



FREMANTLE WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

Services & Resources for Women's Health & Wellbeing

Services & Developments

Winter 2015 Newsletter

Welcome to the Winter newsletter! It's finally getting cooler and we have even had some rain. But then winter is not everyone's favorite time of year. Some women experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), commonly called the winter blues. See page 2 and check out our posting on Facebook later in the month.



Client Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey during March. We received 130 completed surveys and appreciate the quick response. As in past years, we are very pleased to have such positive feedback about our services and staff members.

100% of respondents said that we had helped with their health issues and 99.2% said they would return to FWHC. In terms of the quality of the services, 84.6% rated FWHC services as very good (highest rating in a 5 point scale) and 14.6% rated them as good (second highest rating). Similar high ratings were received for all the different groups of staff—receptionists, nurses, doctors, counselors and crèche staff.

In response to the question What did we do well? we received the following comments, with many women making the same points:

Comments about staff

- Listened, took time, not rushed
- Friendly, welcoming, very approachable

- Open, honest
- Kind, considerate, polite
- Supportive, reassuring
- Helpful and understanding
- Good communication skills
- Good rapport and acknowledgement
- Caring, compassionate, empathic,
- Sympathetic to women's health issues
- Inclusive, non-judgemental, respectful
- Professional, skilled, expertise
- Informative, knowledgeable, careful explanations
- Appropriate advice and service

Comments about the overall service

- Excellent service and place for women in the community
- Women health professionals
- Holistic approach, comprehensive care
- Informal and relaxed, felt comfortable
- Didn't have to wait for appointment, prompt service, punctual
- Information and referral, lots of information /literature to take home
- Affordable
- Efficient

In response to the questions What could we have done better? and What other services should we provide? respondents indicated that they would like us to be better funded/resourced so that we could provide more than 10 counselling sessions and reduce the waiting time for counselling appointments, and so that we could have even longer medical appointments to avoid doctors running late with appointments. Some women wanted more group activities and complementary health services such as naturopathy, homeopathy, acupuncture and nutrition /dietician services. Parking availability continues to be an issue.

Healthy Life Style Expo

On the 10 April FWHC provided an information stall at the Healthy Life Style Expo for 55+ held in Melville. This is an annual event organised by the local governments of Fremantle, Melville and Cockburn.

It was another fantastic event with lots of information from a variety of organisations, different events throughout the morning and food for everyone.

It was great to see so many there and we hope to see you all again next year.



Aboriginal Health Day



The Walyup District Aboriginal Health Action Group in partnership with South Metropolitan Public Health Unit (SMPHU) and the City of Fremantle, organised an Aboriginal Health Day which was held in Kings Square, Fremantle on the 16 April 2015.

The day was for health agencies to meet and yarn with the Aboriginal Community, offer health screening, provide health messages and activities for all ages, and to showcase and provide information about their services.

SAD

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER



Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), also known as seasonal depression or winter blues, is a mood disorder in which people who have normal mental health throughout most of the year experience depressive symptoms in the winter.

Symptoms of SAD include:

- Low mood /depression
- Daytime fatigue
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Withdrawal from social situations and normal daily activity
- Changes in eating habits, including food cravings and weight gain

For more information contact us by phone 9431 0500 or pop in to talk to one of our staff.

Up-Coming Health Promotions



Heart disease is the single biggest killer of Australian women and the Heart Foundation's annual fundraiser Go Red for Women on Thursday 11 June is a big opportunity to make a big difference.

Heart disease takes a life every hour of every day. You don't have to be old, you don't have to be overweight and your risk increases after menopause.

Go Red for Women is a great opportunity to help raise awareness and raise vital funds for women's heart health research.

There are two easy and fun ways you can help. Simply wear something red on Thursday 11 June and make a **donation** or, better still, **host a Go Red event** at work or with your friends – a morning tea, perhaps. So why not go and check out their website to see what you can do.

www.goredforwomen.org.au



GETTING ACTIVE

During August we will be focussing on promoting the message about getting healthy and staying active. But you don't have to wait till then. Here is some information to get you started!

Fremantle Women's Health Centre offers **Wise Women Over 50 exercise classes** (see back page for details)

City of Cockburn offer a number of different walking groups, you can find the details at www.beactivecockburn.com.au/

The Meeting Place, a City of Fremantle facility, has a Tuesday morning Walking group. Phone 9432 9676 for details



Check our Facebook page in August for our Getting Active Campaign.



Health Information

How does your thyroid affect your health?

The thyroid gland influences almost all of the metabolic processes such as to grow and create energy in your body. The two key hormones that the thyroid is responsible for producing are triiodothyronine (T3) and thyroxine (T4). Thyroid disorders can range from a small, harmless goitre (enlarged gland) that needs no treatment to life-threatening cancer.

Thyroid conditions can be grouped as either:

hyperthyroidism, which means the thyroid gland is producing too much thyroid hormones; or

hypothyroidism, which means the thyroid is underactive and not producing enough thyroid hormones

Who is at risk?

Thyroid conditions or abnormalities are five times more common in women than in men.

Women with a family history of thyroid disease, postpartum (post birth) thyroiditis, previous treatment for Graves disease, or autoimmune disorders such as type 1 diabetes, are at higher risk of thyroid abnormalities. Age also increases the risk of thyroid conditions therefore women with a family history and signs and symptoms should be monitored regularly for abnormal thyroid levels.

