and surgical wards and doctors' rooms have done the Group proud. Morton and Partners also have a newly founded radiology practice with a new MRI facility.

The Melomed Gatesville expansion project continues with the next stage being a new block C on the northern side, to include a new paediatric unit, incorporating paediatric ICU beds, an Oncology Unit and plenty of parking. This phase is due for completion in July 2011.

Melomed Mitchells Plain is undergoing a facelift which will enhance the image of the hospital.

Melomed Bellville, from 1 March 2011, appointed a new manager, Mr Johan Nienaber, an accountant by profession who has gained extensive experience in the private hospital industry. We wish him a long and happy stay with the Melomed Group.

Melomed 24 Ambulance Service, renders an indispensable service, second to none in its field.

The trauma units serving all our hospitals and run by Dr Moolla Inc. render an essential service and make a vital contribution to the business of the hospitals.

Melomed has several new specialists joining the doctors' ranks at the hospitals, broadening the specialist pool available to our patients. Many have made their mark in their specialties. Mention can be made of Dr Karbanee, a paediatrician at Melomed Gatesville who has been selected by UNAids to represent South Africa in a newly formed Civil Society Task Force.

All the above would not be possible without the dedication, efforts and support of the body of professionals and persons who have decided to associate themselves with the Melomed Group. To these and many others, the Melomed Group wishes to extend a heartfelt thanks.

Happy reading.



**EBRAHIM BORAT**  
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# HEALTH NEWS & VIEWS

## MIND POWER



Looking for an easy brain workout? Meditation could be the answer. It not only relaxes you, but reduces blood pressure and, it seems, can make you more intelligent.

While many use meditation as a religious practice, you can do it simply for health benefits. The trick is to focus your attention. Try focusing on an image, a sound or your breath. The idea is to get to a point where your mind is still while you're still fully conscious, but not thinking actively. Studies have shown that meditation, by exercising those parts of the brain responsible for attention and concentration, improves learning and decision making. And the benefits are long-term: people who meditate for just 40 minutes a day have been found to have thickening in those parts of the brain responsible for attention. You could benefit by starting off with just 15 minutes a day.

## Guavas -

Nature's own winter remedy for colds and flu

*Guavas are nature's most powerful source of vitamin C, which is vital for boosting immunity, especially in winter. They contain three times more vitamin C than oranges. They're a good source of iron and dietary fibre and contain traces of beta-carotene, calcium and potassium.*



They also help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure, whilst their lycopene content helps to prevent heart disease and prostate cancer. Alongside all the health benefits, guavas make the perfect snack food for the figure-conscious. Guavas contain approximately 156kJ each, which is nothing compared to other treats.

## Eat foods that fight infection

Here are some good foods to eat when your body is fighting off an infection:

- **Bananas:** Soothe upset stomachs.
- **Bell peppers:** Loaded with vitamin C.
- **Blueberries:** Curb diarrhoea, are high in natural aspirin. (May lower fevers and help soothe aches and pains).
- **Carrots:** Loaded with beta-carotene.
- **Chilli peppers:** Can open sinuses and help break up mucus in the lungs.
- **Cranberries:** Help prevent bacteria from sticking to cells lining the bladder and urinary tract.
- **Onion:** Has phytochemicals purported to help the body clear bronchitis and other infections.
- **Tea:** Black and green teas (not herbals) contain catechin, a phytochemical purported to have natural antibiotic and anti-diarrhoea effects.



## EAT BREAKFAST

## to stay slim!

Researchers have found that people who eat breakfast weigh less than people who don't; and what you have for breakfast can influence your food choices for the rest of the day. Those who choose low-calorie foods for breakfast tend to eat healthily throughout the day.

- + Good, healthy starts include whole-grain cereals and fruit. Studies have shown that those who eat a bowl of cereal in the morning have lower average weight than either those who skip breakfast or those who sit down to a plate of bacon and eggs.
- + Eating a breakfast of low energy density foods (foods low in calories for their given amount, such as high-fibre whole grains, fruit and vegetables) is key.



### HEALTH TIP

**YOU CAN PROTECT YOUR HEART BY SWITCHING TO ROOIBOS. THIS TEA IS A CLINICALLY PROVEN ANTIOXIDANT, WHICH MEANS IT CAN HELP TO SLOW DOWN ATHEROSCLEROSIS. DRINK UP TO SIX CUPS A DAY FOR OPTIMAL PROTECTION.**

## ROOIBOS FIRST-AID TIPS

- 1 Add a few rooibos bags to your bath water to soothe a sunburnt skin.
- 2 Treat itchy skin by wiping the affected area with a face-cloth dipped in a strong solution of lukewarm rooibos. Press very gently to dry.
- 3 Apply strong rooibos tea to the skin to relieve eczema, rashes and nappy rash. You can even bath your pet in a rooibos solution to treat skin problems.
- 4 Treat hayfever by taking lukewarm rooibos in your cupped palm and gently drawing the tea into your sinuses. Hold it for a few seconds, release it and blow your nose gently.
- 5 Calm down digestive upset and colic in babies and adults with rooibos.



