



June 2007

Issue 10

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because  
**children**  
matter

# Parentalk

## Overwrapping can be dangerous

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) - the leading cause of death in infants under 1 year of age can happen at any time. But parents and caregivers should be extra careful during the cold winter months, when the flu and other infections and the urge to bundle up babies extra warmly increase the risk of SIDS, say experts from the John Hopkins Children's Centre.

Over-wrapping, which can lead to thermal stress, is one of several risk factors for SIDS, and one that many parents are unaware of. "In my practice, I often find that new parents haven't been told about all the risk factors for SIDS, how to properly put their baby to sleep or that they should never over-swaddle" says sleep specialist Ann Halbower, MD, Director of the Children's Centre Sleep Disorders Program. "It's a conversation that's just not happening often enough in pediatricians' offices."

"Many parents and caregivers might have heard that placing babies to sleep on their backs is the safest position, yet a surprising number of them continue to place their infants in face-down or side-sleep positions, both of which are risk factors for SIDS", Halbower says. "Add over-wrapping and viral or bacterial infections to an unsafe sleeping position, and you have a recipe for disaster," she says.

Several studies in inner cities have shown that many infants sleep with too many blankets or wraps on and in crowded beds with other family members. Halbower says, "Babies who are sick need to vent off the heat from their fever, so bundling baby too warmly is possibly the worst thing you can do in this situation."

### SOME SIDS-PREVENTION TIPS FOR NEW PARENTS

- Place baby face up in the crib.
- Put baby's feet closer to the foot of the bed so he can't roll down.
- Tuck in blankets at baby's feet. Never tuck the blanket higher than baby's armpit.
- Never cover a baby's face or head. Infants release most of their extra body heat through the head.
- Never fall asleep with baby on the couch as you might roll over and suffocate or drop the infant.
- Never allow baby to share a bed with older siblings and/or parents. The baby can be kept in the parents' room but in his own crib.
- Don't rely on baby apnea monitors. They are good for monitoring heart-rhythm disturbances or lapses in breathing. However, they are not effective in picking up other subtle changes leading up to SIDS, such as drops in oxygen levels, and they won't protect babies in unsafe sleeping conditions.
- Premature babies are at higher risk for SIDS.



# Editor's Column

Hi Everyone,

Parentalk is a newsletter for first-time parents in the Northern Metropolitan area of Melbourne. It is a newsletter by parents for parents and we welcome all contributions.

This edition of Parentalk is filled with some really informative stuff which we hope will be of some use to you and your family, and more importantly, you will enjoy reading.

We believe it is important to share your stories, tips, feelings and experiences in order to help other parents feel that they are not alone.

*To submit contributions to Parentalk, you can do so by emailing directly to [psassella@cps.org.au](mailto:psassella@cps.org.au)*

*Or by post to:  
PARENTALK  
c/- CPS  
70 Altona Street  
West Heidelberg Vic 3081*

*Remember to head your submission  
"Parentalk contribution"*

*Our phone number is  
(03) 9458 3566*

*Planning on Moving?  
Let us know!  
Don't miss out on your  
Parentalk.*

I'm a dad... Manuel Boultadakis, Co-ordinator



The 'I'm a dad' program is an internationally recognized initiative that targets and supports first-time fathers in a positive, strength based preventative program that celebrates and encourages men to be active and involved fathers. The CPS delivers the 'I'm a dad' program into Northern Middle Melbourne, strongly supported by the Northern Hospital. Through 'I'm a dad', the CPS will target all first time fathers whose child is born at the Northern Hospital from June 2005 to June 2008.

On May 3rd and May 17th 2007, sessions were held with four couples addressing adjusting to parenthood. The sessions were facilitated by two representatives from Banyule Community Health Centre, and an I'm a dad representative.

The aims of the sessions were:

To provide information on adjusting to parenthood

To give fathers an opportunity to talk about their feelings and to provide support to them and help them understand their feelings

To involve fathers in problem solving

To encourage open and effective communication

To provide tips for fathers

The sessions also provided both partners the opportunity to discuss positives and negatives of being a parent, challenges of being a parent, and how partners can help. Topics that were covered provided the opportunity for couples to communicate and to try different communication techniques such as letter writing, as positive ways of expressing feelings/thoughts.

Listening exercises were also practiced to assist couples in their daily communication with each other.

The main emphasis of the sessions was to reinforce the idea of team parenting not only for the wellbeing of their newborn, but for the health of their own relationship. One of the examples utilized was the importance of support in postnatal depression. A video on post natal depression was very effective in clearly demonstrating the importance of support and communication between couples.



