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NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2024



THE DOCTORS:

Dr Arthur Obi

MBBS, MRCOG (UK), MRCGP (UK),
FRACGP

Dr Felix Ogbo

MBBS, PhD

CLINIC STAFF:

Nursing: Anulika (Joy), Augusta &
Tammy

Reception/Admin: Teash, Emma, Jane
& Jodie

PRACTICE HOURS:

Patrick Street Family Practice's phones
are answered from 8:30am until close
Monday - Friday.

Our doors are open:

Monday: 8:00am – 6:00pm

Tuesday: 8:00am – 6:00pm

Wednesday: 8:00am – 6:00pm

Thursday: 8:00am – 5:00pm

Friday: 8:00am – 5:00pm

AFTER HOURS CARE:

For after hours care please call the GP
Helpline on **1800 022 222**. In case of an
emergency dial **000** and ask for an
ambulance.

VISITING SPECIALISTS & SERVICES:

Dr Hemant Chaudhary Cardiologist

Dr Chris Hengel Cardiologist

Dr Rodney Reddy Cardiologist

Kristie Austin Clinical Psychologist

Grampians Podiatry

Hearing Australia

Continence Nurse

Flying Doctors Telehealth Addiction,

Cardiology, Endocrinology, Geriatrics,

Paediatrics, Pain, Psychiatry, Respiratory

& Wellbeing

Australian Clinical Labs

INTERPRETER SERVICES:

Please notify reception prior to your
appointment if you require any
interpreter services.

❖ **APPOINTMENTS**

All consultations are by appointment only. Appointments can be made by calling the
practice on (03) 5358 7555.

Please let reception know if you require a longer appointment. If more than one family
member needs to see the doctor, please ensure an appointment is made for each
person.

Please advise reception if you are unable to attend an appointment so the reserved
time can be allocated to another patient.

Missed Appointment Policy Patients who fail to attend an appointment or provide
sufficient notice to cancel their appointment may incur a fee of \$50. This fee is not
claimable through Medicare and needs to be paid before any further appointments.

❖ **BILLING**

**We are a private practice and payment is required on the day by cash, cheque or
eftpos.** We can claim your rebate immediately from Medicare using Easyclaim onto
your cheque or savings card. Bulk billing is available for children 16 years and
under, patients aged 65 years and over, concession card holders, and Diabetics.

❖ **CONTACT DETAILS**

It is important to let us know at each appointment if any of your contact details have
changed.

❖ **REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS**

Script requests are provided at the discretion of the doctor for a fee of \$30 (or \$20 for
Concession Card Holders).

❖ **REFERRALS**

New referrals require the patient to be seen by the doctor. Referrals are current for 12
months, please check with your specialist if your referral is current as they *cannot be*
back-dated.

❖ **COMMUNICATION**

To allow each patient the best consultation possible, our doctors prefer not to be
interrupted by phone calls. Our practice staff are happy to take a message and pass this
along to the doctor. Emails are only to be used for correspondence of a non-sensitive
nature and are checked daily.

➤ **Practice information continued on last page...**

Regular health checks



About health checks

Regular health check-ups can identify any early signs of health issues. Finding problems early means that your chances for effective treatment are increased.

Many factors, such as your age, health, family history and lifestyle choices, impact on how often you need check-ups.

Why regular health checks are important

It is a good idea to visit a doctor regularly, even if you feel healthy. The purpose of these visits is to:

- check for current or emerging medical problems
- assess your risk of future medical issues
- prompt you to maintain a healthy lifestyle
- update vaccinations.

Health checks are usually incorporated into routine medical care. Your doctor will often perform these checks when you are visiting for another condition. Your doctor will then tell you how often you need to have a health check.

Having a health check is also a time to examine your lifestyle to see what improvements can be made. This may be something you regularly do yourself or discuss with a healthcare professional.

