KORUMBURRA MEDICAL CENTRE

50 Radovick Street
Korumburra 3950
P: 5655 1355
F: 5655 1537

SURGERY HOURS AND SERVICES

CONSULTATIONS can be arranged by phoning. 5655 1355

Monday to Friday 9.00am–5.30pm
Saturday 9.00am–12.00noon
(phone lines open at 8.30am)

The practice prefers to see patients by appointment in order to minimise people's waiting time.

Home visits can be arranged when necessary. If you need a home visit, please contact the surgery as soon as possible after 8.30am.

For After hours emergency medical attention – at night, weekends or public holidays please call 03 56542753 where a nurse will triage your needs and contact the doctor on call.

YOUR DOCTOR

OCTOBER 2024

IBD VS. IBS: KEY DIFFERENCES

BALANCE BASICS

WHAT IS QUINOA?

THE KNEE-JERK REFLEX

Compliments of your GP

Are you seeing clearly?

Your eyes are remarkable! They capture light and convert it into images your brain can understand, allowing you to see the world around you. To understand common vision problems, it's helpful to first learn how your eyes work.

How your eyes work

The eye has three main parts: refracting tissues, light-sensitive tissues, and support tissues.

- Light first enters through the cornea, which bends (refracts) it for initial focus.
- The lens fine-tunes focus, directing light onto the retina at the back of your eye.
- The retina converts light into electrical signals that travel to your brain via the optic nerve, creating images.

Support tissues, such as muscles and fluids, allow your eye to move and maintain its shape. The iris adjusts the amount of light entering by changing the pupil size, while the ciliary muscle adjusts the lens for focusing at different distances. Together, these parts enable you to see clearly.

Common refractive problems

Sometimes, the shape of your eye causes light to bend incorrectly and affects how well you see. This is called a refractive error, the most common types include:

- Myopia (short-sightedness): occurs when your eye is longer than normal, or the cornea is curved too much, making distant objects appear blurry.
- Hyperopia (long-sightedness): happens when your eye is too short or the cornea is too flat, leading to difficulty focusing on nearby objects.
- Astigmatism: an irregularly shaped cornea or lens causes blurred or distorted vision at all distances.
- Presbyopia: an age-related condition where the eye's lens loses its ability to focus on close objects.

These issues can cause eye strain, headaches, and blurry vision; affecting daily activities and increasing accident risk. If left uncorrected, these problems can worsen over time, impacting your quality of life.

In Australia, around half of the population wears glasses or contact lenses, and uncorrected refractive errors are a major cause of vision impairment among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults.

Despite the severity of the issue, the solution is often straightforward. Refractive errors can usually be corrected using eyeglasses, contact lenses, or surgery, depending on the seriousness of the condition.

When should you see a doctor?

Taking care of your eyes is crucial. See your doctor if you experience sudden changes in your vision, such as blurry spots, flashes of light, or pain. Regular eye examinations, even if you don't have symptoms, are essential for early detection and effective treatment of vision problems.

Regular eye checks are essential for maintaining both good vision and overall health.

Our newsletter is free! Please take a copy with you.

Unlock the benefits of better balance

Have you ever wondered how you're able to stand, bend, or dance with ease? These everyday actions may seem effortless, but they're the result of a complex system - a true feat of engineering. With so many moving parts in our bodies, how do we maintain stability? The answer lies in our remarkable sense of balance.

Balance is the ability to keep your body centred, stable, and upright as you move. Achieving this requires your brain, eyes, joints, muscles, and inner ear to work together, continually adjusting your posture to keep you steady and prevent falls.

Consider what happens when you walk; your brain receives signals from your eyes, ears, and the sensations in your feet. Your environment also influences your balance - factors like wind, terrain, and obstacles in your path all require adjustments. Your brain and body continually process this information to maintain stability and prepare for each step.

Having good balance allows you to move freely and confidently, enhancing your strength, agility, energy, and well-being. Conversely, poor balance can lead to instability and increase the risk of falls. This is a critical concern for older adults who are more prone to serious injuries, such as fractures. A diminished ability to balance can significantly impact your quality of life, reducing mobility, independence, and overall health.

Improving your balance

Incorporating balance exercises into your daily routine can be as simple as standing on one leg while brushing your teeth or waiting for the kettle to boil. These subtle exercises can help you strengthen the muscles that support your balance without needing extra time or equipment.

If you find one-legged activity difficult, use a chair or wall for support. Remember, never risk falling; if you have concerns, consult your doctor before exercising.

Additional tips for better balance:

TAI CHI OR YOGA

These activities focus on slow, controlled movements and can significantly enhance your balance and flexibility.

STRENGTH TRAINING

Building muscle strength, particularly in your legs and core, provides a solid foundation for maintaining balance.

STAY ACTIVE

Regular physical activity, such as walking, swimming, or gardening, helps keep your muscles and joints in good working order.

CHECK YOUR VISION AND HEARING

Regular physical activity, such as walking, swimming, or gardening, helps keep your muscles and joints in good working order.