Group photo of our recent ante natal class 'reunion' held at BuzyKidz on Sunday 20th May.

## DROP US A LINE

We are always happy to hear from you. Email Rob at [rheller@cps.org.au](mailto:rheller@cps.org.au) or call him at 9474 4800

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the 'I'm a dad' program. Any medical information in this newsletter is not a substitute for professional advice. Please see your health-care provider if you have any concerns

# From The Vault

## How much exercise is safe when you're growing a baby?

When it comes to exercise during pregnancy, you should listen to your body and do what makes you feel good. In general, that will be things like prenatal yoga, swimming or walking, and if gentle jogging feels good then do it, but don't push yourself too hard.

Exercise isn't only important for pregnancy, it's important for motherhood too, as you'll do more bending, stretching and lifting than you've ever done in your life and you need to be strong for that.

### BABY STEPS

Current research shows that moderate exercise during a normal pregnancy can bring about beneficial results for both mother and foetus. Over the last 10 years, American gynaecologist and author of *Exercising Through Your Pregnancy*, Dr James Clapp, says that both weight-bearing and non weight-bearing exercise are thought to be safe during pregnancy. He says it's important to **avoid big increases in body temperature during exercise.**

"Pregnant women should ensure adequate fluid intake before, during and after exercise, wear loose-fitting clothing and avoid high heat and humidity to protect against heat stress, especially during the first trimester" he says.

During the first trimester the baby's central nervous system is forming, so they're particularly sensitive to heat. It's okay to build a little sweat, but you need to be aware of your core temperature going up; if you feel you're overheating, you need to stop and let yourself cool down.

Avoid sit-ups and exercises such as lying leg raises which change the pressure in the thoracic cavity or put pressure on your spine. However, it is important to work your abdominals and there are plenty of other exercises you can

It is suggested to talk to an expert about getting appropriate exercises to help in this area. Your abs protect your lower back and pelvic floor and support the "bump". Lisa Westlake, physiotherapist and fitness instructor from Physical Best in Melbourne, designed the DVD exercise program "Great Expectations" which caters for women at different levels of fitness throughout pregnancy and beneficial in the first months after baby's born.

Exercise is also good for a sense of wellbeing and helps you stay within a healthy weight range. It also helps in the prevention of such ailments as extra pressure on joints and gestational diabetes.

Exercise needs to be low impact because the joints are more vulnerable due to hormones, and also because of pelvic floor—jumping and bouncing around increases stress on the pelvic floor, which increases the change of incontinence. The general advice seems to be that moderate exercise is good as long as it's not a high risk pregnancy, and you don't exceed what you used to do.

If you try to maintain a certain level of fitness, you will recover better when you go back to your normal fitness routine—and the birth should be easier.



## EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY—PROS AND CONS

Cherry Baker, author of *Pregnancy And Fitness* (A & C Black), notes that as each pregnancy is individual, women will have their own exercise aims and needs. Here is a list of some of the advantages and disadvantages of exercising during pregnancy:

### Benefits:

- Possible reduction in back pain.
- Improved core strength to support your spine and help you carry your baby.
- Improved posture.
- Reduced chance of leg cramps, swelling, varicose veins and constipation.
- Improved circulation.
- Improved calcium absorption to prevent osteoporosis.
- Enhanced mental wellbeing and self-esteem.
- Reduced chance of developing gestational diabetes.
- Reduced chance of developing high blood pressure.
- Quicker recovery time after birth.

### Disadvantages:

- Possible over-exertion, which may contribute to tiredness.
- Possible increase in blood pressure.
- Possible reduction in blood flow to the foetus if exercise is too intense or performed excessively.
- Possible increased chance of dips in blood sugar levels, leading to hypoglycaemia.
- Possible chance of injury to joints.

# Why Play is Important

**Play is the way babies and children develop their sense of self, sense of the world, and sense of where they fit in. It starts with you, and – as children grow – widens to include playing with others and with toys or objects.**

Playing with your child is one of the most wonderful things about being a parent. It's also a vital part of the way babies and children grow and learn.

The time you spend just having fun together:

- provides a variety of learning opportunities
- helps children learn to trust and depend on their parents
- makes your child feel loved and secure, which helps her to develop
- helps children integrate ideas as they learn to make sense of the world
- helps you get to know each other and brings you closer.