Health checks at home

You can do a basic health check at home to review your health in relation to:

- Alcohol – people who have at least 2 alcohol-free days per week and stick to no more than 2 standard drinks per drinking day have better long-term health.
- Dental care – cleaning your teeth regularly and eating a low-sugar diet can reduce your risk of tooth decay, gum disease and tooth loss. Visit a dentist or other oral health professional at least once a year for a dental examination and professional cleaning, or more frequently as advised by your dentist.
- Diet – a healthy diet improves your general health and wellbeing. Have at least 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables each day.
- Physical activity – regular physical activity is good for your mental health, heart and bones, and can prevent many diseases. Aim for 30 minutes to an hour of moderate physical activity a day. Moderate physical activity takes some effort, but still allows a conversation to be held (for example, brisk walking, gentle swimming, social tennis).
- Skin checks – check your skin regularly for unusual moles or freckles, and see your doctor if you notice anything unusual. People who work outdoors need a yearly examination by their doctor or a dermatologist.

- **Smoking** – smoking increases your risk of many diseases, including [heart disease](#), [stroke](#), [lung disease](#) and [thin bones](#). If you smoke, quitting as soon as possible helps reduce the harm.
- **Weight** – maintaining a healthy weight range helps prevent longer-term diseases, such as [diabetes](#) and [arthritis](#).

Regular health checks for adults

Regular health checks can help to identify early warning signs of disease or illness. Heart disease, diabetes and some [cancers](#) can often be picked up in their early stages, when treatment may be more successful.

When you have a check, your doctor will talk to you about your medical history, your family's history of disease and your lifestyle. Your diet, weight, how much you exercise, and whether or not you smoke and drink alcohol or take [illegal drugs](#) will also be discussed.

If you have high-risk factors, such as a family history of a condition, it may be more likely that you will develop a particular disease. Regular checks may help your doctor pick up early warning signs.

If you have a high risk of a particular health condition, your doctor may recommend more frequent health checks at an earlier age.

These are some common tests, but your doctor may recommend others according to your situation.

Health checks for your heart

Health check-ups for heart disease may include:

- **Blood pressure** – have your blood pressure checked every 2 years if it is normal, you are aged under 40 years, and there is no family history of [high blood pressure](#). Have it checked yearly if you are over 40, your blood pressure is on the high side, or you have a personal or family history of high blood pressure, stroke or [heart attack](#). Be advised by your doctor.
- **Blood tests** – check [cholesterol levels](#) and [blood triglycerides](#), among other things. High levels may indicate an increased risk of various health problems, including heart disease. If you are over 45, you should have these blood tests once every 5 years. If you are at high risk of heart disease and have a family history, you should be tested every year from the age of 40.
- **Electrocardiogram (ECG)** – this is a non-invasive and painless medical test that detects cardiac (heart) abnormalities by measuring the electrical activity generated by the heart as it contracts.
- **Obesity tests** – being [overweight](#) is a significant risk factor for many health conditions, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Ask your doctor to check your [body mass index \(BMI\)](#) and waist measurement every 2 years. If you are at a higher risk, you should have your weight checked more frequently.

Anyone 45 years and over, or 30 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, should have a regular [heart health check](#) with their doctor. A heart health check is a 20-minute check-up with your GP to assess your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Heart health checks are covered by Medicare and are free at practices that bulk bill this service.

Health checks for diabetes

[Diabetes](#) is a serious condition where glucose (sugar) in the blood becomes higher than normal. This can affect many parts of the body and lead to serious complications if not managed.

Tests for diabetes include a laboratory blood glucose test ordered by your doctor (not using a home blood glucose meter). The most common test is the fasting blood glucose test (no food or fluid except water for eight hours before).

Others include a test taken anytime during the day with no preparation, glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) test, or an Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT).

Talk to your doctor about having your risk of diabetes assessed and how often you should be tested.

Your risk of developing type 2 diabetes over the next 5 years can be assessed by completing the [Australian type 2 diabetes risk assessment tool \(AUSDRISK\)](#), a short list of questions.

You can complete AUSDRISK by yourself, or with the help of a health professional or practice nurse.

You can complete the tool in one of 3 ways:

- using the [online interactive version](#)
- using the [online non-interactive version](#)
- downloading the [pdf version](#) and completing it on paper.