calendar

**APRIL**

**Environmental and Nutrition:  
Colorectal Cancer Month**

**1-8 April** Polio Eradication  
Awareness Week

**7 April** World Health Day

**17 April** World Haemophilia Day



**JUNE**

**Tough Living with  
Cancer and Men's Health**

**National Blood Donor Month**

**Child Protection Month**

**1 June** National Paraffin  
Safety Day

**1 June** International  
Children's Day

**23 April** World Book Day

**27 April** Freedom Day



**28 April** World Day  
for Safety & Health at Work

27

**9-13 May**  
National Archives Week

**10 May** Lupus Awareness Day

**12 May** Nurses Day

**15 May** International Day  
of Families

**16-20 May** Health Promoting  
Schools Week



1



**17 May** World  
Telecommunication Day

**18 May** International Museum  
Day "Museums and Memory"

**25 May** Africa Day

**26 May** Bipolar Awareness Day

**1-5 June**  
World Environment Week

**1-7 June** Volunteer Week

**6-12 June** World Heart Rhythm  
Awareness Week

**8 June** World Ocean Day

**14 June** World Blood Donor Day

**15 June** World Elder Abuse  
Awareness Day

**16 June** Youth Day

16

**20-26 June** National  
Epilepsy Week

**21 June** National Epilepsy Day

**21 June** Get Tested Day

**26 June** International Drug  
Awareness Day, International  
Day Against Drug Abuse and  
Trafficking.

**MAY**

**Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month**  
Contact: 021 557 0323

**No Tobacco Campaign**

**AIDS Candlelight Memorial Month**

**1-8 May** Hospice Week

**3 May** World Asthma Day

**6 May** International No-Diet Day

31 May 2011  
**World  
No-Tobacco  
Day**





SAMWU NATIONAL MEDICAL SCHEME

# SAMWUMED

## Have you visited the SAMWUMED Clinics in Athlone and Mitchell's Plain yet?

### HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD VISIT OUR CLINICS:

- We are committed to providing quality medical care that is convenient and comprehensive to our members.
- If you live or work in and around Athlone and Mitchell's Plain, chances are it is close by.
- All services are charged at the Scheme Tariff, which means out-of-pocket expenses are reduced significantly.

### Contact us

If you are a SAMWUMED member, pay us a visit or contact your SAMWUMED Clinic today on 021 697 9032 in Athlone or 021 391 4141 in Mitchell's Plain for an appointment.

Clinics are open from 08h30 to 17h30, Mondays to Thursdays and close at 12h00 on Fridays and Saturdays. Clinics are open on the last Friday of the month, from 08h30 to 16h00 and closed on the last Saturday of the month.

**EVERY PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO ACCESS SUFFICIENT HEALTHCARE WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION, AND SOCIETY MUST UNITE TO ENSURE ITS ADEQUATE FUNDING.**

- Services are charged at lower rates than many private providers.
- Regular promotions where selected products are available at discounted prices.
- Free physiotherapy at the Mitchell's Plain Clinic, subject to a doctor's referral.
- In-house dental laboratory and X-ray machines help keep costs to a minimum.
- Personalised care for members and their families.

**“ SAMWUMED IS A MEDICAL SCHEME STARTED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND GOVERNED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. ”**





# ANIMAL BITES

Any animal bite poses a risk of infection. A doctor should assess the bite mark as soon as possible to see whether a tetanus\* or rabies\* injection, or a course of antibiotics, is required.

**P**ets cause most animal bites, while bites from wild animals and non-immunised domestic animals can carry the risk of rabies. In Africa the mongoose, black-backed jackal and the bat-eared fox are known carriers of rabies. Most pets, however, are vaccinated for rabies and are unlikely to carry the virus.

Possible injuries include:

- + Broken skin, with or without bleeding
- + Puncture wounds
- + Major cuts
- + Crushing injuries
- + Bruising

Follow these guidelines to treat animal bites:

**1 STAY SAFE.** Secure the animal and/or the victim. Move the victim to a safe place.

**2 CALL AN AMBULANCE** if the person has been seriously injured.

**3 CALM AND REASSURE THE PERSON.** Wear latex gloves or wash hands thoroughly before (and after) attending to the wound.

**4 FOR MINOR WOUNDS** If the bite has barely broken the skin, wash it thoroughly with mild soap and running water for five minutes to

remove saliva or debris. Cover the bite with antibiotic ointment and a clean dressing.

**5 FOR DEEP WOUNDS** If the bite leaves a puncture or the skin is bleeding, apply direct pressure with a clean, dry cloth until the bleeding stops. Elevate the area of the bite.

**6** If the bite is on the hand or fingers, **CALL A DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY.**

**7 IF THE BITE HURTS,** give the victim medication to relieve the pain.

## Get medical help if:



- + You suspect the animal might have rabies. If left untreated, rabies is fatal to humans.
- + The person has not had a tetanus shot within the last five years.
- + There is pain, swelling, redness or pus.
- + The bite is on the face, neck, or hands.
- + You aren't sure if the wound needs stitches.



**8 IF THE WOUND BECOMES**

**INFECTED**, find a doctor.

Thus, for 24 to 48 hours after the bite, observe for signs of infection:

- + Skin getting more red
- + Increased pain
- + Swelling
- + Discharge from the site
- + Swollen glands

**9 THE WOUND MAY NEED**

**STITCHES.** Wounds on the face or hands should always be seen by a doctor because of the likelihood of scarring and loss of function.

**PREVENTION**

Here are some ways to prevent animal bites:

- + Teach children not to approach strange animals.
- + **Never leave a small child alone with a dog or cat.**
- + Teach children not to provoke or tease animals.

voke or tease animals. Tell them not to wave sticks, throw stones or pull tails.

- + **Do not move suddenly or scream around an animal.**

Don't rush up to a dog until you know for sure that it is friendly. Leave pets alone while they are eating or sleeping.

- + Do not feed wild animals with your hands.
- + Do not pick up a sick or injured animal.



**Medical DICTIONARY**

**Tetanus or lockjaw:**

An infectious disease. It leads to convulsions and painful, persistent stiffness of muscles. Tetanus can be prevented with immunisations every five years.