## The research on play

Research tells us that a child's environment and experiences – especially during the first three years – strongly influences her development.

Play is one of the best ways for your child to learn, whether it's a planned activity you set up for your child or 'freeflow' play where there's no plan and your child plays at her own pace. Experts say a balance of organised and freeflow play is best.

Play tells you a lot about your child's personality and temperament.

Children get the most out of play if they have the chance to explore a range of activities that they are naturally drawn to.

Play is important for your child's developing self-esteem and social skills.

Playing with others increases your child's social competence – this is one of the advantages of playgroups and places such as childcare and preschool.

Play helps children to develop an understanding of themselves and their own identity. Examples of this in action include:

- imitating facial expressions or movements at an early age
- becoming aware that it's herself she sees in the mirror (between six and nine months) enjoying and being fascinated by her body, which is all part of natural curiosity.

## How play develops with your child

### Newborns and babies

Your baby thinks of you as her most important play buddy. From birth, the carer that spends the most time with your child is the person that she looks to and wants to play with most. She'll want to play with you and to experience new things with you. And she'll look to you for guidance on what's OK and safe to try out – often with just a quick glance at you to gauge your facial expression.

### Toddlers

As your toddler's focus of the world expands, she'll play more with other children. Your toddler is dipping a toe into the world of friends, as she starts to understand that other children are independent too. Your child is likely to want to spend more time playing with other children. This doesn't mean she won't still want to play with you.

Play at this age is about starting to explore relationships with others. From about 14 months of age, you might notice that your toddler plays side-by-side with other children. By about the age of three your toddler will start to want to play with – rather than beside – other children. This is all simply part of exploring the world and developing self-esteem and confidence along the way. Your toddler might also let you know that she really likes playing with a particular friend or two. She may not understand the nuances of relationships, or remember how to share, but she's on her way to finding out how these things work.

## CPS

### Family Support Services

CPS Child and Parent Services assists families and communities to offer children a childhood that is a safe and happy one.

Neighbourhood teams are located in the cities of Darebin, Whittlesea, Banyule, and Nillumbik providing personal, practical and social support for families with children aged 0–18 years.

It is a free, community based service which provides a range of programs for families who are experiencing difficulties that impact on their parenting and family life.

They offer:

- Counselling and support to assist in resolving family problems.
- Social support for parents and children.
- Information and advice about child development and links to community services such as kindergartens, childcare and playgroups.
- Individual education and skills development.
- Group based support, including parenting groups and social groups.
- Assistance to parents in getting help from other services such as housing, Centrelink, disability services, adult health services and child health services.
- Assistance and support to families to address the causes and harms of child abuse and neglect.
- Information and links to other community groups and services.

**For more information on any of these services, please contact CPS on (03) 9450 0900**

# Tips & Ideas

## NOT ALL TV IS BAD FOR KIDS—SOME SHOWS MIGHT EVEN TEACH THEM A THING OR TWO

It's that time of the year again—mud all over the house, the heater is fired up (but only when necessary, so as to conserve energy and stop greenhouse gases), and the winter blankets are on everyone's beds. It's too cold to go outside, so how do you keep the kids entertained indoors?

It's important to balance time in front of the TV with time at the park, but as winter approaches, parents need to be mindful to let their kids relax occasionally with a hot chocolate in front of some quality educational entertainment.

Experts such as Professor John Hartley from the Queensland University of Technology, tell us that children—far from becoming zombies in front of the TV—actually use the ideas they get from the box in their own creative play. He also points out that we shouldn't be scared of TV just because it's popular and entertaining.

There is a huge range of really cool new DVDs for kids that will help fill in a wintry day.

*Wiggledancing, Live in Concert* filmed at the Sydney Entertainment Centre features the brand new yellow Wiggle, Sam Moran. Forget the Rolling Stones, the Wiggles are now the cutting edge of live performance and preschoolers love to get up and dance along with the characters.

Other new DVDs for smaller kids are the brilliant *Charlie And Lola* series, featuring the funny antics of this cartoon brother and sister, and *Five Minutes More*, a great show that ran on the ABC recently, which is full of gentle and inventive tales that will really fire up your kids' imaginations.

## Did you know

Because of Australia's long days and high levels of UV radiation, most kids get enough vitamin D from reflected sunlight.



## How often should you change your children's toothbrush ?

According to Barbara Shearer, Colgate's resident dentist and scientific affairs manager, when people brush effectively, they may be surprised to see signs of wear on their toothbrush sooner than expected. Majority of dentists recommend that toothbrushes be changed at least every three months, or earlier if they become worn or shaggy.



