

WINTER / JUNE 2015

Health matters

INCONTINENCE

Avoid bladder and
bowel control problems

ON THE NOSE

Control body
odour problems

INTRODUCING GALILEO

Navigating your health and well-being



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From the Editor

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Healthmatters* 2015. As winter is well and truly setting in, it's a good time to refresh your memory on the difference between those nasty winter colds and flu.

In this issue we also tackle some sensitive topics including incontinence. Pregnant women and those who have given birth are at risk of developing incontinence due to weakened pelvic floor muscles. Find out more about this interesting topic on page 12.

Please ensure you check out the 'Noticeboard' on page 10 for important news and information. As it is getting close to the end of the financial year, your tax statements will be released, so be sure to see how and when you will receive yours.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue of *Healthmatters* and look forward to bringing you more in the coming year.

Stay happy and healthy,

Rebecca Brooker, Editor

From the CEO

UniHealth Insurance is proud to exist for its members. As part of this focus we continue to work towards helping our members improve their health and well-being. I am therefore very pleased to announce the launch of the Galileo Care program to help ensure our members experience a personalised, integrated and seamless health care experience across their lifespan. Turn to page 8 for more information.

In the last issue of *Healthmatters*, we launched Members Own Health Funds, an exciting initiative between 15 not-for-profit health funds. Response to the launch continues to be positive and has generated significant media interest which is helping to make more Australians aware of the value of not-for-profit/mutual health funds when it comes to choosing a Private Health Insurer.

As always we appreciate your continued support of the only health fund exclusively for the education community and I wish you a healthy and safe winter.

Yours sincerely,

Brad Joyce, CEO

Cold v flu

With cold and flu season upon us, here's a quick guide to the different symptoms to look out for and some basic tips to help prevent them spreading.



The flu is highly contagious and can be spread for up to a day before symptoms appear and for five days afterwards.

Colds and flu are different illnesses caused by different viruses. Antibiotics only work for bacterial infections and therefore are not suitable in treating colds and flu. Good hygiene is one of the most important and effective defences in preventing colds and flu as these viruses can live outside of the body for more than eight hours. It's important to catch a sneeze or cough in a tissue and place the tissue in a bin immediately before thoroughly washing your hands. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze and cough into the inside of your elbow, or use your hands, but wash them straight away. Children often use their hands or their clothes to wipe their noses, which significantly increases the spread of colds and flu.

Colds

Colds are very common. Children may get five to ten colds a year, while adults may get two to four colds a year.

Symptoms

- Sore throat
- Fever (a temperature of 38 °C or higher)
- Sneezing
- Blocked or runny nose
- Cough

A healthy immune system will fight the infection and symptoms will usually clear up in seven to ten days without any treatment. However if your symptoms do not improve after ten days, or they get worse, then it's important to see your doctor.

Flu

Three different types of flu viruses infect humans – types A, B and C. Only influenza A and B cause major outbreaks and severe disease.

If you are concerned about any of your symptoms call Healthdirect to speak to a registered nurse 24/7 on 1800 22 222.

Symptoms

Flu symptoms tend to be more severe and last longer than those of a cold. These include:

- Sudden fever (a temperature of 38 °C or higher)
- Dry, chesty cough
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Aching muscles and joint pain
- Sore throat
- Runny or blocked nose
- Sneezing
- Loss of appetite
- Difficulty sleeping

If you are otherwise fit and healthy, there is no need to see a doctor with flu-like symptoms. However, you should see a doctor if you:

- Are 65 or over
- Are pregnant
- Have a long-term medical condition
- Have a weakened immune system
- If your symptoms don't improve after 10 days, or they get worse

Sources: Healthdirect Australia
www.healthdirect.gov.au,
FluSmart www.flusmart.org.au

Myopia



Myopia, commonly called short sightedness, is becoming more common in children. So what are the causes and how can you help to prevent it?

What is myopia?

Myopia is a condition in which light is focused in front of the retina, resulting in blurred vision. Short sighted people can often see reasonably clearly at short distances, but will not be able to see distant objects clearly. There is currently no cure for myopia, but spectacles, contact lenses and refractive surgery can all provide good distance vision for people with myopia.

Causes

The exact causes of myopia are not known. At various times people have blamed excessive amounts of reading, poor metabolism, poor diet, poor light, poor posture and genetic factors. Recent research has shown that the development of myopia is influenced by both genetic and environmental factors.

Children and myopia

Short sightedness is becoming more common in children. Whilst for years it was thought it was due to genetics, there was more to the story. At first it was thought to be due to the hours spent reading or using a computer. However, more recently it was discovered that children who spend less time outside are at greater risk of developing myopia. The eye's exposure to bright light is what matters the most.