**Rabies:** A serious and often fatal viral infection of the central nervous system. The virus is transmitted to humans through the saliva of the infected animal.

**"DON'T GO NEAR AN ANIMAL THAT MAY HAVE RABIES. DON'T TRY TO CATCH IT YOURSELF."**

**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
- Medical transportation
- Inter-hospital transfers
- Medical repatriation
- First aid training
- Special events standby
- Emergency medical rescue service

The Ambulance unit boasts fully equipped Advanced Life Support 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



FOODS THAT CAN HELP SOOTHE A

# headache

Reach for one of these healthy ingredients

the next time your head is pounding

## Watermelon helps dehydration!

Dehydration is a common cause of headaches. So instead of popping a pain pill next time your head throbs, consider reaching for water-rich foods like watermelon, berries, cucumber, melon, tomatoes and lettuce. The natural water contained in both fruits and vegetables contains essential minerals, like magnesium.

**GOOD  
IDEA**

## Healthy Carbs

Low-carb dieters beware: Too little carbohydrates and you might bring on a headache. By reducing energy to the brain and causing dehydration, these low-carbohydrate diets can trigger headaches. When one hits, consider reaching for healthy carbs, such as those found in wholewheat bread, oatmeal, fruit or yogurt.

Bonus: A healthy boost of carbs may also improve your mood, as they help your body to release serotonin, the feel-good hormone.



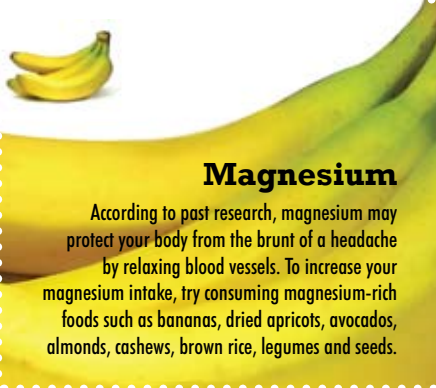


## Spicy foods

It may sound unusual, but spicy foods such as salsa and hot peppers may help you snap back from a headache faster. If a headache is due to sinus congestion, spicy foods may help to decrease congestion and open the airways, helping to decrease pressure and the accompanying headache.

## Coffee or herbal tea

Caffeine dilates the blood vessels, which can lessen head pain. But too much may trigger migraines in some people so instead of coffee try some herbal tea. If taken in conjunction with a painkiller, caffeine can also speed up the medicine's effect, and as a result some painkillers include caffeine. If you're a caffeine junkie, you may experience headaches as part of caffeine withdrawal. A jolt of caffeine will usually help, but in the long run, it's best to break your addiction.



## Magnesium

According to past research, magnesium may protect your body from the brunt of a headache by relaxing blood vessels. To increase your magnesium intake, try consuming magnesium-rich foods such as bananas, dried apricots, avocados, almonds, cashews, brown rice, legumes and seeds.

## Calcium

The brain depends on calcium to function efficiently. Make sure you are consuming calcium-rich foods, like fat-free plain Greek yoghurt, which is a great source of calcium, with no added sugars and beneficial probiotics for your gut.



## Vitamin E

Sprinkle sesame seeds on salads, in oatmeal or on top of soups and stir-fries. Why? These tiny seeds pack a big nutritional punch. Sesame seeds are rich in vitamin E, which may help to stabilise estrogen levels and prevent migraines during your period. It also improves circulation, which helps prevent headaches. Bonus: Sesame seeds are also rich in magnesium, which may give them added headache-preventing power.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY



### Melissa Wentzel

B.SC (Physiotherapy) Practice no. 0238120

8 Koffie Peer Road, Eastridge 7785

**T:** 021 397 5544 | **F:** 021 948 1988

**C:** 082 367 3779

**E:** wentzelmelissa@yahoo.com

A dynamic team of physiotherapists that treat a wide variety of conditions (namely musculoskeletal, orthopaedic, neurological, chests and paediatrics) in both the in-hospital and out-patient setting.

## PHYSIOTHERAPIST



### Nurhaan Rakiep

B.SC (Physiotherapy) Practice no. 0376418

107 Voortrekker Road, No.8 Ambition House,  
Bellville

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**C:** 084 966 8657

**E:** nuraanr@medis.co.za

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 orthopaedic and respiratory physiotherapy.

## PAEDIATRICS



### Dr. Rafiq Khan

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

Room 305, Melomed Gatesville, Clinic Road,  
Gatesville, 7764

**T:** 021 637 3811/7 or 086 037 5426 | **F:** 021 637 3815

**C:** 082 579 1074 | **E:** mhdrafiq@telkomsa.net

Well established paediatric practice providing ambulant and emergency care on a 24/7 basis. Paediatrician available for all types of deliveries, neo-natal care, intensive care of very sick infants and children. Special interest in allergies, asthma and eczema.

## PAEDIATRICIAN & PAEDIATRIC PULMONOLOGIST



### Dr. Delano Rhode

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This new practice offers a 24-hour general paediatric and neonatal service with multi-disciplinary support. Special interests are paediatric lung disease, asthma, intensive care and both interventional and diagnostic bronchoscopy.

## PSYCHOLOGIST



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Mitchell's Plain

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A general psychology practice for therapy with adults and assessments of children with scholastic problems.

## CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST



### Miriam Ameer Mia

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**T:** 021 637 8100 ext 2361 | **F:** 086 689 7517

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Assessment and psychotherapy for adolescents and adults with anxiety, mood disorders, bereavement, trauma, relationship difficulties and somatoform conditions. Also personal development. Long-and-short term therapy with individuals and couples.