## TIPS FOR PARENTS ...

When you both get angry, walk away, calm down, then intervene.

Build resilience by loving your child and making sure they have a diverse circle of friends.

Make peace before your child goes to bed.

Know your child's friends.. and feed them.

## What to do when your toddler has a tantrum in the supermarket

Bear in mind your toddler is learning to deal with his emotions but meanwhile try the following tips:

- Stay calm, and remind yourself this is normal.
- Distract him with things to look at or a favourite toy.
- Try to ignore the tantrum, avoid giving him the attention he's demanding.
- When you see signs of good behaviour—such as.. he stops screaming—praise him.



## GERM WARFARE

If you want to minimise the risk of suffering food poisoning at home, zap your kitchen sponges in the microwave.

Experts in the US found that two minutes in the microwave on full power killed, or inactivated 99% of bugs which included bacteria, viruses, parasites, and spores.

Washing sponges cleans but doesn't decontaminate them.





# Feed Their Face

## Handy Hints



**Banana porridge:**  
Cooking rolled oats with milk and banana gives it natural sweetness. Sultanas can also be sprinkled on top



**Googy eggs:**  
Serve soft-boiled eggs with toast soldiers or vegetable sticks which are delicious dipped in yoke.



**Smoothie and toast:**  
Whip up a breakfast smoothie with milk, yoghurt and banana, berries or canned peaches. You can add a little wheat germ if you like. Serve the smoothie with toast.

## OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

**Australia has the highest number of television food commercials per hour in the world. During children's programs there is an average of one junk food commercial per ad break, sometimes as many as three. Children under eight don't understand that ads aren't telling them the truth, and are easily persuaded by them.**

Once at child care, kinder and school, children learn more about the social aspects of eating and watch carefully to see what their friends eat. If they haven't already, they'll soon find out about party food and fast food, both of which are fine for **special occasions**. But the biggest external influence on what children want to eat is now **commercial television**, which relentlessly promotes fatty or sugary ('high-energy') low nutrient foods, snack foods, fast food and soft drinks.

If your child eats high-energy foods regularly, he will be too full of fat and sugar to eat the nutritious things offered at meals. There's also a high risk he will become overweight or obese. Because food advertising on television has been shown to contribute to the problem of childhood obesity, you might want to consider taking some action. Here are some ways to address the problem.

- Limit your child's exposure to commercial TV and instead, borrow videos/ DVDs from the local library.
- Lessen the amount of commercial TV watched in general.
- Take the TV out of your child's room.



## Show Sugar Cravings The Door ...

Sugar cravings creep up on us when "the blood glucose level is low and our body cells and brains cells need sugar to keep functioning", explains Sydney naturopath, Alison Bull. An essential nutrient for body cells, sugar is the only food the brain will accept as fuel.

"The ideal source of sugars is from complex carbohydrates, as these are digested slowly and let into the blood stream gradually", says Ms Bull. "The slow release and breakdown of sugar allows for a steady supply of glucose to body cells, reducing the hunger stimulated by low blood sugar."

### Low GI Foods

Eating foods that have low GI rating is one of the best ways to control appetite and help with sugar cravings. The GI is a rating of how quickly the sugars in foods enter the blood stream. Foods that have a low GI lead to a steady release of energy from food, which increases the feeling of fullness and encourages fat burning.

### Understand the Beast

Being aware of why the cravings occur is essential. It could be that you are emotionally upset and need some support or simply that you feel deprived from restricting your feed intake in an attempt to lose weight. Rather than seeking solace in chocolate bars or soft drinks, turn your attention to complex Carbohydrates (low GI foods).

### Supplement your Health

If you have a high sugar diet, supplementing nutrients that help control blood glucose levels can assist in reducing cravings.



# Short Story...

## A Tough Act To Follow

When we first got married we knew we wanted to have a family and we knew one of us would stay home with the children. I know in the back of both our minds we were thinking it would be me.

We lost our first pregnancy and it was a very difficult time. Thanks to my husband's love and support we got through it. Later that year we got pregnant again. Luckily this time we had a healthy baby girl. After some discussion we decided my husband would stay home and I would work full time. I know this scared him to death in the beginning, but he had the routine down in no time. Not only does he stay home and take care of the house, work a few nights a week and pursue his film career while working from home, but he has managed to raise an incredibly confident, happy little human being. They have a very unique bond that many wish they had. I marvel at his patience with her. And I simply want to cry when I see them playing games that only they know.