Reducing the risk

It is suggested that children need to spend around three hours per day under light levels at 10,000 lux to be protected against myopia. This is about the same level experienced by someone under a shady tree, wearing sunglasses and sunscreen, on a bright day. In comparison an office or classroom is usually about 500 lux.

For more information visit your eye health professional.

Sources: Rose, K.A. et al. Ophthalmology 115, 1279–1285 (2008), Elie Dolgin: The Myopia Boom, Nature Vol 519 (2015), Optometry Australia www.optometrists.asn.au/your-eyes/your-eye-health/eye-conditions/myopia.aspx.



Get your eyes tested
this **JulEYE** –national
eye health awareness
month.

Introducing Galileo

Navigating your health and well-being



UniHealth Insurance is always looking for ways to support our members' health and well-being and are continually evaluating and seeking ways to improve the programs, products and services we provide to our members.

As such we are very excited to introduce our new health support service, called Galileo.

Galileo has been established to ensure our members experience a personalised, integrated and seamless health care experience across their lifespan. Its purpose is to support members navigate the health system, coordinate or refer members to appropriate, quality health services, and promote health literacy and health independence.

By providing trusted health and well-being information, and

access to specialist programs and services, our goal is to support members to receive the right care at the right time, at the right place, with the right outcome.

Galileo comprises of three distinct offerings:

Galileo Health Hub

An online service accessible to all members providing trusted health and well-being information, including details of public and private programs and services across a wide range of health and well-being areas. The major focus of the Health Hub is to promote health literacy, health independence and to help members navigate the complete healthcare system.

To find out more,
unihealthinsurance.com.au

Galileo Care

A personalised care and navigation service provided by UniHealth Insurance expert clinicians for members with chronic disease and/or complex needs. The focus of the service is to support members by identifying their needs and coordinating access to public and private programs and services to improve member's health and well-being.

Our goal is to support our members to receive the right care at the right time, at the right place, with the right outcome.

Galileo Care services will be available towards the end of July 2015, and eligible members will be contacted directly and invited to participate in the program.

Galileo Aged Care Navigation

Online and personalised navigation services to support members who wish to remain in their own home as they age as well as those needing to transition into different levels of residential care. The focus of the service is to provide expert information and navigation services to assist ageing members with specific care and health needs.

Galileo Aged Care Navigation will be available from the end of July 2015. To find out more on these services, call us on 1300 728 578.

Noticeboard

Claiming just got easier



UniHealth Insurance now offers a mobile claiming app for simple and convenient claiming.

You can use this great app to claim on all Extras services. Simply take a photo of your receipt to submit your claim! It's that easy, so get claiming now.

For more information and to download the app, go to unihealthinsurance.com.au/app.

Competition winner!

Congratulations to **Michelle Evans** our Feedback ASAP prize draw winner. You have won a **\$1,000 Visa gift card**. We hope you enjoy your prize!

You should know

Subscribe to *YouShouldKnow* to ensure you remain as up to date as possible about the latest issues affecting your private health cover, such as, health care costs and the increasing demand on the public health system.

**You
Should
Know
.com.au**

**Subscribe
now!**

Tax statements

Tax statements will be available for all members through Online Member Services (OMS) by 8 July 2015. Members who have consented to receive communications from UniHealth Insurance via email will receive an email notifying them that the statement is available in OMS. Members who have not provided this consent will receive their statement via mail by 15 July 2015.

There will also be detailed FAQs available from 1 July 2015 on our website unihealthinsurance.com.au to answer any questions you may have, or our Contact Centre team are available on **1300 367 906**.

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Terms and Conditions apply. Cover limits are set out in the policy wording. When calculating your annual premium based upon the sum of periodic payments, this total annual premium may differ from our quoted annual premium due to the impact of standard rounding. If you purchase a policy, Teachers Health Fund receive a commission which is a percentage of your premium – ask us for more details.

We do not provide any advice on this insurance based on any consideration of your objectives, financial situation or needs. Before making a decision about your insurance needs, please refer to the Product Disclosure Statement available from www.unihealthinsurance.com.au or by calling 1300 367 906.

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Incontinence

Incontinence can affect both men and women, regardless of age or background, and can have a major impact on your quality of life. Healthy bladder and bowel habits can help you avoid bladder and bowel control problems such as incontinence.

What is incontinence?

Incontinence is a term that describes any accidental or involuntary loss of urine from the bladder (urinary incontinence) or bowel motion, faeces or wind from the bowel (faecal or bowel incontinence).