**DIAGNOSTIC RADIOLOGISTS**



Dr. Sean S Conway - L.R.C.P & S.I; L.M.;  
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Dr Norman Smuts - MB.Ch.B; F.F. Rad(D) SA  
Dr Marek Blaszczyk - FC Rad(D) SA  
Practice no: 0366862

Suite 701, Mitchell's Plain Medical Centre,  
Symphony Walk, Mitchell's Plain

T: 021 392 7167 | F: 021 392 0938  
C: 083 627 3800 | E: m.c.n@iafrica.com

General radiology and X-ray, multi-slice CT, ultrasound,  
mammography, bone densitometry and intervention.

**GENERAL SURGEON**



**Dr Craig Stanley**

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C: 082 614 6459  
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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.

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**MELOMED GIVE-AWAY**

We're giving away a tablet, "BambooFun" to one lucky reader! **To stand a chance to qualify, SMS the name of Melomed's baby programme (the name is displayed in the magazine) and your name to 34298 (R2 per SMS).** Competition closes 15 June 2011. Prize sponsored by Kamoka Computers.



Give-away terms and conditions. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn after the closing date. In the event of the judges not being able to get hold of winners on details supplied, alternative winners will be selected. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners must be prepared to be photographed for publicity purposes. The prize is not transferable and may not be converted into cash.



SAMWU NATIONAL MEDICAL SCHEME

# SAMWUMED

## SAMWUMED : A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

**SAMWUMED is a unique member-controlled medical scheme, offering the most affordable medical cover for municipal employees nationally.**

**SAMWUMED** believes that every South African has the right to access quality healthcare.

As a restricted medical scheme catering to the needs of local government employees, it has a specific mandate to provide affordable healthcare plans for its members.

Created by workers for workers in 1952, the Scheme's underlying principles echo those of the Department of Health's planned National Health Insurance: that every person has the right to access sufficient healthcare without discrimination and that society must unite to ensure its adequate funding.

### WHY CHOOSE SAMWUMED TO CARE FOR YOUR FAMILY?

- **SAMWUMED** was started by workers for workers in 1952. The scheme has a proud history of providing for the specific healthcare needs of its members.
- **SAMWUMED** is financially stable with a solvency ratio that has been significantly higher than its competitors since 2001 and well above the 25% minimum requirement set by the Council for Medical Schemes.
- **SAMWUMED** is the largest restricted medical scheme in local government which means that more people trust the scheme to look after their



**LOOK AFTER YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH**

**M E L O M E D**  
HOSPITAL HOLDINGS LTD

Melomed Hospitals have been contracted as a preferred provider of hospital services for SAMWUMED patients. Visit any of our emergency units for immediate medical attention. For any information please contact the following:  
Melomed Bellville – 021 948 8131  
Melomed Gatesville – 021 637 8100  
Melomed Mitchell's Plain – 021 392 3126  
or visit our website on [www.melomed.co.za](http://www.melomed.co.za)

## ROAD TO HEALTHCARE



## ROAD TO HEALTHCARE AND JOIN SAMWUMED TODAY!

healthcare interests than any other.

- **SAMWUMED** offers good value for money. Its benefit payouts are in line with contributions paid by its members, while most of its competitors have benefit payouts that are much lower than the contributions they receive.
- **SAMWUMED's** non-healthcare costs are very low. This means that the scheme makes sure that the money its members pay is used to provide the best quality healthcare their contributions can buy.

### Contact us

**Call Centre:** 0860 104 117

**E-mail:** [info@samwumed.org](mailto:info@samwumed.org)

**Website:** [www.samwumed.org](http://www.samwumed.org)

**Office hours:**

**Monday – Thursday:** 08h15 – 16h45

**Friday:** 08h15 – 16h00

**Saturday:** 08h30 – 12h00

**Athlone Primary Healthcare Clinic:**

**Tel:** 021 697 9032 or 9022

Situated at

**SAMWUMED Head Office:**

Cnr Trematon & Lascelles Streets,  
Garlandale, Athlone, Cape Town

PO Box 134, Athlone, 7760

**Tel:** 021 697 9500

**Fax:** 021 696 3505

**Mitchell's Plain Primary Healthcare**

**Clinic:** Merrydale Avenue,  
Portlands, Mitchell's Plain

**Tel:** 021 391 4141/3/5

**Fax:** 021 392 6186

“  
**EVERY PERSON  
HAS THE RIGHT TO  
ACCESS SUFFICIENT  
HEALTHCARE WITHOUT  
DISCRIMINATION,  
AND SOCIETY MUST  
UNITE TO ENSURE ITS  
ADEQUATE FUNDING.**”

# THE DANGERS of smoking



That smoking is dangerous is well known. It is ironic that until the 1960s smoking advertisements still appeared in medical journals, e.g. *The British Medical Journal*, *Lancet*, *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* etc. The caption would be “Doctors prefer Camel”, and similar.

Article by: Dr Axel Brüning, Pulmonologist / Specialist Physician

The statistics are that a billion people will die as a result of smoking this century. This year alone 6 million people will die as a result of smoking. This is several per second. If any other substance were this deadly there would be a huge outcry and the substance would be banned immediately. It is, however, socially acceptable to smoke, and highly addictive. It is also very profitable for the tobacco manufacturers.

If you smoke you are likely to live at the least 10 years, often 25 years, less than somebody who doesn't smoke. What is more, the last years of your life will be spent in extremely poor health. You will also harm those

around you with second-hand smoke. It is estimated that approximately 11 million people will be affected this year by the effects of second-hand smoke, and that is a considerable cause of death as well. Again, should any other substance cause second-hand effects to a person who is not directly involved with that substance, there would be a huge outcry.

