

# melomag

Spring 2021 | Issue 41



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GUIDE

  
M E L O M E D  
PRIVATE HOSPITALS

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EGGCEPTIONAL **04**

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SPRING CLEANING FOR  
GOOD MENTAL HEALTH **09**

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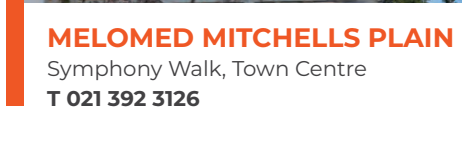
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## SAPS BELLVILLE VACCINATION SITE

SAPS Bellville was chosen as one of the vaccination sites for the SAPS team in the Western Cape. Melomed Private Hospital sponsored a bed to help get as many SAPS members as possible vaccinated (one of the criteria is a medical examination bed in case of an emergency). In one week, 1 500 members were vaccinated.



From left to right: Manager of Melomed Hospital, Morne Weideman, together with Igshaan Bassier and Bulelani Taliwe of the VRCID.



### Well done to our Melostars for the quarter!



We appreciate your tireless dedication to improving the patient journey, providing excellent service and bringing an exceptional work ethic.



## MANDELA DAY



“There can be no greater gift than that of giving one’s time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return.”

Nelson Mandela

# EGGS ARE EGGCEPTIONAL!

Compiled by Jandri Barnard

Eggs are an excellent source of protein and ideal for any meal of the day. Easy to prepare, readily available and inexpensive. It is so popular that World Egg Day is celebrated annually on 9 October.

It was once thought that eating eggs predominantly increases your cholesterol levels, but it is now known that foods high in saturated fats (meat, pastry, commercial baked goods, high fat cheeses) rather than dietary cholesterol raises your blood cholesterol levels. Eggs are low in saturated fats and higher in 'heart healthy' mono- and polyunsaturated fats, as it can be taken as part of a balanced diet to have a positive effect on your **heart health**.

Eggs are **nutrient dense** foods by being naturally rich in 13 vitamins and minerals, 6g protein per egg and a high proportion of nutrients to energy (kilojoules). It is also beneficial in a diet for people with deficiencies of protein and essential nutrients like HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB).

The intake of eggs can also keep **diabetes** at bay, as a research study in Finland found that men who ate around four eggs a week had a lower risk of

developing type 2 diabetes. This study was also published in 2015 in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Several **obesity** studies have reported that starting your day with eggs for breakfast as part of a reduced energy (kilojoule) diet, can help overweight adults feel fuller for longer, feel more energetic and assist to lose more weight.

Eggs are an excellent source of choline, a nutrient essential for brain and nerve function to transport nutrients throughout the body, especially during **pregnancy**. It helps prevent birth defects and promote brain and memory development in the fetus, newborn and into old age. One egg can provide 28% of a pregnant woman's daily choline requirements.

The antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthine in eggs play a role in keeping your **eyes healthy** and helping to prevent common causes of age-related blindness. Found mainly in the egg

yolk it reduces the development of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration – a disease that develops with age and causes blurred or distorted vision.

Eggs are a useful source of vitamin D, as it is essential for the body to be able to absorb calcium and phosphorus, which helps to develop and **protect bones** and prevent osteoporosis and rickets. There is mounting evidence that it plays a beneficial role in the prevention and/or treatment of a wide range of diseases. Vitamin D appears capable of inhibiting pulmonary (lung) inflammatory responses while enhancing innate **defense mechanisms against respiratory pathogens**. Research has shown that vitamin D might play an important role in regulating mood and warding off depression. Scientists have found that people with depression who received vitamin D supplements noticed an improvement in their symptoms.

## EGGCELLENT TIPS ON STORING AND SERVING EGGS

Eggs have an expiration date on the egg container or on the eggs itself. Salmonella bacteria can multiply with age, thus the fresher the egg the better. Also, pregnant and nursing women, young children, immunocompromised individuals and the elderly should avoid eating undercooked or raw eggs because of the risk of food poisoning. Pasteurised eggs are the safest option, because pasteurising kills the bacteria.

Eggs preserved in normal temperature can be beaten well to a fluffy froth much more effectively than cold eggs kept in the fridge.

While arranging eggs, make sure that the pointed side is kept face down. This prevents the chance of the yolk cracking.

Fresh eggs can be stored in the refrigerator for close to two weeks. For the best results, it's best to take them out of the fridge at least half an hour before use.

Cracked eggs can also be boiled by adding a few spoons of vinegar to the water being boiled.

Avoid cooking cold eggs taken straight from the fridge. A few drops of hot water on top of the egg would be a better option.

Use cold water to boil eggs. When the water boils, lower the heat and allow it to boil for the required time. Drain out the hot water and dip the eggs in cold water. This prevents the forming of a dark line between the white and the yolk.

Boiled eggs can easily be shelled if they are dipped in cold water as soon as they are boiled.

Dip a knife in hot water to halve eggs to perfection. ■



## NUTRITIONAL CONTENT PER MEDIUM EGG

Energy	319 kJ	Fiber	0g
Protein	6g	Potassium	65mg
Carbohydrates	0g	Calcium	29g
Fat	5g	Magnesium	6g

**Source:** South African Poultry and Egg Association: [www.sapoultry.co.za](http://www.sapoultry.co.za) | The Egg Book | The Vitamins & Minerals Bible | [www.onmanorama.com/food/features](http://www.onmanorama.com/food/features) | [www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/02/10/feds-poised-to-withdraw-longstanding-warnings-about-dietary-cholesterol](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/02/10/feds-poised-to-withdraw-longstanding-warnings-about-dietary-cholesterol) | Virtanen, J K, Mursu, J et al Egg consumption and risk of incident type 2 diabetes in men: the Kuopio Ischaemic Heart Disease Risk Factor Study. Am J Clin Nutr. 2015 May;101(5):1088-96. doi: 10.3945/ajcn.114.104109 | Kim J E, Gordan S L et al. Effects of egg consumption on carotenoid absorption from consumed raw vegetables. Am Jnl Clin Nutr. 2015; 102(1):75 – 83



# THE FUNNY BONE

By the National Osteoporosis Foundation of South Africa (NOFSA)

## The Funny Bone: it's no laughing matter...

Elbows are ugly. Let's face it, they're not the prettiest bones in your body. They're pushy and pugnacious – delicately curtained off by a demure fall of wrinkly skin when not in use. And for good reason. **An elbow has its own power and is ready to be put into aggressive**

**action at a moment's notice.** And while crucial to most sporting success, they have never liked tennis.

**One is often accused of elbowing one's way into something – or out for that matter. They are always in on any determined action.**

To throw a good punch, you need a strong elbow. And of course, when required to do some hard work, you are often encouraged to 'put your elbow into it'. And without their sturdy support at a table most of us would be lying on the floor.