WEAR PROPER FOOTWEAR

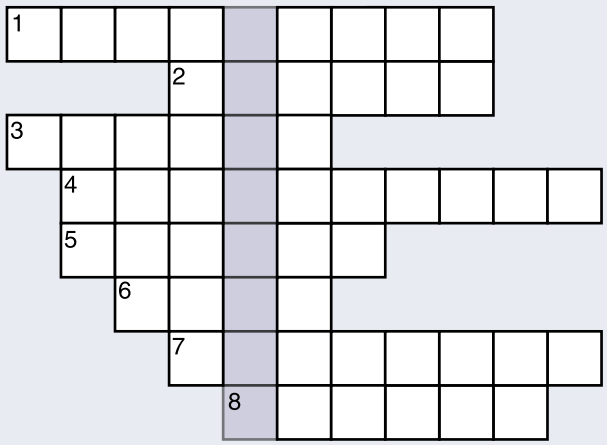
Shoes with good support and non-slip soles can help with your balance and prevent falls.

Improving your balance boosts confidence and enables you to enjoy activities without fear of falling. Regular practice helps you maintain your overall well-being.

HIDDEN CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Fill in the answers of the clues in the puzzle. Once you have done this, you will find the hidden word in the bold squares. Good Luck!

1. A mineral in your body that helps muscles and nerves work well.
2. A condition of the eye that makes it difficult to see objects that are far away.
3. A fast, automatic response to a stimulus without input from the brain.
4. The three muscles at the back of the thigh, between the hip and knee.
5. The tissue at the back of your eye that receives light and sends signals to the brain.
6. A practice that can help mental and physical health, especially strength and balance.
7. The large bone at the front of your leg between your knee and ankle.
8. A tough piece of tissue in your body that connects a muscle to a bone.



The hidden word is:

Answers can be found on the back page

Quinoa: the tiny seed with big health benefits

Quinoa (pronounced keen-wah) has become very popular in recent years. It's often referred to as a "superfood" because of its impressive nutritional profile. Originally from South America, quinoa was a staple food for the ancient Incas, and today, people all over the world enjoy it.

Quinoa is technically a seed but is commonly treated like a grain in cooking. It's available in white, red, and black varieties and has a slightly nutty flavour.

Nutritional powerhouse

Quinoa is packed with nutrients. It's a complete protein, which means it contains all nine essential amino acids that your body needs. This makes it an excellent plant-based protein source for vegetarians and vegans.

Quinoa is also rich in fibre, B vitamins and important minerals like magnesium, iron, and zinc. Plus, it's gluten-free, so it's a great option for those with gluten sensitivities or celiac disease.

Health benefits

Quinoa's high protein and fibre content can help you feel full longer, making it helpful for weight management. The fibre also promotes a healthy gut and may lower the risk of heart disease by reducing cholesterol levels.

Magnesium supports muscle and nerve function, while iron helps prevent anaemia and keeps your blood oxygenated. Quinoa is also rich in antioxidants, which help protect your body against aging and disease.

B vitamins are essential for brain function and overall health. Quinoa is particularly high in folate, crucial for cell growth and DNA synthesis, making it especially important during pregnancy.

Adding quinoa to your meals is easy– try it in salads, soups, or as an oatmeal alternative. Don't miss our tasty stuffed capsicum recipe!

Quinoa is a smart choice for good health!

Understanding reflexes and the knee-jerk test

Has your ever doctor tapped your knee with a little hammer to test your knee-jerk reflex? Do you know why this is done? Let's explore the different types of reflexes and the purpose of this common test.

It's helpful to understand what a reflex is and how the knee-jerk reflex works. A reflex is a fast, automatic response to a stimulus without input from the brain. Reflexes are essential for protecting your body and maintaining function.

There are two main types: muscle stretch and skin (cutaneous) reflexes. Abnormal reflexes, like overly strong or weak responses, can indicate nerve problems. Reflex tests are important for assessing neurological health, especially in newborns.

The Patellar Reflex

The patellar, or knee-jerk reflex, is a muscle stretch reflex that checks if your spinal cord is working properly. It tests the lumbar area, specifically the L2, L3, and L4 segments of the spinal cord.

The name comes from the patellar tendon, which connects the bottom of your kneecap to the top of your shinbone. This is the tendon your doctor taps when they test for the reflex.

How does it work?

When the patellar tendon is tapped, sensors in the quadriceps (thigh muscle) send a signal to your spinal cord, triggering the thigh muscle to contract and the hamstring to relax. This allows your leg to kick out in a quick, automatic movement.

This fast response shows the efficiency of your nervous system, which plays a crucial role in everyday activities.

This automatic contraction and relaxation helps you walk, recover quickly from tripping, and maintain balance. It's vital for movement, and preventing falls.

The cutaneous reflex protects you from harm by prompting quick reactions to dangerous triggers, like a hot surface.

Don't be alarmed if your knee-jerk reflex is weak or absent; it doesn't necessarily indicate a problem. However, if you have any concerns about your reflexes or balance, it's best to consult your doctor.