Incontinence is a widespread condition that can affect people of all ages and ranges in severity from 'just a small leak' to complete loss of bladder or bowel control. It can be treated and managed and in some cases even cured.

Who is at risk?

Some health conditions and life events can put you at risk of developing incontinence such as:

- Pregnancy and post birth
- Menopause
- Obesity
- Specific types of surgery such as prostatectomy

- Neurological and musculo-skeletal condition such as multiple sclerosis and arthritis
- Health conditions including diabetes, stroke
- Some medications

Pelvic floor muscles

Having strong pelvic floor muscles gives us control over the bladder and bowel. Weakened pelvic floor muscles mean that internal organs are not fully supported and you may have difficulty controlling the release of urine, faeces or wind.

Pelvic floor muscles may be weakened in childbirth and so it's important to keep them strong before and after. Other common causes of a weakened pelvic floor include age, obesity and the associated straining of chronic constipation.

Pelvic floor exercises are designed to improve muscle tone and prevent the need for corrective surgery.



World
Continence
Week
22-28 June 2015

Look after your pelvic floor muscles during and after pregnancy with the free Pregnancy Pelvic Floor Plan smart phone app available for download from the Apple Store and Google Play.

Prevention

In many cases, incontinence can be prevented by adopting a healthy diet and lifestyle habits.

1. Drink well – aim to drink six to eight cups of fluid throughout the day, unless otherwise directed by your doctor, and reduce your alcohol and soft drink intake. Drinks that have caffeine in them irritate the bladder.
2. Eat a healthy diet – eat plenty of fibre to help bowel function and eat two servings of fruit, five servings of vegetables and five servings of cereals and breads each day.
3. Lead a positive lifestyle - maintain an ideal body weight and stop smoking.

4. Get active – aim to exercise for 30 minutes most days and do pelvic floor exercises regularly.
5. Practise good toilet habits – go when you feel the urge to.

Need help?

If you experience bladder or bowel control problems seek help, as the symptoms will not go away on their own and may worsen over time. For further information speak to your doctor or a continence nurse advisor on the National Continence Helpline on **1800 33 00 66**.

For more information refer to www.continence.org.au.

Source: Continence Foundation of Australia, www.continence.org.au

Tip!

Need to plan your travels around toilet breaks?
Check out toiletmap.gov.au

Body odours



Body odours can be an unpleasant problem affecting men and women, young and old. Many people are concerned by body odour at some point in their life and if left untreated the problem can impact upon a person's confidence and self-esteem.

Here are some quick tips to help control common body odour problems.

Halitosis

Halitosis, or bad breath, is usually caused by sulphur-producing bacteria that live within the surface of the tongue and in the throat. To help ease bad breath, ensure that you stay hydrated and practice good oral hygiene, including brushing, flossing and regular dental check-ups. Mouthwash may also help.

Smelly feet

The main cause of smelly feet is sweat which, although has no odour itself, creates an environment for bacterial growth. To help eliminate this, wear cotton or wool socks (which absorb more perspiration) and canvass or leather shoes rather than synthetic ones. Avoid wearing the same pair of shoes over long periods of time; they should get a regular 24-hour airing.

Sweaty armpits

Your armpits contain a large number of apocrine glands which are responsible for producing body odour. In addition to wearing deodorant, wearing natural fibres, such as wool, silk or cotton, will

allow your skin to breathe and your sweat to evaporate quicker.

Flatulence

Flatulence is caused by intestinal gas which may come from certain foods. Passing wind is normal but if you feel it is happening too often or causing you discomfort you should see your GP or consult a dietician. These health professionals can help identify causes and if necessary help you eliminate certain foods from your diet that may be contributing to the problem.

Source: Better Health Channel,
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au



For more detailed information, consult your health professional.

Calendar

June 2015

Month	Bowel Cancer Awareness Month (Bowel Cancer Australia)
8	Queen's Birthday (except for WA)
15-21	Men's Health Week
17	Red Apple Day (Bowel Cancer Australia)
26	Red Nose Day

July 2015

Month	JulEYE – National eye health awareness month
6-12	Sleep Awareness Week
12-18	Diabetes Awareness Week
20-26	National Pain Week (Chronic Pain Australia)
28	World Hepatitis Day

August 2015

Month	Tradies National Health Month
1	Jeans for Genes Day
2-9	DonateLife Week
3-10	Dental Health Week
17-23	Natural Fertility Awareness Week
23-29	Hearing Awareness Week

The dates and events listed are major awareness days, weeks and months related to health and ageing. They could be subject to change and confirmation should be sought from the relevant organisation before planning associated activities. For further information, please visit health.gov.au and click on 'Calendar of Events'.



**Dental
Health Week**
3-10 August