## Funny Peculiar

But for all their bravado, elbows have a curious vulnerability – and that is, when struck on a certain sensitive spot, you could actually end up lying on the floor. We call it rather euphemistically, the 'funny bone' because if hurt in this way, we can feel giddy and peculiar, caught between laughing, crying and even fainting. The pain can be extraordinary, unlike anything you might feel anywhere else in the body from a slight bump or knock. For a few excruciating seconds you might feel as though every nerve in your body has slid

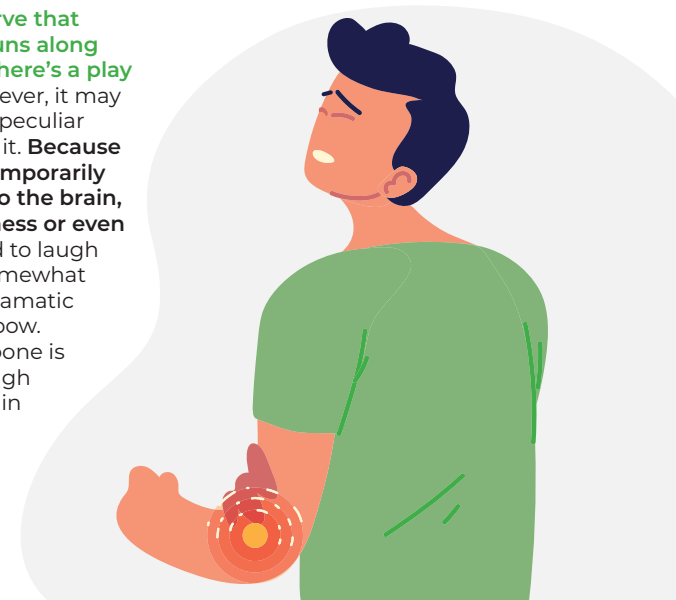
down your arm and found vital import in your elbow.

But the fact of the matter is that although we refer to the elbow as the funny bone, it is not the bone itself that causes the problem. **The funny bone is not a bone at all, but actually the ulnar nerve that runs from the neck all the way to the hand, where it serves several muscles in the hand and forearm and ends in two branches that innervate the little finger and half of the ring finger, and which helps to stimulate movement in the hand and wrist.**

As it passes the elbow, this nerve runs through a channel called the cubital tunnel. **This is a tunnel of tissue on the inside of the elbow under a bony portion of the humerus (your upper arm bone) called the medial epicondyle.** At this point, the ulnar nerve's protection is reduced to a thin sheath of skin and fat, making it vulnerable to bumps. **When you hit your funny bone, you're actually hitting the nerve against the bone and compressing it.** This causes a dizzy numbness and tingling that runs down the arm to your hand.

## So why do we call what is essentially a nerve, the 'funny bone'?

Some say it's because the nerve that causes the giddy sensation runs along the humerus, and therefore there's a play on the word 'humorous'. However, it may more likely be due to the very peculiar feeling you get after knocking it. **Because hitting the funny bone can temporarily stop the nerve's connection to the brain, resulting in that dizzy numbness or even faintness.** We sometimes tend to laugh afterwards because we feel somewhat foolish regarding our rather dramatic reactions to a bump on the elbow. And while hitting your funny bone is something you can usually laugh about once the pain subsides, in some instances the pain and discomfort is ongoing when serious conditions arise from an unwell elbow.



## Conditions of the elbow

### Cubital tunnel syndrome

- **This condition can develop when the ulnar nerve becomes regularly obstructed and over time, progressive irritation of the nerve causes the numbness to become permanent.** Causation is usually from regular movements where your elbow is bent, like spending large parts of the day making phone calls and holding your phone to your ear, or through various repetitive movements in sports or factory work.
- **Muscle weakness in the forearm and hand can also set in, and the little finger and ring finger can curl up in a position called the "ulnar claw."** The condition can usually be helped with elbow splinting, hand therapy or, in extreme cases, surgery that provides more space for the nerve and reduces the amount of pressure on it.

### Tennis Elbow

- **This caused by the inflammation of the lateral epicondylitis, one of the most common elbow problems, usually caused by a sudden injury or by repetitive use of the arm.** It is actually a tendinitis of the muscle called the extensor carpi radialis brevis which attaches to the lateral epicondyle of the humerus. There! And if you manage to say all this without developing tennis tongue you have the up on the elbow.
- **The micro tears in the tendon lead to a hyper-vascular phenomenon resulting in pain.** The pain is usually worse with strong gripping with the elbow in an extended position, as in a tennis back hand stroke, but this problem can occur in golf and other sports as well as with repetitive use of tools. >>

- Rest, anti-inflammatories, physical therapy, a brace, cortisone injections are all treatments before surgery is considered. **Procedures as simple as percutaneous release of the tendon off of the bone, or more recently arthroscopic procedures or other procedures involving the joint and resection of a ligament, have been suggested as successful remedies.**

### Golfer's Elbow

- This follows in a similar way to tennis elbow. **Medial epicondylitis is inflammation of the tendon attachment of the flexor pronator muscles in the forearm.** Usually this begins as microscopic tears in the tissue which leads to an inflammatory or hyper-vascular process.
- **This occurs when stiff, underused tendons are suddenly overused or this may occur from an acute injury.** The treatment is also similar to that taken for tennis elbow as outlined above.

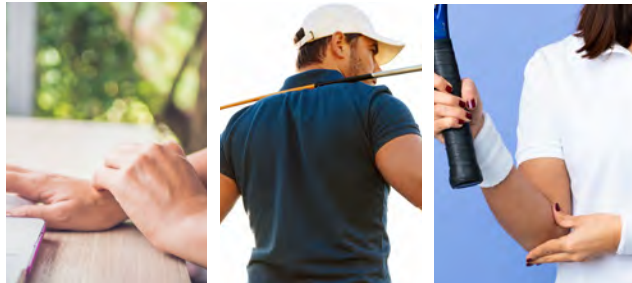
### Osteoarthritis

- **The elbow is one of the joints least affected by this condition because of its well-matched joint surfaces and strong stabilising ligaments.** As a result, the elbow joint can tolerate large forces across it without becoming unstable. However, a fracture or dislocation increases the risk of arthritis

for the elbow, especially after surgery, loss of joint cartilage, and injury to ligaments causing unnatural joint stress.