## SPECIFIC PROBLEMS YOU CAN EXPECT FROM CIGARETTE SMOKING ARE:

**Cardiovascular System**, i.e. your heart and blood vessels. Many smokers feel that only their lungs might be affected, but smoking is also the biggest

cause of heart attacks. If you smoke one cigarette your risk is 50 times higher than a non-smoker. If you smoke two cigarettes, the risk is 50 times higher than one cigarette, etc. You can appreciate the risk of a 20-a-day habit. If you have other risk factors for heart disease, e.g. diabetes, your risk is many times elevated above what I have just mentioned. Stroke is also a major consequence of smoking cigarettes. Amputations of the legs, i.e. peripheral vascular disease, is a further cardiovascular complication.

**Respiratory system**, i.e. your lungs and upper airways. Smoking will cause chronic

### QUITTING: THE BENEFITS

+ Within 6 hours your heartbeat will slow down and your blood

pressure will drop.  
+ Within 12–24 hours you'll be able to breathe better.  
+ Within a few days your

sense of smell and food taste will return.  
+ Within a month you'll have fewer wrinkles.  
+ Within two months

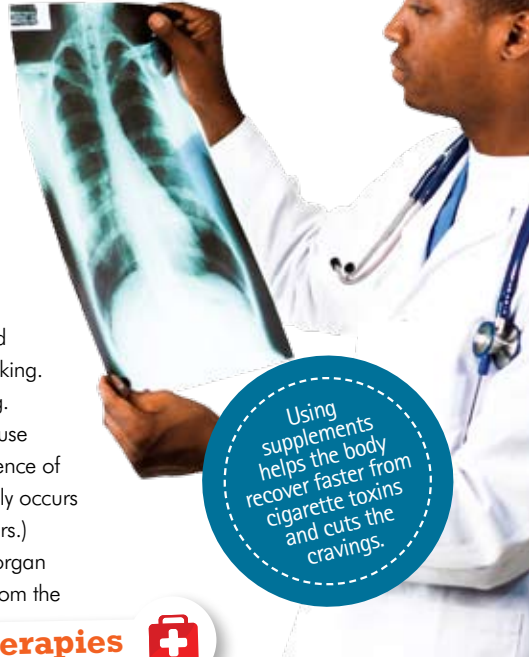
you'll have more energy.  
+ After a year of quitting you'll have reduced the risk of heart disease by half.



bronchitis and emphysema in many smokers. Once this has occurred, it is irreversible. The only effective form of management for chronic bronchitis and emphysema is stopping smoking.

With this lung condition you will be **chronically short of breath, wheezy, tight and with a productive cough**. Eventually you may end up on oxygen confined to a wheelchair or bed. Not all smokers will develop chronic bronchitis and emphysema and there is definitely a genetic or inherited predisposition. If your parents or other relatives have this condi-

you will die a painful death in a short period of time. Cancer of the throat (like Michael Douglas) is also caused by smoking. TB in this country is very strongly associated with cigarette smoking. (Other causes, e.g. AIDS, can also cause TB, but in the absence of AIDS, it usually only occurs in cigarette smokers.) Cancers in other organ systems ranging from the



Using supplements helps the body recover faster from cigarette toxins and cuts the cravings.

## Alternative therapies



- + Kick the Habit is a programme that involves two 30-minute sessions of therapy done within 24 hours. This programme has a money-back guarantee and effects are said to last for a year. See [www.quitsmoking.com](http://www.quitsmoking.com).
- + Hypnosis is used as a means of treatment

- therapy. Consult the yellow pages to find a registered psychologist who specialises in hypnosis.
- + Natura (available at pharmacies and health shops) have homeopathic drops to help you quit.

tion related to smoking, you will almost certainly develop that as well. Many asthmatics smoke and their asthma will never be controlled until they give up. They will definitely also develop chronic bronchitis. Lung cancer is a dreaded consequence of smoking.

There is a rising epidemic of lung cancer worldwide, almost only due to cigarette smoking, and at present there is no cure. If you get lung cancer

mouth, oesophagus, stomach, pancreas, kidneys, bladder, colon, breast in females and many more are directly attributable to cigarette smoking.

**Smoking causes premature ageing** of the skin and associated connective tissue. It is easy to pick up a smoker just by looking at the face, especially the fine wrinkles around the mouth.

**Alzheimer's Disease**, which causes memory loss, is

almost never the case in non-smokers, i.e. is strongly associated with cigarette smoking.

**The effect of second-hand smoke** on children in the household of smokers is highly detrimental and your children are likely to develop asthma and other respiratory conditions.

Hopefully this will convince you to give up smoking. There are now two new medications as well as nicotine replacement therapy to help you. Good luck!

# DRUGS

# on the Street

All you need to know about drugs on the street – what is out there and how to know the symptoms if your child is using. Find out the long-term effects on your child and the side effects of the drugs.

Source: Cape Town Drug Counselling Centres - [www.drugcentre.org.za](http://www.drugcentre.org.za)

## TIK (CRYSTAL METHAMPHETAMINE)

Tik is an odourless, crystal-like substance. It is a stimulant that speeds up the functioning of the vital organs, e.g. the heart. It is highly addictive and harms the functioning of the central nervous system.

**Street names:** speed, ice, choef and straws.

### How is Tik used?

It is commonly smoked in a light bulb or a glass pipe called a “lolly”. The crystals are heated in the bulb/pipe and inhaled. It can also be swallowed, injected or sniffed for an immediate, intense high. The pattern of abuse is “crash and binge” (use a lot; go into withdrawal then use more to stop the withdrawal symptoms).

