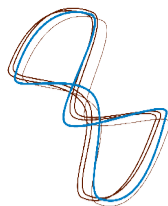


Community Health News

December 2010



Mitchell
Community Health



Providers of health and social support services within the shires of Mitchell and Murrindindi. Working actively with communities to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and prevent illness.

Avoiding Christmas Blowouts Budgets & Waistlines!

As Christmas is fast approaching so are the mounting expenses that can go along with the festive season. Here are some tips to help your back pocket as well as your health in general.

Mobile Phones – traps to avoid this Christmas

Christmas is fast approaching, and mobile phones are on the top of many wish lists. Mobile phones can be a useful tool, but unsuspecting consumers may end up with a large telephone debt. Listed here are some common pitfalls to avoid:

- Caps – A phone that has a cap may seem inexpensive, but tend to have high call and SMS text costs. Calls can exceed the cap amount and continue to mount unlimited until the next billing period. A cap works the same as an ongoing phone plan. A pre-paid phone is a preferable alternative for many consumers including children and those on a tight budget.

- Mobile Premium Services – are targeted towards young people, and entail purchasing items such as ring tones, or (often unwittingly) subscribing to an ongoing service after sending an SMS text, e.g. to "Find out your perfect partner's name." These can cause huge ongoing costs and quickly gobble up any new recharges put onto prepaid mobiles. It may be possible to block these services being accessed on your or your child's phone – contact your provider.

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) is a free and independent alternative dispute resolution scheme for small business and residential consumers in Australia who have a complaint about their telephone or Internet service. Phone 1800 062 058, or www.tio.com.au

Healthy Christmas Snack Ideas

Here are some healthy snack ideas for the Christmas period. Try adding extra fruit and vegetables to your snack options for some more crunch this summer.

Fruit

Fruit skewers

A fruit platter with yoghurt in the centre for a dip
Frozen fruits or fruit and yoghurt smoothie
A dried fruit, nuts and popcorn mix.
Add extra fruits and nuts to cake and muffin recipes

Vegetables

Vegetable sticks served with dips or salsa
Pumpkin chips
Rice crackers with tomato, avocado and cottage cheese
Stuffed cherry tomatoes

Some alternatives to chips are:

- Rice Cakes
- Prawn Crackers cooked in the microwave
- Pretzels
- Mini-toasts
- Pita bread triangles toasted in the oven
- Pappadams cooked in the microwave

Hommus Dip

1 X 440g can chickpeas, drained
2 clove garlic, crushed
1/2 cup tahini
1/2 cup parsley, finely chopped
1/2 cup water
large pinch black pepper
pinch cayenne pepper

1. Mash chickpeas to a thick paste, using a food processor.
2. Combine everything and chill thoroughly.
3. Taste to correct seasonings. Some people like extra garlic, soya sauce or tahini.
4. serve with carrot and celery sticks

Asthma & Allergies

With the recent weather events and rainfall in Victoria, this year sees an increase in the incidence of hay fever which can be a sometimes debilitating condition as well as an increase in asthma.

It is important to keep your allergy and/or asthma management plan up to date and be aware of triggers for these conditions. Keep a note of what triggers your asthma or allergies and avoid those situations or environments.

Asthma can change on holidays, some people find their asthma symptoms increase, while others experience

an improvement in their asthma. This depends where you go, what you do and what triggers your asthma. Remember that the more stable your asthma, the more control you will have in different environments.

Ensure you have good inhaler technique and that you take medications as prescribed. Adapted from "Take it Easy not Wheezy" brochure (www.asthma.org.au).

An allergic rhinitis (hay fever) checklist and pollen calendar is available on the ASCIA website www.allergy.org.au/content/view/291/234/ (Adapted from www.allergy.org.au)

Christmas Holiday Office Hours 2010 - 2011

Kinglake:

Fri 24th Dec	9.00am – 1.00pm
Mon 27th – Mon 3rd Jan	Closed
Tue 4th Jan	9.00am – 5.00pm

Flowerdale:

Wed 22nd Dec	9.00am – 1.00pm
Thurs 23rd Dec – Mon 3rd Jan	Closed
Tues 4th Jan	9.00am – 5.00pm

Marysville:

Fri 24th Dec	9.00am – 1.00pm
Mon 27th – Tues 28th Dec	Closed
Wed 29th – Friday 31st	By appointment only call: 0417 563 997
Tue 4th Jan	9.00am – 5.00pm

Snake Bite First Aid Kits Make Great Gifts

Snake bite first aid is very relevant to us as we approach another summer with early movement of snakes in the area due to the recent weather events.

Mitchell CHS are pleased to be able to offer Snakebite First Aid Kits for sale to the general community. These kits provide clear written instructions for applying Snakebite First Aid, compression bandages and a sling.

These kits are great to have at home, in the shed, in your car, a gift for friends and family and as a fundraiser for schools, community groups or sporting clubs.

Snakebite Prevention / Tips

- When outside wear solid shoes and socks and if you are outside in the dark carry a torch. Snakes are very active in the evenings.

- Around the yard keep grass short, free from rubbish and avoid storing materials such as wood heaps and iron directly on the ground – elevate or place in a completely sealed shed with a concrete floor.

- Try to keep shrubbery trimmed above ground level to reduce snake hiding places.

- If gardening always wear heavy gloves and try to minimise placing hands in hard to see places that provide havens for snakes.

- If you are going to a snake prone area always have compression bandages available and make a plan as to how to contact the nearest medical assistance.

- Do not attempt to catch or kill a snake – this is the most common time for a snakebite to occur.

The Pressure Immobilisation Technique - knowledge and ability to apply first aid can mean the difference between life and death in recovery from snakebite.

If a person is bitten the most important thing is to keep them calm and still.

As soon as possible a compression bandage should be applied using the Snake Bite Kit. This is followed by splinting the bitten limb to ensure no movement occurs.

These simple first steps will slow the venom transport and allow medical assistance to be sought.

Contacting medical assistance should be done as early as possible after first aid is applied.

To purchase snake bite kits please contact MCHS Reception on 5784 5555.

Cost of snake bite kit: \$10.00

Service Access and Care Coordination (SACC)

For all MCHS enquiries and bookings, phone the SACC team on: 1300 773 352

Mitchell Community Health Service is located in Broadford, Wallan, Seymour, Kinglake, Alexandra, Yea, Marysville, Flowerdale and other sites in Murrindindi by negotiation.

Broadford Reception: 5784 5555 Web: www.mitchellchs.org.au