- Again, repetitive actions in sports or work situations can cause the kind of wear and tear that can lead to osteoarthritis. **Individuals involved in heavy work or sports activities should maintain muscular strength around the elbow. Proper conditioning and technique should always be used. The best way to prevent elbow arthritis is to avoid injury to the joint.** The most common symptoms of elbow arthritis are pain and loss of range of motion.
- **Both of these symptoms may not occur at the same time. Patients usually report a 'grating' or 'locking' sensation in the elbow.** The latter is due to loss of the normal smooth joint surface, caused by cartilage damage or wear. The 'locking' is caused by loose pieces of cartilage or bone that dislodge from the joint and become trapped between the moving joint surfaces, blocking motion. **While this is a cartilage condition, treatment follows the above-mentioned options, while surgery may offer varied, but sometimes limited intervention.**

Take care of your elbows, even though they can be awkward and often in the way, knocking over things. They do an enormous amount of work for you. Love your bones! ■



Sources: NOFSA (National Osteoporosis Foundation South Africa)

## Spring cleaning for good mental health

### 5 WAYS CLEANING CAN IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

**Mental health is an important element of overall health which is often overlooked.** As our modern world becomes more demanding and we continue to feel the effects of the last year's global events, people are reporting record levels of anxiety and depression.

Taking care of our mental health is becoming more important than ever before and one simple way we can do this, is through regular cleaning.

A 2017 study on clutter and overconsumption found that **cleaning helps our minds feel more in control and elevates feel-good hormones in the body – which means cleaning is good for the mind and the body!**

Psychologist and Life Coach Dr Tshepiso Matentjie outlines 5 ways cleaning can be beneficial to our health and wellbeing. >>

**1. When we clean, we get our bodies moving, which helps to release endorphins** and feel-good hormones into the blood and reduce cortisol levels, which cause stress. Overall, this helps to relieve tension and anxiety, allowing the body and mind to unwind.

**2. Cleaning can create a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction by increasing our mind's feelings of control.** The achievement of a goal, like a clean space, can give us the motivation to tackle other challenges in our lives, beginning with the belief that we are capable and can overcome any obstacles we come across along the way.

**3. A clean and tidy environment can help to create a positive attitude and the resilience to keep going, no matter what.** The discipline and habit of cleaning and tidying on a regular basis can also lay a foundation for developing positive habits like discipline, focus and motivation.

**4. When we clean with others, it can be a bonding activity that can improve intimacy and strengthen relationships.** Untidy and chaotic home environments have been found to be related to parental stress and to negatively impact parenting behaviour and children's problem behaviours. But, when cleaning becomes a positive group activity, it creates cohesion, helps everyone to feel like they play their part and relieves the pressure from being shouldered by one individual, which often creates tension in the home.

**5. Your home is an extension of your how you feel about and see yourself, so cleaning is a form of self-care that can help with developing and maintaining self-esteem.** People who struggle with depression and anxiety in particular often find cleaning difficult but report feeling safer, calmer and happier when their space is clean and tidy.

"For some people, motivation can be a struggle when it comes to cleaning. Others may feel they lack the necessary skills to get going, but resources like Cleanipedia.com can help by giving expert, simple cleaning tips, readily available online for anyone to use," says Dr Tshepiso, "**Committing to small daily tasks instead of letting the cleaning build up and become a daunting task is another good way to stay on top of cleaning and enjoy a happier home.**"

- **Reduce clutter:** Getting rid of packaging, gadgets, old clothes and anything that is no longer needed will **make rooms look tidier and make it easier to keep them that way.**
- **For thick dust:** wipe with a damp microfibre cloth that traps grime and allows you to get rid of it, rather than spreading it around.
- **Storage:** Hooks are a great way for efficiently dealing with coats, bathrobes and shopping bags when storage space is limited.
- **Rubbish:** Make sure there are always bin liners and recycling bags available

so there is no need for rubbish to accumulate. **Putting it outside promptly will prevent odours.**

- **Ironing:** An effective hack is putting wrinkled clothes in the tumble dryer on a high heat with a handful of ice cubes for 15 minutes, so the melting ice can steam away creases.
- **Stains:** These vary a lot, but in general, a good approach with spills is to **blot up any liquid with a clean cloth or paper towel immediately.**
- **Floors:** Make cleaning floors easier by buying a **powerful, cordless vacuum cleaner** that is simple to use and empty. ■

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## Hip Replacement Surgery Frequently Asked Questions

By Orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Zaheer Moonda



The hip joint is one of the largest weight-bearing joints in the human body. Most activities like walking, jumping, sitting, squatting, dancing, swimming, climbing etc., depend on your hip bones to provide the necessary mobility and stability. Unfortunately, once it gets damaged, the hip becomes stiff causing pain every time you walk. You may be forced to restrict your activities or even be unable to walk.

Replacement of the hip joint, also known as total hip arthroplasty, is a well-established surgery in which the diseased or injured hip joint is replaced with an artificial hip joint to remove pain and stiffness and improve the quality of your life. Those who require hip replacement surgery often have many questions before and after surgery. Below are a few frequently asked questions that may help address your concerns:

### 1. Why would someone need Total Hip Replacement?

The hip is a ball-and-socket joint that has a large range of movement. Total hip replacement (THR) surgery is undertaken when a patient's native hip has been problematic due to a number of possible causes, including arthritis, trauma or collapse of the femoral head (the ball). Surgery is recommended when there is constant pain and stiffness (immobility) that limits daily activities and reduces your quality of life. Typically, a hip replacement is not performed unless nonsurgical methods fail to relieve hip pain.

### 2. What happens during a Total Hip Replacement?

The surgery involves replacing the worn or damaged ball (femoral head) with a new prosthetic ball, as well as lining the socket (acetabulum) with a prosthesis to restore range of motion in the hip, prevent bone on bone friction, and eliminate pain.