Your doctor may recommend that you be tested for [type 2 diabetes](#) if you have any of the following type 2 diabetes risk factors:

- have [pre-diabetes](#)
- have a family history of diabetes (for example, if you have a first-degree relative with type 2 diabetes)
- are over 55 years. The risk increases with age
- are over 45 years and [overweight and obese](#) or have [high blood pressure](#)
- are over 35 years and from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, or from a Pacific Island, Indian subcontinent or Chinese cultural background
- had [gestational diabetes](#) during a [pregnancy](#)
- have [polycystic ovarian syndrome \(PCOS\)](#)
- have cardiovascular disease such as past history of [heart attack](#), [angina](#), [stroke](#) or narrowed [blood vessels](#)
- taking certain antipsychotic medication or corticosteroid medication.

Other lifestyle risk factors include:

- being overweight or obese, especially around the waist
- sedentary lifestyle – having low levels of physical activity, including more than two hours of television watching per day
- unhealthy eating habits, such as regularly choosing [high-fat](#), [high-sugar](#), [high-salt](#) or [low-fibre](#) foods
- [cigarette smoking](#).

Health checks for bowel cancer

Screening for [bowel cancer](#) in people aged 50 to 74 who do not have any symptoms, helps to find cancer early.

The [bowel cancer screening test](#) uses chemicals to check a bowel motion sample for blood, which may be a sign of bowel cancer.

The [National Bowel Cancer Screening Program](#) sends free test kits in the mail to people aged 50 to 74, every 2 years.

If you have a family history of bowel cancer, please talk to your doctor about what screening options are right for you. People at high risk of bowel cancer may need a [colonoscopy](#) every 5 years. During this test, the doctor inserts a slender instrument called a colonoscope through the anus to visually check the rectum and large bowel for any abnormalities.

Health checks for eye conditions

Eyesight tends to deteriorate with age. Serious eye conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration are more common with age.

People older than 65 years should have an annual examination. However, more frequent testing may be recommended for those with certain risk factors, such as:

- a family history of eye disease
- a personal history of eye disease or injury
- certain medical conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes
- taking certain medications.

If you already wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, you should have your eyes tested every year. Adults who do not wear prescription glasses or contact lenses should have an eye test every 2 years.

Health checks for your bones

Advancing age is a significant risk factor for osteoporosis in both men and women. A bone density test helps to determine the health of your bones. Generally speaking, people over the age of 50 should be assessed for the need to have a bone density test.

Sexually transmissible infections (STI) screening

If you are sexually active, you should get tested for chlamydia every year between the ages of 15 and 29, using a simple urine test. Chlamydia is very common and does not always show symptoms.

If you are at risk of other sexually transmissible infections, such as HIV/AIDS or herpes, ask your doctor about further testing.

Health checks for women

In order to stay in good health and identify possible health issues at an early stage, it is important for women to have regular health checks. There are a number of specific tests that you should make part of your regular routine.

Breast cancer screening

Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting Australian women. It can occur at any age, but it is more common in women over 60.

Breast screening (also known as mammogram) is one of the best ways to detect breast cancer early. If breast cancer is found early, it is more likely to be successfully treated and improve your chance of surviving it.

BreastScreen Australia invites women aged 50 to 74 for free mammograms every 2 years. If you are in your 40s or over 75, discuss the risks and benefits of screening with your doctor. Women under 40 are not eligible for the screening program.

It is important that at any age, if you notice any breast symptoms or a change in the look and feel of your breast to see your doctor without delay.

Cervical screening test

Having regular cervical screening tests can help prevent cervical cancers through early detection and treatment.

Cervical cancer screening is recommended every 5 years for women and people with a cervix who are aged 25 to 74 years and have ever been sexually active.

The cervical screening test (which replaced the pap test) checks for the presence of the human papilloma virus – a virus that can cause cervical cancer. Even if you have been vaccinated against HPV, regular cervical screening is still important as the vaccine does not protect against all types of HPV infection.

Screening is available for eligible people through the National Cervical Screening Program.

From July 2022, everyone who is eligible for cervical screening will be able to collect their own vaginal sample if they choose, this is called self-collection. Self-collection is a safe and effective method of testing.

Pregnancy

You should have a general check-up before becoming pregnant to discuss any health risks during pregnancy. Once you are pregnant, regular antenatal checks help monitor your baby's development, pick up abnormalities and assess your health.