He never complains about all the work he has to do. And he never makes me feel guilty for pursuing my career. As if being a wonderful father isn't enough, he has been an incredible husband. He's always making sure we make time for us. Planning our date nights is something else he does quite well. I am so lucky to have this man with me on this incredible journey. We just celebrated our fourth wedding anniversary and are looking forward to the upcoming year by expanding our family. Maybe this time I'll stay home. I sure do have a tough act to follow.

By Karla Meledes

## ME BREAK ..

**Amanda Warefield**

Motherhood is one of those things. On the good days, you feel like you are on top of the tallest building in the world, and that no one, but your VERY cute baby, can bring you down. On the bad days, you are still on that building's top floor, but there is a wrecking ball coming straight towards your head.

I have the added disadvantage of having multiple sclerosis. Stress is one of the biggest contributors to whether or not I stay healthy. As a first-time mum, I have to be EXTRA conscious of my well-being.

I had all these grandiose notions that I would start a one-hour yoga class every weekday, that I would consistently de-stress my day. Yeah, RIGHT. I learned the hard way, though, that I had to do SOMETHING. I had an MS attack when my son, Patrick, was about 9 months old. It lasted for two months. I was not able to work. Things were pretty bad.

After much speculation, it was the little things that kept me going. So it is the little things that I focused on. My husband and I have a regular "date night" once a week, AWAY from our son. I do a 20-minute yoga tape every night after Patrick goes to bed. I find I feel SO much better. When Patrick takes a nap, I try to do something -- anything -- for just me. Whether it is reading a magazine, taking a bath, or simply sleeping! If I remember the little things, the big things don't seem so big anymore! I find if I miss out on these little moments -- "me breaks" as I call them -- I feel very off-kilter.

I'm a new mum. I don't have time for big plans. But these little ways of remembering my spirit spill over -- my life seems more balanced, and I enjoy everything that much more!

**DO YOU HAVE A STORY YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH US? PLEASE SEND IT IN AS WE'D LOVE TO READ IT..**

PARENTALK is a newsletter for parents and we need contributions from our readers.

If you would like to share a personal experience, why not drop us a line at:

**psassella@cps.org.au**  
or post it to  
**Parentalk, C/- CPS,  
70 Altona Street,  
West Heidelberg Vic 3081.**

Sharing information is a great way for parents and families to help each other, and you also benefit by receiving a Bunnings Gift Voucher. So what are waiting for!! Drop us a line.

## Help line support services

**Mensline**—1300 789 978

**Lifeline** (24 hrs) 13 11 14

**Parentline** - 13 22 89

8am to midnight Mon-Fri

10am-10pm on weekends

**Maternal and Child Health Line**

(24 hrs) 13 22 29

**Post & Antenatal Depression Health**

**Line (PaNDa)** 03 9428 4600

**Suicide helpline** - 1300 651 251

**The Men's Referral Service**

12 noon—9pm (03) 9428 2899

**Men and Relationships Service**

(03) 9450 0900

**Whittlesea Housing**— housing issues

(03) 9408 8777

**Centrelink**—13 10 21

# Second-time Parenting . . . by Debra Parker

Debra has worked at CPS for 5 years as a family support worker and parent educator. Debra runs Positive Parenting Courses and is available for consults around parenting issues at a number of Maternal Child Health Centres in the City of Whittlesea. Debra is also the mother of four sons and one daughter and wouldn't have it any other way.

## Your toddler and "your new baby"

- Children will often misbehave to get your attention because they don't know how to tell you how they're feeling.
- Remember a new baby in the home is a huge life change for you and your child so expect some shift in their behaviour (imagine if your partner brought home a new man/woman to share your life!)
- Toilet trained toddlers may start having "accidents" or forget how to dress themselves or suddenly need to drink from a bottle rather than a cup. A little patience from mum and dad and letting him/her act younger for awhile without too much fuss will assist your child in adjusting to the big change.
- Your child needs to feel loved and secure and you can show him this by giving him lots of hugs and smiles and by spending time with him. If you can, arrange for someone else to watch the baby for a time while you do something just with your toddler.
- Consider calling in some outside help. Relatives, friends or even occasional care can be useful if available. This is a great opportunity for dads to spend more time with their first child and that's a win-win-win situation. Number one child still gets the attention they so need and love, dad gets to strengthen the father child relationship and mum gets the space to care and nurture the new member of the family (or catch up on some rest).
- This is the time to heap on the praise for your child. Notice every little positive thing he does and make a comment. "I really love it when you help me" "Gosh.. How did you get so clever"? "You're so good at dressing yourself" "I love it when you sit next to me and read when I'm feeding the baby".
- This is not the best time to introduce new routines or changes. It's not a good idea to start toilet training or weaning from a bottle. If you need your child to move out of a cot, do this well before the new baby arrives or leave it till things have settled at home.
- The age of your child will guide how much information you will need to give him about the impending birth. Once mum's pregnancy is noticeable is a good time to start talking about it. Taking your child along to some doctor or hospital appointments and involving him in purchasing new items for the baby is a great way to get him interested.