**“Hip replacements are one of the most successful surgeries in medicine and often last decades after implantation” >>**

For more information contact us at [info@melomed.co.za](mailto:info@melomed.co.za)



### 3. What are the results of Total Hip Replacement surgery?

Hip replacement surgery is usually very successful, second only to cataract surgery in the whole field of medicine. More than **95% of patients have relief from hip pain, and the success rate remains at 90 to 95% at 10 years post-surgery.**

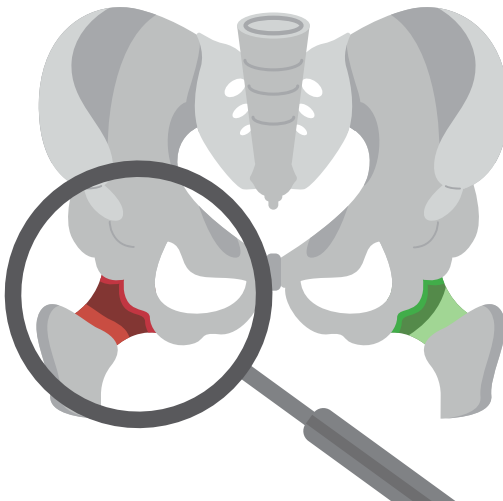
### 4. What the risks involved in this kind of surgery?

Although hip replacement is an extremely successful procedure, there are possible risks associated with any surgery. **The risks of complications are around 1 to 2%.** The most common complications in THR are:

- **Bleeding (intra-operative):** This can be controlled in surgery using various techniques.
- **Fracture of the femur or pelvis:** These may be left to heal on their own or may need to be stabilised during the surgery or soon thereafter.
- **Blood clots:** These can form in the leg veins during or after surgery and carry a risk of shooting to the lung or heart (embolization). Blood-thinning medication is used to reduce this risk.
- **Infections:** This may be superficial, involving only the wound, which is treated with antibiotics, or deeper involving the joint, when further surgery may be needed to cure it. Our patients are all given antibiotics around the surgery to reduce this risk.
- Other more rare complications include **dislocation of the hip joint, loosening of the prostheses, leg length differences, and nerve damage**, but these all occur very infrequently.

### 5. How soon after a hip replacement surgery can the patient go home?

Modern surgical techniques aim to get our patients back home and returning to function as soon as possible. **The usual hospital stay is between two and four days.** Patients are discharged once they are mobile, and it is safe for them to return home.



### 6. Will the patient need any assistive devices, for example, a walker or crutches?

**Most patients will cope with crutches after their hip replacement, which they will use for between 4 and 6 weeks.** A small number of patients may require a walking frame if they feel unsteady or are unable to use crutches.

### 7. How soon does rehabilitation therapy start after the hip surgery?

Ideally, patients will have “pre-habilitation” where they do exercises to strengthen them prior to surgery. Rehabilitation will start very soon after surgery, **mostly the next day, or in some circumstances even on the day of surgery.**

### 8. What is considered a normal amount of pain after hip replacement surgery and what kind of pain management can be expected?

We aim to make the surgery as comfortable and pain-free as possible. The anaesthetist will decide with the patient on the pain management strategy best suited for them. **This may include general or regional (spinal or epidural) anaesthesia, nerve blocks, local anaesthetic wound injections, patient-controlled pain medicine pumps, and intravenous and oral pain medication.**

### 9. How can the patient reduce the likelihood of injury or complications?

**The best strategy is to follow the instructions given to you by your surgeon and physio- and occupational therapists.** The wound is to be left undisturbed (clean and dry) until your first check-up. Care should be taken when walking with crutches, certain movements need to be avoided (like crossing the legs or squatting) for the first 6 weeks, and infections elsewhere need to be managed early.

### 10. How soon can regular activities (sport, driving, going to work) be resumed?

**Most patients will be off regular activity for around 5 to 6 weeks,** including work and driving. Walking, however, should resume soon after surgery. We recommend a slow and progressive return to sport, in consultation with the physio, as this is governed by your activity and fitness level and the type of sport played.

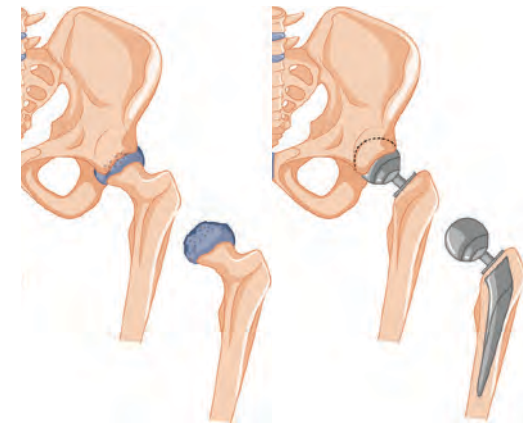
### 11. What factors could hinder recovery?

The most important factor is to follow what you have been advised to do by your surgeon and physiotherapist. **Not being active enough with rehabilitation, or the converse – trying to do too much too soon – will work against you.** Recovery is cumulative and progressive, and the vast majority of patients will enjoy a return to an active and pain-free quality of life.

### 12. How long does the hip implant last and will the other hip also need to be replaced?

With modern surgical techniques, implant designs and manufacturing materials, most hip implants will have good longevity, **often in the region of 15 to 20 years or more.** There are some patients who have had hip replacements over 30 years ago who are still going strong! ■

**“Having hip replacement surgery can help extend your independence, and help you live a better quality of life”.**



Damaged Hip bone

Hip replacement

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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## How Do Our Kidneys Work?

Our muscles, joints and bones enable us to stand and move, and our bowels and liver digest and absorb nutrients. Our hearts function as a pump for pumping blood through our lungs to capture oxygen for the body, and to eliminate carbon dioxide.

By contrast, our two kidneys are filters which perform many different functions. **Kidneys manufacture essential chemicals, they break down (metabolize) unnecessary or dangerous chemicals, and they retain necessary substances and eliminate toxic waste.** They are very busy organs doing multiple jobs.

### In everyday life, our kidneys:

**Make 150 litres of urine a day but keep back (reabsorb) 149 litres of useful substances, like protein, potassium and salt etc.** They in turn will excrete around 2 litres of water with waste. They can be likened to a huge swimming pool filter which never needs backwashing and will rarely need an overhaul if you look after your general body health. This is pretty amazing!

### The kidney's multiple jobs include:

- **Excretion of drugs, medicines and poisons and unwanted chemicals.**

- Provide the nutrients to take care of our bones and joints, allowing for a solid and healthy skeleton.
- Control the amount of acidity and alkalinity (pH) in the body.
- Produce chemicals which control our blood pressure.
- They produce a complicated chemical which produces our red blood cells – which carries oxygen to our body.
- Destroy chemicals and hormones which the body no longer needs – like insulin.
- Balances body chemicals like salt, potassium and chloride.
- Works with the heart to control water (fluid) levels in the body e.g. when it's cold they get rid of extra

water, and when hot it holds on to water.