### Symptoms of Tik use

- + Dilated pupils
- + Accelerated speech
- + Agitation /Aggression
- + Weight loss



**BEFORE RECOVERY MY LIFE WAS PRETTY MESSED-UP. ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T WANT TO ADMIT IT, I KNOW NOW THAT I WAS IN THE GUTTER.**

- + Loss of appetite
- + Insomnia
- + Unusual energy

**What are the effects of Tik?**

- + Increased confidence
- + Increased energy
- + Increased sex drive
- + Decreased appetite
- + Loss of concentration
- + Memory loss

**What are the long-term effects?**

- + Risk of addiction
- + Sexual dysfunction
- + Chronic use results in psychosis, violence, confusion and risk of suicide

**Psychosis**

It is characterised by hallucinations (e.g. seeing and hearing things that are not true/real), extreme paranoia, delusions as well as violent outbursts due to panic and fear.

**What to do if someone is psychotic?**

The individual needs medical treatment immediately – get to an emergency room or psychiatric hospital.

**How addictive is Tik?**

The rate of addiction can be extremely fast for some people. Tolerance develops rapidly, so users need more and more

to get high, and start going on longer and longer binges. Some avoid sleep for several days while using.

**What happens when you stop using Tik?**

- + Nausea
- + Depression
- + Aggression
- + Fatigue
- + Anxiety
- + Cravings for the drug
- + Stomach cramps
- + Back pain
- + Drowsiness
- + Increased appetite

**WHAT IS HEROIN?**

Heroin is one of many drugs known as opioids – drugs originating from the opium poppy Papaver Somniferum. Other drugs in the same family include opium, morphine, pethidine, methadone, codeine and wellcanol. **Street names:** Unga, Beat, "H", Thai white and Brown Sugar.

**How is it used?**

Heroin can be injected under the skin or directly into a vein. This is called "mainlining" or "spiking". It is also sniffed, inhaled or smoked. When heroin is smoked, heroin powder is heated in tin foil and the resulting black smoke is then inhaled. This is called "chasing the dragon". ▶

**I am 26 years old and have two wonderful kids. I have been in recovery just over a year.**

When I was using Tik I didn't really care about anything – not my kids and not myself. I thought I had everything in the world but I didn't. My life was built around gangsters and drugs and I loved it. I used to date a gangster and for me it was cool. He used to hit me and even threatened to kill me, but that didn't make me leave him or stop taking drugs. I know now that at that time I did not really have a life. I did not have proper clothes and sold most of my own and my kids' clothing, just to feed my Tik habit.

My mom and I used to fight a lot because of my using, but I never thought that drugs were the problem – I always blamed my mom for everything. She even threw me out of home and called the cops on me. I spent a month in jail but that did not stop me using. I lied, stole and manipulated my way through everything. What is still hard for me to think about today is the fact that I robbed people in the street, and I can't make amends to them.

A year ago I went into treatment and I was so fortunate to have such wonderful people in my life. People I used to steal from and lied to many times have helped me in my recovery. My life today is much better than it was. I attend NA and feel I have a new family and new friends. The 12-step programme has helped me a lot and I have a wonderful sponsor whom I can call if I feel like using drugs. I am also still attending the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centres and I love it. Looking back I can say that I don't want to be in that lonely dark place anymore. I still have a lot of problems but I don't have to use drugs. Sometimes I miss Tik but I can't use – if I used my life would get unmanageable, just one hit and my life would be over. I don't know what else to say, but recovery is worth living.

### Symptoms of heroin use

- + Constricted pupils
- + Mood swings
- + Constipation
- + Personality changes
- + Loss of appetite and weight
- + Sleepiness
- + Decreased sex drive
- + Slurred speech

### Risks of heroin abuse

A person can become addicted to heroin after only a few days of using it. **This means the person needs more and more of the drug to get high and will experience withdrawal symptoms after stopping.**

### What are the effects of heroin?

- + "Rush"
- + Slowed breathing
- + Cloudy thoughts and feeling confused
- + Nausea and vomiting

- + Spontaneous abortion
- + Amenorrhea (women stop getting their period, the menstrual cycle stops)

### What are the long-term effects?

- + Addiction
- + Infectious diseases, e.g. HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C
- + Collapsed veins
- + Abscesses and sores
- + Infection of heart lining and valves
- + Arthritis and joint pain
- + Accidental death through overdose

### Suspicious signs to look for

- + Bent and blackened teaspoons
- + Hypodermic syringes and needles
- + Lemons/packets of citric acid
- + Needle marks
- + Unidentified tablets, capsules or syrups
- + Tourniquet

**What happens when you stop using heroin?**

**Withdrawal symptoms begin within 4-6 hours after the last dose in heavy users. For the first 48-72 hours the symptoms may be painful and unpleasant but are rarely life threatening.**



### Symptoms include

- + Sweating
- + Nausea and vomiting
- + Trembling and shaking
- + Shortness of breath
- + Dizziness
- + Pounding heart
- + Stomach cramps
- + Diarrhoea
- + Muscular aches and pains
- + Cold, sweaty and covered in goose-flesh (this is often referred to as "cold turkey")



## Signs of alcohol & other drug abuse

### Physical changes

- + Weight loss, pale face, circles under eyes
- + Red eyes (or frequent use of eye drops)
- + Unexplained skin rashes
- + Persistent cough, frequent colds
- + Changes in sleep and/or eating patterns
- + Deterioration in personal hygiene
- + Odour of alcohol or other drugs
- + Obvious intoxication

### Behavioural changes

- + Increased need and use of money
- + Quitting or getting fired from jobs
- + New friends, lying secretive, mysterious phone calls