## How much Love?

A thought that goes through many a second time parent's mind is: Will I be able to find the same amount of love for the new baby that I have for this one? Is it possible to share the love? Believe me you can and you will!

There's a terrific story in the June edition *Melbourne's Child* (a free magazine you find at Maternal Child Health Centres, crèches, etc). It's thoughts from a dad about the impending birth of his second child and well worth a read for those of you concerned about some of the big issues like "the contraction of sleep and the expansion of love".

## Help

- If you have any concerns or worries about pregnancy the second time around take advantage of resources available to you. This includes friends and family who have already experienced the arrival of a second child. Speak to your Maternal Child Health Nurse, your doctor or midwife.
- Time to consider doing a positive parenting group. You get to meet and share ideas about parenting with other mums and dads.
- The library and the internet are also valuable sources of information. Libraries and bookshops have a wealth of books and stories that can help your toddler prepare for the new arrival.



# Health & Fitness...

## Men's Health Week...

### MEN'S HEALTH WEEK - JUNE 11-17

#### CONGRATULATIONS ... YOU'RE A DAD!

##### "I'll drink to that"

Many men like to "wet the baby's head" which is a metaphor for having more than a few drinks to celebrate the birth of their child. Drinking alcohol is a part of celebrating in our culture. We celebrate weddings, getting a new job, our footy team winning, when we back a winner at the races, anniversaries, the sun shining on our barbecue and many more occasions.

We also do it (drink) when things aren't so good (got sacked, the dog died, team lost, car stolen, got a parking ticket...).

##### FACT: We drink.

We drink for all sorts of reasons that aren't going to stop, or go away because you're drunk. Yes, we know that alcohol causes a lot of harm in our society. Some affect us, some don't, but we need to know our boundaries and limitations

I know an article about alcohol in "Parentalk" will not change society's view or our "Aussie Bloke" culture, but some new fathers would benefit by just taking some time to review their drinking to see how/if it affects their new family.

Have you ever slept through the baby waking up because you had "one or two too many"? Have you ever missed out on an activity with your

baby (even something as simple as a nappy change) because you were "a bit seedy"? Have you abused the fact that your partner is not drinking because she's still breast feeding (for example; "she's now the designated driver for awhile so it's my party time").

It's always a good time to review your health and what you can do about it. Think of ways to reduce your alcohol consumption. Then try putting these thoughts into practice.

Another round boys?

I'll pass. We're still breast-feeding.



For more information about Mens Health visit [www.49.com.au](http://www.49.com.au)  
[www.andrologyaustralia.org.au](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org.au)  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)  
[www.malehealth.co.uk](http://www.malehealth.co.uk) (includes an interesting male health video)  
[www.mydr.com.au](http://www.mydr.com.au)

#### RESOLUTION— I WILL QUIT THE FAD DIETS

If you tried a fad diet in January and it failed, don't despair and don't wait another six months for action. As many as 95% of people who lose weight courtesy of a diet regain it within a year.

Tania Ferraretto of the Dieticians Association of Australia says: "While some are safer than others, the fact is that fad diets don't work in the long run because they're just too hard to sustain. They don't take people's individual lifestyle's into consideration so most people find them hard to stick to after a few weeks. And diets that completely cut out food groups just aren't safe and should be avoided," says Ferraretto.

Instead, make some small but sustainable healthy-eating changes now and you'll be looking and feeling good by summer.



#### Achy breaky bones

Experts say one in two women, and one in three men will experience an Osteoporotic fractures over the age of 60. To help prevent being part of this statistic, you might like to think about looking after your bones while you're still young enough to do so.

Eating calcium-rich foods and doing weight-bearing exercise helps prevent Osteoporosis. Weight-bearing exercises like aerobics or skipping—rather than swimming—and more intense exercises like weight training, help new bone to grow and prevent bone loss.