### Thus, severe kidney damage causing kidney failure could cause the following symptoms:

- **Accumulation of toxins which will eventually poison the body and mind causing confusion and damage to various organs e.g., heart, nerves and stomach.**
- Swelling of the body can occur if fluid is retained and/or protein is lost.
- Shortness of breath.
- Weakness.
- Poor appetite.
- Insomnia (sleeplessness).
- Body aches and pains.
- Impairment of thought processes.



### How do you avoid this?

- **A heart-healthy diet and lifestyle will protect your kidneys in most cases.**
- All people with a family history (even in old people) of hypertension or diabetes (Type 2) should have an annual blood pressure check-up from the age of 20 years and blood sugar check-up from the age of 30 years.
- If a person has hypertension or diabetes they must have a kidney check every year.
- If you are unwell and present to your GP or a nurse in a clinic then you should have your urine examined with a dipstick test. If there is protein, blood, white cells or glucose (sugar) in your urine detected with the dipstick test, one must immediately be referred to a doctor (if a nurse is doing the test).
- In many instances when a person has hypertension or diabetes, and the urine or blood testing is of

concern then a person should be referred to a Kidney Specialist i.e. a Nephrologist or Renal Medicine specialist.

- You should always remind your doctor or nurse to test your urine if you go to see them with an illness, as this is an option to screen for kidney disease if you have hypertension, diabetes, HIV or a family history of kidney problems.

### Some startling facts:

- **10% of all people in the world have some form of kidney disease.**
- A person with any small amount of protein in the urine (microalbuminuria) and especially large amounts (macroalbuminuria or nephrotic range proteinuria) has a 5 to 8 times higher risk of dying from cardiovascular disease than those without such a kidney problem.
- Protein leaking from a kidney indicates a

very high risk of both developing a cardiovascular problem e.g., stroke or heart failure and also a higher risk of the kidney failure progressing. The higher the protein leak the higher the chance of progression or complications.

- **Kidney failure in South African adults is mainly due to inherited hypertension (60 to 65%) or Type 2 diabetes (another 20 to 25%)**

### Hypertension and diabetes can be:

- **Prevented**
- **Diagnosed early**
- **Properly treated if detected**

If kidney disease is detected then it can potentially prevent 70 to 80% of all kidney failure and/or cardiovascular deaths.

**PREVENT, DETECT, TREAT** and look after your kidneys! ■



**MELOMED RENAL CARE (MRC):** For more information on the services offered by Melomed Renal Care, please contact any one of our three-dialysis units.

Melomed Gatesville: Unit Leader: Cynthia Smith | Telephone: +27 21 637 1702  
 Melomed Mitchells Plain: Unit Leader: Michelle Jenniker | Telephone: +27 21 391 0816  
 Melomed Tokai: Unit Leader: Florina Hartnick | Telephone: +27 21 712 5860



# Broken Heart Syndrome

By Jandri Barnard

## What is Broken Heart Syndrome?

Your heart can break (literally), but when you think of a broken heart, you may picture the broken heart emoji – a heart with a jagged line through it. But in real-life a “broken heart” can lead to life threatening cardiac consequences.

**A condition described as ‘broken heart syndrome’, otherwise known as stress-induced cardiomyopathy, has increased fourfold since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.**

This is according to a study conducted by researchers at Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, USA. The extended lockdown orders, having to isolate and cancel special events, and not seeing friends and family for an extended period has had a profound impact on our hearts.

The pandemic has caused severe psychological, social and economic stress in people’s lives all over the world. This research gives us a glimpse into the broader impact that COVID-19 has had – not only on those with pre-existing health conditions, but also the broader population.



## Possible Causes and Triggers

**In most cases, broken heart syndrome is triggered by severe stress and extreme emotions,** such as having to deal with:

- **The death of a loved one**
- **Divorce**
- **Losing your job**
- **A major financial loss**
- **Emotional memories**
- **Physical stressors – asthma attack, COVID-19 infection, car accident, or major surgery**

## Signs and Symptoms

**The unexpected rush of adrenaline weakens the heart muscle, causing irregular heart rhythms.** It also interferes with the pumping function of the heart, causing a ballooning effect. At first, patients seem like they may have experienced a heart attack, but further examination reveals no signs of blocked coronary arteries or history of cardiovascular disease.

Symptoms may occur within minutes or not until hours after a stressful situation and sufferers may experience **symptoms similar to a heart attack** such as:

- **Sudden, severe chest pain (angina)**
- **Shortness of breath**

Remember that when sudden chest pain and shortness of breath are present, it should always be taken seriously as it could be a sign of a heart attack, which requires immediate action.

Other symptoms include, arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat), cardiogenic shock, fainting and low blood pressure.

## Prevention and Treatment

Once stabilised, your doctor may run a few tests, such as a coronary angiopathy or take X-rays to take a closer look at your coronary arteries. Other diagnostic tests include blood tests, ECG and an MRI. Your doctor may also put you on medication. The condition usually reverses itself within a few days or weeks.

While most recover from broken heart syndrome without any long-term effects, 10% become critically ill and in 1% to 2% of cases can be fatal.

## Known risk factors

Risk factors for broken heart syndrome include:

- **Sex – it affects women more than men**
- **Age – it appears more likely to happen to people older than 50**
- **A history of a neurological condition such as epilepsy**
- **A previous or existing psychiatric disorder such as anxiety and depression**

As the pandemic progresses, self-care is of utmost importance to our heart-health. Those who feel anxious and overwhelmed by the pandemic – both physically and mentally – need to reach out to their GPs for help.

Being proactive about managing stress in your life is good for your heart and may help to prevent broken heart syndrome. ■



## Melomed 24-hour Trauma Units:

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**Melomed Bellville Trauma Unit:** 021 948 6535  
**Melomed Mitchells Plain Trauma Unit:** 021 392 3126  
**Melomed Richards Bay Trauma Unit:** 035 791 5301  
**Melomed Tokai Trauma Unit:** 021 764 7023

## Sources:

1. Mayo Clinic: “Broken heart syndrome”
2. University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics: “Ask an Expert: What is Broken-heart syndrome?”
3. American Heart Association: “Is Broken Heart Syndrome Real?”
4. John Hopkins Medicine: “Frequently Asked Questions about Broken Heart Syndrome.”
5. Harvard Health: “Takotsubo cardiomyopathy (broken heart syndrome)”
6. Cleveland Clinic: “Broken Heart Syndrome.”
7. Press-release: Pharma Dynamics – “COVID-19 pandemic causes surge in cases of broken heart syndrome.”



