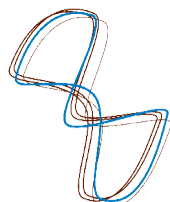


# Community Health News

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 to 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](http://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 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](http://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/](http://www.allergy.org.au/content/view/291/234/) (Adapted from [www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au))

## Festive Seasons Survival Packs

Come and grab your Festive Season Survival Pack available at Broadford Reception. Includes: health information and resources, emergency after hours numbers, kids travelling activities and more. Be quick as supplies are limited. FREE.

## Sunshine Club

The Mitchell Community Health Service "Sunshine Club", formally known as PAG (Planned Activity Group), is having an afternoon tea and activities "Open Day" from 2:00pm - 4:00pm Monday 20th December 2010.

The Sunshine Club is a social support group for older people who are finding it hard to get to other community activities due to ill health, frailty or a lack of transport.

Activities include: outings, gardening, physical activity, traditional and electronic games and art and craft. The Sunshine Club operates every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

If you would like to come along and find out more about the group, our staff and participants then please phone 5784 5555 to register.

## Community Christmas Trees of Remembrance - a gift of ritual for people in our communities missing loved ones who have died

Mitchell Community Health Service will again be providing Community Christmas Trees of Remembrance during the month of December.

The trees will be set up at MCHS Broadford and Wallan in the Wallan Multi Purpose Centre to acknowledge the loss and grief of people in our community and to support the healing journey.

We are inviting people to write messages to family members, friends or pets who have died to include them in the spirit of Christmas. The message cards will decorate the tree.

Special occasions like Christmas can be a trigger that brings on a resurgence of grief and this can often be experienced for years to come.

The Community Christmas Tree of Remembrance is an opportunity for people who have had a loved one die to express their feelings at this time of year.

## Christmas New Year Holiday Office Hours 2010-2011

Broadford, Wallan & Seymour:

Friday 24th Dec 8.30am – 3.00pm

Mon 27th & Tues 28th Dec Closed (Public Holidays)

Wed 29th – Fri 31st 8.30am – 5.00pm  
(Seymour by appointment only these days)

Mon 3rd Jan 2011 Closed (Public Holiday)

Tues 4th Jan 2011 8.30am – 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.

Kits are only \$10. 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.



## Service Access and Care Coordination (SACC)

P: 1300 773 352 F: 5784 5525 E: [serviceaccess@mitchellchs.org.au](mailto:serviceaccess@mitchellchs.org.au)

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

Broadford Reception: 5784 5555 Web: [www.mitchellchs.org.au](http://www.mitchellchs.org.au)