# Turner's Syndrome...what is it?

## **What is Turner Syndrome?**

TURNER'S SYNDROME was first documented in 1938 by Dr. Henry Turner. It is due to a chromosomal abnormality that is found in one in every 2,500 newborn females. In Turner's Syndrome, one of the two X chromosomes found in the cells of most females is either missing or structurally abnormal. This means that females with Turner's Syndrome lack some of the genes found on the second chromosome. The direct link between the missing genes and the particular problems is not yet well understood.

## **The cause is genetic**

Genes are the blueprint for our bodies, governing factors such as growth, development and functioning. Humans have 46 paired chromosomes, with two sex chromosomes that decide gender and 44 chromosomes that dictate other factors. Our estimated 30,000 genes are beaded along these tightly bundled strands.

The main consequences of TS are:

- Short stature (average height 143cm)
- Lack of secondary sexual characteristics (failure to develop at puberty)
- Infertility.

## **Treatment options**

Turner's syndrome is a lifelong condition. However, many treatment options are available to help affected girls and women reach their potential in all aspects of life. Treatment aims to correct any physical defects and help bring about puberty. Options include:

- Surgery to correct any heart defects
- Growth hormone therapy to increase height
- Hormone replacement therapy to trigger menstruation and the development of secondary sexual characteristics such as breasts
- Regular monitoring to check hormone levels
- Regular follow-up and management of medical conditions
- Treatment for the management of complications such as high blood pressure
- Assisted reproduction.

There may be other medical problems related to TS such as eye, ear, heart, kidney and thyroid. Sometimes there are other physical features such as low set ears, low hairline, webbed neck, pigmented moles, bending out of the elbows and puffy hands and feet.

## **The intellect of TS girls and women is the same as the range of that in the normal population.**

Some TS individuals may have spatial skill and psycho-social problems, and need some extra help to overcome these.

It is recommended that females with TS receive ongoing medical care from an Endocrinologist, Pediatrician or Gynecologist, or a TS Clinic who have experience with TS.

## **Things to remember**

- Turner's syndrome is a random genetic disorder that affects only females.
- Usually, a female has two X chromosomes. However, in females with Turner's Syndrome, one of these chromosomes is absent or abnormal.
- With appropriate medical treatment and support, a girl or woman with Turner's Syndrome can lead a normal, healthy and productive life.
- Treatment aims to correct any physical defects and help bring about puberty.

## **Where to get help**

- Your doctor
- Victorian Turner's Syndrome Association Tel. (03) 9720 2620 or (03) 9337 4074
- Royal Children's Hospital, Department of Endocrinology Tel. (03) 9345 5951
- Genetic Support Network Vic Tel. (03) 8341 6315 <http://www.gsnv.org.au>
- Monash Medical Centre Tel. (03) 9594 6666 Royal Women's Hospital Tel. (03) 9344 2007

## **Living With Turner's Syndrome..**

When a diagnosis of Turner Syndrome is made, it is usually very difficult to initially comprehend what it all means. Sometimes it is a relief to get an answer, but the road to understanding and coming to terms with everything can be difficult and confusing.

I would like to say to anyone reading this article that if I had to have my daughter all over again despite learning she had Turners Syndrome from a 12 week amnio fluid test that identifies this chromosomal problem, I would do it again in a heart beat.

At the time, the only option I was given by my doctor was to abort the pregnancy. As you might imagine, I was positively devastated by this gut wrenching news. I hurt right through to the pit of every core in my body. I had a hard decision to make and I grieved my unborn baby for several days, but by accessing information through correct support services, I was able to make a more informed and positive decision about my unborn child's future.

My daughter has had many doctors and hospital visits, and battles with the psychological aspects as well. We're not the first and will not be the last to go through these experiences. She's intelligent, compassionate, loving, argumentative, and extremely talented. Yes, she has most of the problems associated with this condition, but I wouldn't want her any other way. She's unique and that's exactly how I want her.

She plans to be a Physical Fitness Trainer and TaeKwonDo Instructor when she's older, and is working toward her goal - having achieved Black Belt level. You've probably known girls with Turner's Syndrome—you just didn't realise it at the time.

If your child is diagnosed with a genetic disorder, don't panic and make decisions you may regret. Research the condition thoroughly through websites and textbooks, and investigate what support services and groups are available to you, and if possible, speak to people who are living with it. They are the best source of information to help clearly understand what the future holds for you and your child. It's not as hard a decision as you may think once you know all the facts.