## WOOD-FIRED HOT TUB STAYS

Looking for a cosy, romantic stay? Maybe you're in the market for a getaway with family and friends where you can enjoy some lazy days in style. Then have a look at LekkeSlaap.co.za's sizzling selection of stays boasting the latest in holiday hotness, wood-fired hot tubs!



From R1 495 for 2 guests

### BUFF AND FELLOW ECO CABINS – GEORGE

Up for a dreamy location on a buffalo farm? Buff and Fellow offers eco-friendly accommodation in pods and coconut villas that are ideal for a romantic stay, but also big enough for a small family. There is free-roaming game to view on the premises and guests can ride their bicycles, do or fish.



From R2 800 for 6 guests

### BLACK EAGLE LODGES, THE VILLA – CALEDON

This four-star villa on a farm near Caledon is eco-friendly and offers a getaway for up to six guests. Spectacular views, wood-fired hot tubs and the wonderful, restful environment of farm life promises every guest an unforgettable experience.



From R2 000 for 6 guests

### GOEDVERTROU GUEST FARM – STANFORD

Between Gansbaai and Stanford, this house on a dairy farm is all Cape-Dutch goodness with its thatch roof and large garden. Bring five loved ones along and simply stay in the hot tub all day, or you can arrange a sunset drive or a self-drive tour to the cattle farm on the premises.



From R1 800 for 2 guests

### CAMISSA COTTAGE – STELLENBOSCH

For a weekend getaway, look no further than this beautiful cottage next to a dam in Stellenbosch. Here you can hang out in the hanging chairs on the deck or spend time in the cosy wood-fired hot tub with a view. Bring five loved ones along for a stay to remember!



From R1 650 for 2 guests

### OPSTAL STAY – RAWSONVILLE

Opstal Stay offers self-catering accommodation on a working wine farm, situated approximately 10 km from central Rawsonville, and approximately an hour's drive from Cape Town. It is nestled in the picturesque Slanghoek Valley with breathtaking views of vineyards, fynbos and mountains and offers an ideal escape inland of the Boland Mountains.



From R2 400 for 4 guests

### TIERKLOOF MOUNTAIN COTTAGES – NEAR CERES

Tierkloof is on a farm at the foothills of the Swartruggens Mountains and offers a view of the Karoo plains from the three free-standing cottages. The cottages are solar-powered and boast a veranda and a swimming pool. The Dragon Rock Unit also has a wood-fired hot tub.



From R1 950 for 4 guests

### DE HOOP VICTORIAN FARM HOUSE AND COTTAGE – GREYTON

If you haven't been to Greyton, it's high time you get going, and while you're at it, a stay at De Hoop, a Victorian farmhouse which sleeps ten guests, is a great option. This grand old dame is conveniently equipped and boasts a fully-kitted braai area. Don't miss the town's fabulous Saturday Market when you stay here!



From R2 180 for 4 guests

### BLUE CRANE FARM LODGE – BOTRIVIER

In the foothills of the picturesque Houwhoek Mountains lies Blue Crane Farm Lodge's two free-standing self-catering cottages. These cottages have their own hot tubs, braai facilities and veranda's with a view to die for. Guests receive fresh milk and bread in the mornings and there are a huge number of attractions to explore in the area. ■



# COOKING from the heart

## Low Salt

There is a strong correlation between increased **salt intake** and **elevated blood pressure**.<sup>1</sup>

South African and International **hypertension guidelines** advocate the reduction of dietary salt intake in the management of hypertension.<sup>2,3</sup>

Salt reduction is additive to other non-pharmacological and pharmacological interventions in lowering blood pressure.<sup>1</sup>

A JOINT INITIATIVE WITH



THE HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION SOUTH AFRICA



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The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa [www.heartfoundation.co.za](http://www.heartfoundation.co.za) ☎ 021 422 1586

<sup>1</sup> He, FJ, et al. Salt reduction to prevent hypertension and cardiovascular disease, JACC State-of-the-Art review. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* 2020;75:632-647. <sup>2</sup> YK Seadat et al. South African hypertension practice guidelines 2014;25(6):1-8. <sup>3</sup> Williams B et al. 2018 ESC/ESH guidelines for the management of arterial hypertension. The task force for the management of arterial hypertension of the European Society of Cardiology and the European Society of Hypertension. *Journal of Hypertension* 2018;36:1853-2041. CNSRA658/07/2020.



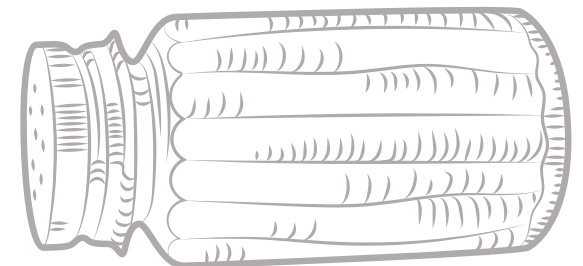
## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SALT?

We all know that we need to eat less salt, but that doesn't mean losing out on flavour. Learning about the sodium content in foods and new ways to prepare it will also help to achieve your desired sodium reducing goal.

Salt, also known as table salt or rock salt, is a crystal line mineral that is composed primarily of sodium chloride (NaCl), a chemical compound belonging to the larger class of ionic salts. It is absolutely essential for human and animal life but can be harmful to animals and plants in excess. Salt is one of the oldest, most ubiquitous food seasonings and salting is an important method of food preservation. The taste of salt (saltiness) is one of the basic human tastes. Chloride and sodium ions, the two major components of salt, are needed by all known living creatures in small quantities. Salt is involved in regulating the water content (fluid balance) of the body.

The sodium ion itself is used for electrical signalling in the nervous system. Because of its importance to survival, salt has often been considered a valuable commodity during human history.