- + Attendance problems at work or school
- + Drop in performance at work or school
- + Accidents at work or school
- + Mood swings (e.g. angry outbursts, sadness/depression or elated mood)
- + Verbal and/or physical abuse of family members
- + Spending more time alone
- + Quitting hobbies or extracurricular activities
- + Theft and missing valuables, alcohol or medication

### Items to look for

- + Alcohol and other drugs in possession
- + Mouthwash, breath sprays or eye drops
- + Thinners, Tippex or other solvents (indicates inhalant abuse)

- + Bank bags, rolling papers (Rizla, etc.), broken glass bottle tops, pipes of various shapes and sizes, pieces of tinfoil, mirrors, razor blades, small screens or burnt spoons
- + Seeds (from dagga plants)
- + Incense burning
- + Burns or stains on hands and clothing

*Some of the above symptoms may be due to other reasons besides drug use, such as sexual abuse. Adolescence is also a time of physical changes as well as changes of your role in society. To a degree some of the above symptoms may be completely normal for an adolescent. Substance abuse normally results in a substantial change in a whole range of behaviours.*

# Melobabes programme

CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR JOURNEY TO MOTHERHOOD IS UNDERWAY. WE AT MELOMED HOPE THAT OUR MELOBABES PROGRAMME WILL HELP YOU TO PREPARE FOR THIS JOURNEY BY PROVIDING YOU WITH ALL THE RELEVANT INFORMATION. [www.melomed.co.za](http://www.melomed.co.za)

## » What can expectant mothers and their partners look forward to from the Melobabes programme?

- Pregnancy education seminars.
- A special Melomed pregnancy journal to help you keep track of the changes you can expect in your body.
- A guided tour of the hospital facilities.
- On admission you will receive a toiletry bag which includes a luxurious pair of velvet slippers, a shopper bag and your own copy of *Melomag*, compliments of Melomed management.
- You will receive a Melomed nappy bag, which contains nappies and a selection of baby toiletries to get you started in the first few days of motherhood.
- The option to have a photo of your new baby displayed on our website.
- A Melomed photo frame with your newborn's photo.
- Complimentary informational brochures/pamphlets.
- The first immunisation.



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Melomed Bellville 021 948 8131,  
Melomed Mitchells Plain  
021 392 3126 or send us an  
e-mail: [info@melomed.co.za](mailto:info@melomed.co.za)



# DEALING WITH Epilepsy

**Seizures can be frightening to see, but with the right medical care, epilepsy can be managed.**

Article supplied by Epilepsy South Africa, [www.epilepsy.org.za](http://www.epilepsy.org.za).

People with epilepsy have a tendency for recurring seizures. **Seizures, or convulsions, occur when there is abnormal electrical discharge in the brain.** This may be triggered by chemical imbalance or a structural abnormality. The term epilepsy is used to cover a variety of

seizure types. These differ in cause, nature, severity, management and long-term outcome.

## CAUSES

Some people develop epilepsy because of brain damage from injury, infection (e.g. encephalitis\*),

hormonal problems, circulatory problems or tumours (known as symptomatic epilepsy). However, for most the underlying cause can't be identified.

Some with epilepsy may identify their triggers (specific circumstances under which some people with epilepsy

Seizure	What it looks like	How you can help
Generalised absence (previously named petit mal).	The person looks blank and stares. There may be blinking or slight twitching. It lasts a few seconds then normal activity continues.	Be reassuring. The person may be unaware of the seizure. Note that it has occurred and, in a classroom situation or similar, repeat missed information.
Generalised tonic-clonic (previously named grand mal).	The common sequence is: stiffening of the body; falling; possible blue colour around the mouth; jerking movements. As breathing returns to normal the normal colour returns. There may be blood-flecked saliva and incontinence (rare). Lasts a few minutes.	Protect the person from injury. Cushion the head. Don't restrict movement or put anything in the mouth. Help breathing by putting the person on to the side. Stay with him or her until fully recovered.
Complex partial (affecting a specific area of the brain).	May start with a warning or "aura". The person may appear confused or distracted or may display abnormal behaviour. There may be repetitive movements, e.g. plucking at clothes.	Remove harmful objects and guide the person away from danger. Reassure him or her quietly.



## Living with epilepsy

Thanks to better medical treatment and improved understanding, most people with epilepsy lead full and active lives. Yes, the diagnosis may come as a shock and you may have to make some changes so that you can get on with your lifestyle. But try to come to terms with it as quickly as possible so that you can get on with your life!



**SOME PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY MAY IDENTIFY THEIR TRIGGERS. THESE COULD INCLUDE STRESS, HORMONAL CHANGES OR ILLNESS.**

will be more prone to seizures). These could include stress, hormonal changes, heat, forgotten or incorrect medication or illness. A particular type of epilepsy, photosensitive epilepsy, is triggered by visual stimulation such as flashing lights or flickering TV.

### TYPES OF SEIZURES

There are many types of seizures and a person may have more than one type.

No two people have the same symptoms, and the type of seizure depends on which part of the brain is affected. If the whole brain is affected then the seizure is known as generalised and there is a loss of consciousness, however brief. If only part of the brain is affected, then it is known as partial or focal and consciousness is not necessarily lost. Recovery

times vary from seconds to minutes.

### DIAGNOSIS

An accurate description of the seizures and the circumstances in which they occur is important. CAT scans\* may be taken to determine whether or not there are any structural changes in the brain. EEG\* tests will measure changes in the brain's functioning.

### MEDICATION

The majority of people with epilepsy have their seizures controlled by anti-epileptic medication. About 80% of people with epilepsy will have their seizures totally controlled or greatly reduced thanks to these drugs.

### PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

+ **GP and neurologist:** To help your doctors, keep a

record of your seizures, noting how you felt before and the circumstances surrounding it. You may find it useful to prepare a list of questions before you visit your doctor.

### Questions to ask:

- + Which type of epilepsy do I have?
- + Is there an identifiable cause?
- + Will I have to take medication?
- + How long will I have to take it?
- + What does the medication do?
- + Are there any side effects?
- + Is control possible?
- + How will it affect my life? ▶

**+ Social worker:** You can get practical advice from your clinic social worker. Advice and support are available from Epilepsy SA (website listed above).

**+ Relatives and friends:** Be as open as possible. The support and understanding of family and friends are invaluable. Give accurate information to your family and friends, as their correct understanding of your condition will assist them in supporting you.

**+ Employers:** Most people with epilepsy have steady jobs. Many are afraid to disclose their epilepsy, but you really should tell your boss and co-workers if you have frequent seizures. That way people will know what to do if you have a seizure.

**+ Teachers:** It's very important to tell your child's teacher if he or she has epilepsy. Share any advice you get from your doctor.

## HELPING YOURSELF

You can prevent getting injured during a seizure.

**Here are some tips:**

**Fires and stoves:** Never

come too close to an open fire. Keep guards around hearth fires and primus and gas stoves.

**Bathrooms:** Doors should be left unlocked and if possible should open outwards. A shower is often better than a bath, but if not available, bath water should be kept shallow and the taps should be turned off before getting in. Avoid bathing while alone at home.

**Sleep:** Some people have seizures during their sleep. Sleeping without a pillow may be advisable.

**Sports:** With adequate precautions, you can take part in any sport. When horse riding, always wear a helmet. Don't swim, go mountain climbing or sailing alone.

**Identity discs:** Wear a Medic Alert identity disc at all times. These are available from Medic Alert or through Epilepsy South Africa. Keep an identity card with your name and address and your doctor's details in your purse or wallet.

**Self-help groups:** Epicare is a support group for people with epilepsy and

their families and friends. For more information about your nearest group, contact Epilepsy South Africa on 0860 374 537 (0860 EPILEPSY).

## Medical DICTIONARY

**CAT scan:** The CAT (Computerised Axial Tomography) scan, also known as the CT (computed tomography) scan, is an X-ray technique that produces a film representing a detailed cross section of tissue structure of any chosen part of the body.

**Electroencephalogram:** A machine-made, graphic record of brain activity. A neurologist places electrodes on the scalp to pick up brain activity.

**Encephalitis:** Acute inflammation (irritation and swelling) of the brain, usually caused by infections such as meningitis.





# MELOMED EVENTS!

Official opening of the new south wing and MRI unit  
at Melomed Gatesville.



**LAUNCH  
OF MRI  
UNIT  
Melomed  
Gatesville**

The new south wing and MRI facility at Melomed Gatesville was officially opened by the MEC of Health (Western Cape) Mr Theuns Botha on Tuesday 25 January 2011. The hospital now incorporates 173 beds, boasts the latest technology and comfort, and includes new luxurious general, ICU and private wards. The spacious new specialised 26 bedded cardiac ICU is the single largest specialised ICU in the Western Cape.



Franco West, Marc Rogers and Faizal Sanford from Melomed 24 departed on the 3rd February 2011 for three weeks to Poffadder in the Northern Cape. Melomed 24 was chosen to be the Emergency Medical Service Provider on duty for the Emergency Medical Rescue Event for Audi.



*Melomag portable DVD winner:* We would like to congratulate Mrs Telana Charles for winning the portable DVD in our Melomag competition. Mrs Charles's mother was admitted to Melomed Gatesville, whereby she saw the competition and entered.



**Pregnancy Workshops held at Melomed Hospitals**  
The winning prize at Melomed Gatesville was presented by Paediatrician Dr Karbanee from Melomed Gatesville.



Dr Karbanee (Paediatrician at Melomed Gatesville) has been selected by UNAids to represent South Africa in a newly formed Civil Society Task Force. An article was published in the Cape Argus on the 15th February 2011.

# Pasta fungi



## What you will need

- 1.2kg** Sliced mushrooms tinned or fresh
- 50g** Low fat margarine
- 30ml** Olive oil
- 4g** Crushed dry chilli
- 4g** Nutmeg
- 20g** Garlic freshly crushed

- 200ml** Low fat cream or Orley Whip
- 500ml** Low fat milk
- 200g** Parmesan cheese
- 20g** Corn flour
- 1kg** Spaghetti / tagliatelle / pasta shells
- Chopped parsley
- Cocktail tomatoes

## Method of preparation

1. Cook spaghetti / pasta.
2. Sauté mushrooms in oil and margarine.
3. Add chilli, nutmeg and garlic.
4. Add milk and cream and simmer for 6 minutes.
5. Add parmesan and simmer for an extra 4 minutes.
6. Add corn flour to thicken.
7. Serve mushrooms on top of spaghetti and garnish with parsley and halved cocktail tomatoes.

Number of servings  
**4**



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Generic medicines are so similar to original branded medicines that you'll find it hard to tell them apart. They contain the identical active ingredient and are manufactured against the same strict standards prescribed by the Medicines Regulatory Authority. As a world leader in generic medicine and South Africa's number one generic brand, Aspen is renowned for its quality, effective and affordable medicines. So when it comes to choosing a quality generic, make the choice that most South Africans make - **choose an Aspen generic.** Hotline: 0800 122 912. [www.aspenpharma.com](http://www.aspenpharma.com)

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