Gut-Friendly Quinoa Stuffed Capsicums

Capsicums are a low-FODMAP vegetable, making them gentle on your digestive system and less likely to cause bloating. This recipe is rich in protein, iron, vitamins, and fibre to boost energy, reduce inflammation, and support gut health. Enjoy a mix of colours for added nutritional benefits.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large capsicums (red, yellow, green)
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- ½ cup grated carrot
- ½ cup chopped spinach
- ½ cup diced tomatoes (canned, no added sugar)
- ½ cup grated cheese (e.g.,cheddar or mozzarella)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and pepper (optional to taste)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C.
2. Cut the tops off the capsicums and remove the seeds and membranes.
3. In a bowl, mix the cooked quinoa, carrots, spinach, tomatoes, and cheese.
4. Drizzle the olive oil over the mixture and add the dried oregano, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine.
5. Stuff each capsicum with the quinoa mixture, pressing down gently to pack it in.
6. Place the stuffed capsicums upright in a baking dish, cover with aluminium foil and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the capsicums are tender.
7. Remove the foil and bake for an additional 5 minutes to brown the tops.

Enjoy your delicious, digestion-friendly meal!

Gut-related issues: is it inflammatory or irritable?

IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) and IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) are both conditions that affect your digestive system. They can sometimes be confused, but they are different conditions, so let's compare them:

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

IBD refers to a group of chronic (ongoing) inflammatory conditions in the digestive tract. The two main types are Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. These conditions often begin in adolescence or young adulthood.

Causes

The exact cause of IBD is unknown, but it involves inflammation of the digestive tract. Other factors like genetics, lifestyle, and immune system health may play a role. For example, you may be more likely to develop IBD if you have a family history of the condition; you smoke, or have experienced some early-life environmental factors like antibiotic use, or an imbalanced diet, particularly one high in processed foods and low in fibre.

Symptoms

Symptoms of IBD include abdominal pain, diarrhoea (often with blood), weight loss, and fatigue. In severe cases, it can lead to complications and permanent damage to the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

Diagnosis and treatment:

IBD is diagnosed through a combination of blood tests, stool tests, endoscopic procedures (like colonoscopy), and imaging studies. Treatment often involves medication to reduce inflammation and control symptoms, and in some cases, surgery may be required.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

IBS is more common than IBD and does not cause inflammation or damage in the digestive tract. It mainly affects the large intestine (bowel).

Causes

The exact cause of IBS is unknown, but it's thought to involve increased sensitivity to intestinal pain and possibly an altered gut microbiota. Stress, diet, medications, infections, and hormonal changes can trigger or worsen symptoms. Abnormal movement of food and waste through the digestive tract is also a factor.

Symptoms

IBS symptoms include abdominal pain or discomfort, bloating, gas, and alternating diarrhoea and constipation. These symptoms often fluctuate and can vary widely among individuals.

Diagnosis and treatment

IBS is diagnosed based on recurring symptoms like abdominal pain and changes in stool patterns; and by ruling out other conditions through blood and stool tests.

Treatment focuses on managing symptoms. These may include dietary changes (e.g., a low FODMAP diet), fibre supplements, medications for specific symptoms, and psychological therapies like cognitive-behavioural therapy.

Understanding the differences between IBD and IBS is crucial for proper diagnosis and treatment. If you experience digestive issues, consult your doctor for an accurate diagnosis and appropriate care.

Questions to ask at your next doctor's visit

Asking questions is key to good communication with your doctor. To make the most of your visit, write down what you want to know in the area below. Bring this list to your next appointment so you remember what you wanted to ask.

DOCTOR'S NAME	DATE	TIME

1.
2.
3.
NOTES:

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Magnesium
2. Myopia
3. Reflex
4. Hamstrings
5. Retina
6. Yoga
7. Shinbone
8. Tendon

Hidden word: Eyesight

INFLUENZA IN 2024

Influenza is a common viral infection that affects people of all ages.

While it may be a mild disease for some, it can also cause serious illness and even lead to hospitalisation in otherwise healthy people.

Vaccination, administered annually by a health professional is the safest means of protection from influenza.

Each year the virus' circulating can vary, this is why annual vaccination is very important. There are different vaccine brands available for different age groups, all brands are quadrivalent, which means they contain 4 viral strains. Influenza vaccines have been around for many decades and are very safe. The vaccine does not contain any live viruses and therefore cannot give you influenza. Common side effects are mild pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, more serious reactions are very rare.

Flu vaccination is strongly recommended and free under the National Immunisation Program for the following people:

- Children aged 6 months to less than 5 years
- Pregnant women at any stage during pregnancy
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and over
- People aged 65 years and over
- People aged 6 months and over with certain medical conditions.

If you are not eligible for the free vaccine you can purchase the vaccine from participating pharmacies or speak to your GP.

What else can you do to stay healthy during Flu season?

- Hand Hygiene - washing your hands regularly with soap and water or using handrub is the most important routine to include in your day.
- Cover your mouth – If you feel a sneeze or cough coming on and you don't have a tissue handy, it is important to cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wear a mask.
- Stay home – Staying at home while you are unwell is the best way to avoid spreading the flu or covid.
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables.
- Stay active – 30 minutes a day of activity.

Flu vaccine will be available from late April, 2024.