However, as salt consumption has increased during modern times, scientists have become aware of the health risks associated with high salt intake, including high blood pressure in sensitive individuals. Therefore, some health authorities have recommended limitations of dietary sodium, although others state the risk is minimal for typical western diets. ➤➤





### Sea salt versus table salt

Both sea salt and table salt contain about 40% sodium. Sea salt is obtained directly through the evaporation of seawater. It is usually not processed or undergoes minimal processing and, therefore, retains trace levels of minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium, and other nutrients. Table salt, on the other hand, is mined from salt deposits and then processed to give it a fine texture so it is easier to mix and use in recipes. Processing strips table salt of any minerals and additives it may have contained, are usually incorporated to prevent clumping or caking. While these attributes may make sea salt more attractive from a marketing standpoint, there are no real health advantages of sea salt.

### Salt and cancer

Research has shown that rates of nasopharyngeal cancer are high in areas where Chinese-style salted fish is very common. Other studies have linked eating large amounts of foods preserved by salting and pickling with an increased risk of stomach cancer. The incidence of stomach cancer is greater in parts of the world (such as Japan) where diets traditionally include foods that are salt-preserved.

## Limit your salt intake to 5g (1 teaspoon) of salt a day!

### Food rich in sodium

Foods in their natural state contain very little sodium. Fast foods and processed foods are highest in sodium. Processed foods include snack foods, deli items, bakery products, canned foods and prepared foods like salad dressings and spaghetti sauces. Table salt, soy sauce and other condiments are high in sodium. **Ordinary salt (table salt) is 40% sodium and 60% chloride. More than 40% of the sodium comes from the following foods:**

- Bread and rolls
- Cold cuts and cured meats
- Processed meats
- Pizza
- Fresh and processed poultry
- Soups
- Snacks (chips, pretzels, popcorn and crackers)
- Cheese (natural and processed)
- Mixed pasta dishes (lasagne, spaghetti with meat sauce and pasta salad)
- Mixed meat dishes (meat loaf with tomato sauce, beef stew and chili)
- Sandwiches and similar foods (hot dogs and hamburgers)

### Salt and your heart

Most people know that they should try and limit the amount of salt they eat – few realise how bad it is for your heart. South Africans eat twice as much salt as they should, and in fact they should limit their salt intake to no more than 5g (1 teaspoon) of salt a day. A high salt diet is a leading cause of high blood pressure and one in four South Africans over the age of 15 years are affected by hypertension. High blood pressure is the single most important risk factor for stroke, in fact, the World Health Organisation sees hypertension as an even greater health risk to your health than smoking.

Fifty five percent of the salt consumed comes from hidden sources like processed foods. Bread is the number one culprit, followed closely by fat and butter spreads, stock cubes, soup powders, breakfast cereals and savoury snacks.

CVD (cardiovascular disease) is the second biggest killer in our country, after HIV/AIDS. Every hour, five people suffer a heart attack, ten people suffer a stroke and, ten of these people die. However, let's remember that 80% of CVD is preventable through diet and lifestyle changes. It is in everyone's interest to become more aware of the salt they consume on a daily basis.



## Steps to cut down on sodium intake

Learning about the sodium content in food and new ways to prepare food will help to achieve the desired sodium reduction goal:

- Read the nutrition facts label to see how much sodium is in the food.
- **Check the nutrition fact label for lower sodium choices and compare sodium in different brands of foods** – like frozen meals, packaged soups, bread, dressings or sauces and snack foods – select those products with the lowest sodium content.
- Prepare your own food whenever possible. **Do not salt foods before or during cooking and limit salt shaker use at the table.**
- Add flavour without adding sodium. **Use herbs and spices instead of salt to add flavour to foods. Try rosemary, oregano, basil, curry powder, cayenne pepper, ginger, fresh garlic or garlic powder (not garlic salt), black or red pepper, vinegar or lemon juice and no-salt seasoning blends.**
- Buy fresh or frozen (not processed) lean meat rather than canned, smoked or processed meats like luncheon meats, sausages, and corned beef. **Check the package on fresh meat and poultry to see if salt water or saline has been added.**
- Buy fresh, frozen (without sauce), or low sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables.
- **Rinse sodium-containing canned foods, such as tuna, vegetables, and beans before using.** This removes some of the sodium.
- Choose fat free or low fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese and fortified soy beverages (often called soy milk) instead of processed cheese products and spreads, which are higher in sodium.
- Choose unsalted nuts and seeds, as well as snack products such as chips and pretzels, that are marked 'low sodium' or 'no-salt-added' – or rather have a carrot or celery stick instead.
- **Sodium in soy sauce, ketchup, salad dressings and seasoning packets can add up.** Choose 'lite' or 'reduced sodium' soy sauce and 'no-salt-added' ketchup/tomato sauce, add oil and vinegar to a salad rather than bottled salad dressings and use only small amounts of seasoning from flavouring packets instead of the entire packet.
- **Ask to see the nutrition information in restaurants and choose a lower sodium option.** ■

#### Source:

1. [www.heartfoundation.co.za](http://www.heartfoundation.co.za); [www.cansa.org.za](http://www.cansa.org.za)
2. Information published by Heart Foundation and CANSA (Cancer Association of South Africa)



# Eggcellent Breakfast Recipes

When you're trying to eat healthy, eggs are an awesome go-to for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or even as just a snack. The key is to use the eggs in a variety of different ways by adding spices or seasonings and pairing them with loads of wholesome vegetables and grains.

## Eggy Toast

Eggy toast is an easy way to get kids to enjoy eggs if they don't like scrambled or fried eggs. Different toppings can be added for an interesting weekend breakfast or brunch idea.

**Prep time:** 15 min  
**Cook time:** 25 min  
**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup (60 ml) water
- ¼ tsp (1,2 ml) salt
- black pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) sunflower or canola oil for frying
- 4 slices brown or wholewheat bread

### To serve

- 2 pears, bananas or other fresh fruit, sliced
- 1 tsp (5 ml) honey per person ground cinnamon
- OR**
- 1 tomato, sliced
- ½ cup (125 ml) grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh herbs of your choice

### TIPS

1. Serve a small portion of tinned fish on the toast for an even more filling breakfast.
2. If you are serving eggy toast with a savoury topping, add 1 tsp (5 ml) dried herbs of your choice to the egg mixture, before dipping the bread into it.
3. Slice 1 avocado to serve with the savoury options.