Tests related to pregnancy may include ultrasound scans, urine tests, blood tests and genetic testing. Some antenatal tests are recommended for all pregnant women, while others are only necessary for women at increased risk of complications. Be advised by your doctor.

Health checks for men

It's a good idea for men to make regular health checks part of your regular routine. This will help you stay healthy and pick up potential problems early.

Health checks for prostate cancer

Discuss testing with your doctor. It is not recommended that all men are routinely tested for prostate cancer. You will need to consider the benefits, risks and uncertainties of testing, as well as your risk of developing the disease.

Health checks for older people

As you get older, keeping an eye on your health becomes more important. Speak to your doctor about:

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening – former and current smokers (particularly older men) can consider having an ultrasound to screen for abdominal aortic aneurysms, a blood-filled bulge in a major blood vessel in your abdomen called the aorta.
- Blood pressure screening – every year. If you have diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, or certain other conditions, you may need to be checked more often.
- Bowel cancer screening – a simple test for signs of bowel cancer is recommended once every 2 years if you are over 50.
- Cholesterol screening and heart disease prevention – every 5 years if levels are normal. If you have high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems or certain other conditions, you may need to be checked more often.
- Diabetes screening – every 3 years. If you are overweight and have other risk factors for diabetes, ask your doctor if you should be screened more often.
- Lung cancer screening – for current smokers and those who have quit within the past 15 years.

- Osteoporosis screening – if you have risk factors for osteoporosis, you should check with your doctor about screening. Risk factors can include long-term steroid use, low body weight, smoking, heavy alcohol use or a family history of osteoporosis.
- A physical exam – every year or as recommended by your doctor. Your doctor will check and record your weight, height and body mass index (BMI).

You should also speak with your doctor about immunisation, in particular:

- a pneumococcal vaccine if you have never had one, or if it has been more than 5 years since you had the vaccine
- an annual flu shot
- a tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster every 10 years
- a shingles or herpes zoster vaccine.

Check-ups with other health professionals may include:

- a dental exam – every year or so, or more often if recommended by your dentist
- an eye test – every one to 2 years if you have vision problems or glaucoma risk
- a hearing test – if you have symptoms of hearing loss.

Other health checks

Your GP may also recommend other tests based on your family history, your medical history or current symptoms. Depending on the results of those tests, your doctor may then want to provide a course of treatment, investigate further or refer you to a specialist for diagnosis and treatment.

Where to get help

- Your GP (doctor)
- Your community health clinic
- An optometrist
- A dentist
- An audiologist
- National Bowel Cancer Screening Program
- National Cervical Screening Program
- BreastScreen Victoria Tel. 13 20 50 or book a BreastScreen appointment
- Gynaecologist
- Eye specialist
- Pharmacist
- Jean Hailes for Women's Health
- Cancer Council Victoria Tel. 13 11 20
- National Immunisation Program Schedule, Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Heart Foundation
- Diabetes Australia
- Breast Cancer Network Australia
- Healthy Bones Australia

For the Kids:



Patient Notices:



FACE MASKS

We ask that any patients with cold or flu symptoms please wear a mask when entering the practice.

SERVICES:

- Men's Health
- Women's Health
- Children's Health (including Childhood Immunisations)
- Family Planning
- Antenatal Care
- Chronic Disease Management
- COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Travel Health (including Yellow Fever Vaccinations)
- Minor Surgeries (Suturing, Ingrown Toenails, Sunspots, Removal of Moles, etc.)
- Health Assessments
- Mental Health
- Q Fever Testing and Immunisation
- Pre-Employment Medical Assessments
- ECG's
- Urine Drug Screens

RESULTS:

If you wish to discuss any results, an appointment needs to be made with your doctor. If you have any results requiring immediate action, you will be contacted to make a follow-up appointment with your doctor.

PRIVACY:

Patrick Street Family Practice respects your privacy. Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of this practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff. A copy of our Privacy Policy is available upon request.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK:

Patrick Street Family Practice values all comments and feedback, and take all suggestions seriously. We take all feedback under advisement as part of our continuous quality improvements. For minor feedback/suggestions that we may be able to deal with immediately, please contact us in person at the practice or phone us on (03) 5358 7555. For matters requiring more consideration, please put your feedback in writing and place it in the Suggestions Box at Reception.