# Your Say ...

## The Beginning of Fatherhood

The beginning of fatherhood began the moment he heard the news that he was going to be a father. My husband has been very supportive of me, but more than that, he has dedicated his time to his child who was born in September 2006. He talks, sings and reads to our son. He even reads to me !

I say the beginning of fatherhood begins the minute you know you're expecting a child. And he is a one-of-a-kind father because he knows a beautiful journey has begun.



## A Frightening Moment

My 11-month-old swallowed a small coin as I was changing his nappy. I panicked and feared that he would choke on it. The first thing I did was put my finger down his throat to retrieve the coin, but it kept slipping farther and farther down. So I called 000.

While I waited for the call to connect I turned my son over and hit him on the back and out flew the coin. Scared and crying, I waited for 000 to answer so that I could tell them that my baby was OK. They said that they would send someone out anyway just to check him.

Ten minutes later, thinking that they would send out a MICA car or something, I hear HUGE engine coming down my street. To my surprise they sent a fire truck to my house. Needless to say I was embarrassed. The neighbors didn't waste anytime coming out.



## MEN'S HEALTH WEEK... MEN'S HEALTH

On Wednesday evening 13th June at the CPS Heidelberg office the Men & Relations Service team hosted an event for Men's Health Week (11—17 June). Our guest speaker was Dr. Colin Rattray-Wood who spoke about many various aspects of men's health including the importance of regular health checks, what groups are at high risk and why, vaccinations, mental health and much more. The session was informative on many levels especially as men's health affects the whole community. While the event attracted a small turn out the information to those that were there was invaluable. I believe that the team would be seriously considering this as an annual event coinciding with Men's Health Week.

**All present were given an information pack about men's health. If you would like one, either for yourself or someone you know who could benefit from the information provided in the pack, please let us at Parentalk know. If you have the pack already we would be interested in any feedback that you have about the contents.**

Parentalk invite all readers to take advantage of the "Your Say" page.

You may have a story to share, or an interesting fact and information others may benefit from, or perhaps you have baby gear to sell or give away, or need to buy or borrow. You may even want to announce an upcoming special event, or you may just want to meet other parents for coffee.

Whatever the circumstances, this is your page to submit anything you'd like others to know about, so use it to your advantage ...

Please send contributions to "Parentalk", 70 Altona Street, West Heidelberg Vic 3081  
Or email to [psassella@cps.org.au](mailto:psassella@cps.org.au).

Please include a phone number in case we need to contact you.

# What's On

PROGRAM:	ACTIVITY:	LOCATION:	DATES:	CONTACT:
Men And Relationships Service	Fortnightly Men's Group around fatherhood and men's issues	CPS 70 Altona Street West Heidelberg	Monday evenings - Fortnightly 6.30—8.30pm	For details and registration contact the Men's Counselling program on (03) 9450 0900
CPS Family Services	Social Support group for parents	Preston Neighbourhood House	Thursday—fortnightly	Contact Sally Waddell (03) 9450 0900
CPS Family Services	7 week Parenting Group	CPS 70 Altona Street West Heidelberg	10.00am—12.00pm	Monica Robertson (03) 9450 0900
	7 week Parenting Group	Mill Park Community House	9.30—11.30am	Debra / Jan (03) 9450 0900 or (03) 9474 4800
CPS Family Services	Drop-In—Free consult around parenting issues  <i>No appointment necessary</i>	Bundoora Maternal and Child Health Centre Shop 17—5 Nickson Street, Bundoora	1.30—3.30pm 1st and 3rd Monday of every month	Debra Parker (03) 9474 4800
CPS Family Services	Drop-In—Free consult around parenting issues  <i>No appointment necessary</i>	Mill Park Maternal and Child Health Centre 7 Mill Park Drive Mill Park	9.30—11.30am 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month	Carol Rosentreter (03) 9474 4800
CPS Family Services	Drop-In—Free consult around parenting issues  <i>No appointment Necessary</i>	Lalor Maternal and Child Health Centre Cnr Dalton and Maple Streets, Lalor	9.30—11.30am 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month	Carol Rosentreter (03) 9474 4800
CPS Family Services	Grandparents Group—offers support/ advocacy to grandparents with grandchildren in their care	CPS 70 Altona Street West Heidelberg	Fortnightly—Mondays 1.00—3.00pm	For further enquiries contact Jan Roberts at (03) 9450 0900