### Instructions

1. Whisk eggs with water and season with salt and black pepper. Place in a shallow bowl.
2. Heat half of the oil over a medium heat in a frying pan.
3. Dip a slice of bread in the egg mixture and turn over with two forks to cover the bread completely with the egg mixture.
4. Fry 1 to 2 slices of bread on both sides until golden brown and repeat with the remaining bread and eggs. If the pan is big enough, all the slices can be fried together. If the pan is too small, don't dip the bread in the egg mixture too long in advance as it could become too soggy to handle and fry.
5. Remove bread from pan and keep warm, while frying the rest.
6. Serve with slices of fruit, drizzle with honey and sprinkle with cinnamon. Or serve with tomato and cheese and sprinkle with herbs.

### Sources:

1. Breakfast Egg Muffins." Well Plated By Erin. Sept.2020, [www.wellplated.com/healthy-breakfast-egg-muffins](http://www.wellplated.com/healthy-breakfast-egg-muffins)
2. [www.eatingbirdfood.com/hardboiled-egg-and-avocado-bowl](http://www.eatingbirdfood.com/hardboiled-egg-and-avocado-bowl)

## Healthy Breakfast Egg Muffins Recipe

Make these delicious egg muffin cups and eat them immediately, freeze them for later, or for breakfast on the go.

**Prep time:** 15 min  
**Cook time:** 25 min  
**Servings:** 12 muffins

### Ingredients

- 1 cup lightly packed baby spinach, chopped
- ¾ cup red pepper, finely diced
- ¾ cup green pepper, finely diced
- ¾ cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 6 large eggs
- 4 large egg whites
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp dried basil
- ¼ tsp dried oregano
- Pinch ground black pepper
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese, plus additional to sprinkle on top



### Instructions

1. Place a rack in the centre of your oven and preheat to 180°C. Lightly coat a standard 12-cup muffin tin with non-stick spray. Divide the spinach, red and green pepper, and tomatoes among the cups (they will be about two-thirds of the way full).
2. In a large bowl, briskly whisk together the eggs, egg whites, salt, basil, oregano, and pepper until well combined. Carefully fill each muffin cup three-quarters of the way to the top with the egg mixture. Sprinkle the feta evenly over the tops of the cups.
3. Bake for 24 to 28 minutes, until the egg muffins are set. Let cool for a few minutes, and then run a butter knife around the edges of each muffin to loosen it.
4. Remove them from the pan and enjoy immediately or let cool on a wire rack and refrigerate or freeze for later.



## Hard Boiled Egg and Avocado Bowl

This egg and avocado bowl combines hard boiled eggs with creamy avocado slices for a super healthy and quick meal that's loaded with protein, healthy fat and fibre while also low in carbs.

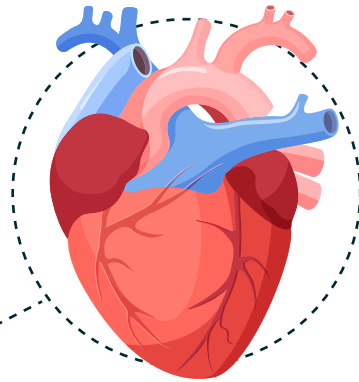
**Prep time:** 5 min  
**Total time:** 5 min  
**Servings:** 1 bowl

### Instructions

Combine eggs, avocado, onion and pepper in a bowl. Sprinkle on sea salt and ground pepper. ■

## 5 Heart Numbers You Need to Know

Knowing just a few key numbers can provide an accurate picture of your current cardiac fitness – and give you ongoing motivation to maintain healthy heart numbers and improve less healthy ones.



### Five key things to track to know your numbers:

#### 1. How many steps you take per day



Moving a lot improves every other heart-health measure and disease risk. You should either aim to walk at least 10,000 steps a day, or to exercise 150 minutes per week.

#### 2. Your blood pressure



High blood pressure, or hypertension, has no symptoms; it can only be detected by being measured. A score of 120/80 is optimal, and 140/90 is normal for most people. Higher readings mean that arteries aren't responding right to the force of blood pushing against artery walls (blood pressure), directly raising the risk of heart attack or stroke.

#### 3. Your non-HDL cholesterol



That's your total cholesterol reading minus your HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol, a measure of fats in the blood that can narrow and clog arteries to the heart. Lower is better: Aim for a score lower than 130 mg/dL or, if you're at a high risk of heart disease, lower than 70–100 mg/dL.

#### 4. Your blood sugar



High blood sugar ups your risk of diabetes, which damages arteries. In fact, type 1 and type 2 diabetes are among the most harmful risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

#### 5. How many hours of sleep a night you get



Although there's no one "right" answer for all, consistently getting the number of hours that works for you helps lower the risk of heart disease. Most people need to sleep six to eight hours a night. ■

Source: [www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)

### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that happiness is linked to productivity and that happy employees are 20% more productive during the work day?



# CARDIAC CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

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\*Interventional cardiologists are super specialists who can diagnose and treat a patient in the Cath Lab.

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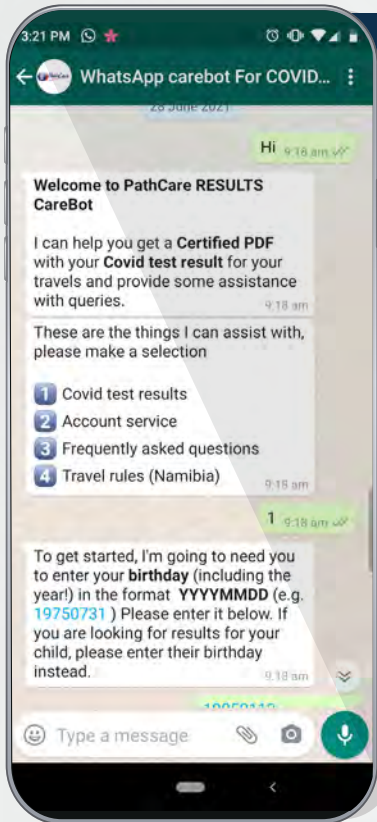


# Introducing PathCare's WhatsApp CAREBOT



where you can retrieve a copy of your  
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## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:



Save 021 596 2130 as a contact on your phone  
– call it PathCare Bot

Navigate to your WhatsApp App  
Find your PathCare Bot contact

Send us a message: Hi

You will be presented with different services

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2. Accounts
3. FAQ
4. Travel rules (Namibia)

Select the number of the service you want to access

Provide your Date of Birth

Wait for validation

Retrieve your PDF results

Please note that the Bot will only interact with you on the cell/mobile number you provided on your COVID request form. No one can get your results on your behalf from a different cell/mobile number.