Symptoms of thyroid conditions vary between individuals which is why it is often difficult to diagnose.

Symptoms of hyperthyroidism	Symptoms of hypothyroidism
Accelerated heart rate or palpitations	Fatigue
Muscle weakness and trembling	Muscle weakness
Unexplained weight loss	Weight gain or increased difficulty losing weight
Sensitivity to heat	An intolerance to cold
Diarrhoea	Dry, rough pale skin
Sleeping difficulties	Hair loss
Sweating	Coarse, dry hair
Irritability	Muscle cramps and frequent muscle aches
Nervousness, agitation and anxiety	<u>Low mood or depression</u>
Changes in menstruation	Changes in menstruation

Thyroid disorders in younger women

While thyroid disorders are more common in women at midlife, younger women do experience thyroid abnormalities which can impact their physical and emotional wellbeing. In addition to the physical symptoms of thyroid disorders, there may also be an emotional impact of this condition. Weight gain may lead to body image concerns and fatigue may affect some women's motivation to exercise. This negative cycle affects the mental health of many sufferers.

Thyroid problems can also affect fertility and pregnancy. The health problems associated with thyroid abnormalities can cause decreased fertility, increased risk of miscarriage and an increased risk of premature delivery.

Thyroid disorders in women at midlife

Thyroid disease, which is one of the most common hormone disorders in women, can be difficult to recognize in the middle years. A key reason for this is that symptoms of thyroid disorders are similar to symptoms of menopause such as changes in menstrual cycles, fatigue, sleep disturbance, mood, skin, and hair changes, and heat (or cold) intolerance.

A large American study which looked at women transitioning through menopause found that approximately 10 per cent of women aged between 42 and 52 had abnormal thyroid function.

Thyroid disorders in older women

Thyroid disorders or abnormalities are also common in older women. Hyperthyroidism (and overactive thyroid gland) can have a significant impact on bone health. High concentration of the thyroid hormone can lead to more bone breakdown than bone formation which affects bone density and causes osteoporosis.

What should you do?

If you have concerns, contact your doctor to discuss your symptoms.

Find out more information about [thyroid conditions](#), management and treatment.

FWHC Services

General Counselling

Individual counselling is available for women experiencing difficulties across a wide range of issues, including: stress and anxiety; depression; bereavement and loss; trauma; relationships; domestic violence; parenting concerns; low self-esteem and much more ...

Perinatal Counselling

The centre provides individual counselling for women experiencing antenatal and postnatal depression, anxiety and / or stress.

Counsellors are available Monday - Friday by appointment.

Medical Services

Female doctors are available by appointment Monday—Friday for a range of women's health issues.

Nursing Services

Nurses are available Monday-Thursday for well-women checks before doctors' appointments, by appointment for Pap smears, and for walk-in STI (sexually transmitted infection) screening. For the screening service no appointment is needed and it is available Monday-Thursday 9am - 3pm.

Health information is available at appointments, by dropping into the Centre to collect brochures, or from the nurses by phone.

Crèche

Child minding is available Wednesday morning for the postnatal support group and Thursday mornings for appointments. Bookings are required.

Other Services at FWHC

Continence Advice

A continence nurse is available on Mondays to advise on how to manage and improve symptoms of incontinence. This is a free service provided by Silver Chain to women on pension and health care cards who have had symptoms for six months or more. Phone 1300 787 055 for an appointment.

Counselling for Carers

Counselling for carers is available on Tuesdays on a fortnightly basis. This is provided by Carers WA. To make an appointment phone 1300 227 377.

Ongoing FWHC Groups

Postnatal Support Group
Wednesday 10 - 12 noon

Over Eaters/Anonymous
Wednesday 7.30 pm
Sunday 9.30 am

Portuguese Women's Group
Thursday 2.00 - 4.00 pm

Wise Women Exercise
Thursdays 2.00 - 3.00 pm

Massage Courses & Workshops
Various days & times

**To access services an annual
FWHC Support Fee
is required:**

\$30 full fee
\$15 concession

Chicken and Corn Noodle Soup



Ingredients

1 onion
1 tablespoon peanut oil
4 cobs corn
500ml (2 cups) chicken stock
1 1/2 tablespoons light soy sauce
600g chicken thigh fillets
2 spring onions
1 teaspoon Chinese five-spice
450g packet fresh rice noodles (see note)

Peel and finely chop onion. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes or until soft. Meanwhile, remove husks and silks from corn. Working with 1 cob at a time, hold upright and cut kernels away from cob.

Add kernels and stripped cobs to onion and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until kernels are starting to soften. Add stock, soy sauce, chicken and 1L water. Increase heat to high and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium and bring mixture to a gentle simmer, then cook for 5 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Using a slotted spoon, remove chicken and set aside.

Cook soup for a further 15 minutes to develop flavours. Meanwhile, slice spring onions on the diagonal. Combine five-spice, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper in a small bowl. Place noodles in a heatproof bowl. Cover with boiling water. Stand, gently separating noodles, for 10 minutes or until softened.

Using tongs, remove corn cobs from soup and discard. Place a sheet of paper towel flat over surface of soup to remove oil, then discard. Repeat twice more.

Drain noodles, then divide among bowls with soup. Roughly shred chicken into bowls. Scatter with spring onions and a pinch of spiced salt to serve.