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magazine

March 2021

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Improving wellbeing through Physical Activity

Physical activity can sometimes seem like a chore, especially later in life, and will often slip down the priority list.

Of course we all know about the health benefits of staying physically active but there is so much more to gain in both social connections and improved wellbeing.

As the population of 65+ continues to rise, it is important to improve the quality of this extended life.

When older adults increase their physical activity it provides a variety of health benefits that include an improved quality of life, and a reduced risk of falls and dementia.

But beyond this there are other benefits that extend out to social and psychological well-being with research suggesting physical activity reduces loneliness and improves both mood and self-esteem.

Further research shows that the fun and enjoyment of social interaction works to increase motivation to exercise, so both work hand in hand to empower each other.



Recently revised guidelines from the World Health Organisation recommends that older adults (+65) engage in at least 150 to 300 min moderate intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 -150 min vigorous intensity physical activity per week.

So now that we know the benefits of physical activity and how much we should look to do, how can we be physically active in a fun and sociable way?

- Join a community group exercise class
- Join a gym (ideally with a designated seniors programme)
- Meet a friend, neighbour for a walk
- Join a local club eg lawn bowls, croquet, golf
- Walk a dog – great conversation starter!

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- **Sport for Seniors**
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President's report

BY **ROGER HENNEBRY**

HAMILTON GREY POWER PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first magazine for 2021.

On the world stage we have been very lucky keeping Covid at bay. Jane and I have been part of the 5 million by wearing masks on public transport (most recently on the train) and using our app to

register our movements.

We did manage our Grey Power AGM with our Christmas lunch in November at the Hamilton Gardens. A good turnout, nice food, laughs and raffle prizes.

The AGM was short 'n' sweet and complied with the Incorporated Societies rules.

We welcome new members to our committee and farewellled and thanked retiring committee members, Dawn Smith and Jack Thomas.



Roger Hennebry

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PHOTOGRAPH

Our committee is:

Roger Hennebry
Geoff Kreegher
Jim Higby
Raewyn Boyd
John Nicholls
Linda Smith
Chuck Bird
Gurbir Singh
Shanti Ralm

When you read this our brilliant team in the office will be in full swing registering your subs for this year.

We have emailed invoices for subs to as many of you as possible - already this is saving Grey Power up to \$1,000 in postage per year.

Please let the office know your email address if you have one to help us save even more. If you don't have email, don't worry we will still send you an

invoice via "snail mail".

As you know most banks are phasing out cheques which has forced our hand to get into the modern world - and we now have an eftpos machine in the office - you may say keeping up with things.

I want to thank Waikato Business News who produce our magazine and let you know they are currently working on a new discount book for us. Watch this space.

Just reminding you all that the Monday morning cuppa seminars are up and running again.

We hope to see you come along. We have some interesting discussions and guest speakers.

Why not join us and bring a friend?

Best wishes from Roger Hennebry, President, Hamilton Grey Power.

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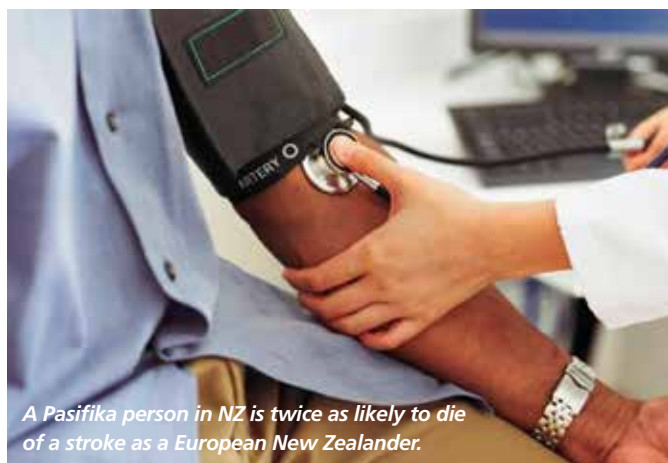
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Most Kiwis don't realise how deadly strokes are

BY RITA KRISHNAMURTHI

Stroke is the third highest cause of death in New Zealand, after cancer and coronary heart disease. But our new research shows very few people are aware of the risk, particularly in Pasifika communities - despite being much more likely to have an early stroke.



A Pasifika person in NZ is twice as likely to die of a stroke as a European New Zealander.

Each year, about 9,000 New Zealanders have a stroke and according to the data, 2,322 died of stroke in 2016. Just over half of the people who survive a stroke live with ongoing health impacts.

Our study, based on a random national sample of 400 people, shows only 1.5% identified stroke as a common cause of death. In contrast, 37% identified heart disease and 33% identified cancer as common causes of death.

Our research is unique in that it recruited a group of participants who represent New Zealand's ethnic groups. It shows people from Pasifika communities have the lowest stroke awareness, despite being at higher risk than the general population.

Recognising stroke symptoms and risk factors

The research also shows around 43% of people surveyed did not believe they could tell if a person was having a stroke.

The most common symptoms of stroke are:

- the sudden onset of face drooping on one side
- arm weakness, especially if one-sided
- speech difficulty
- complete or partial loss of vision on one side
- swallowing difficulties
- acute confusion or memory loss
- unusually severe, abrupt headaches

While the majority responded correctly to stroke symptoms, a large proportion (45-70%) also responded "yes" to unrelated symptoms, such as chest pain.



Bowen Therapy HOLISTIC HEALTH THERAPIES



I am Jocelyne, your holistic Health Therapies practitioner. I was born in France and have resided in New Zealand for the past 45 years. Prior to settling in New Zealand, I traveled extensively around the world and learned different ways to treat the body to make it feel better.

I formalised my training in New Zealand, starting with Naturopathy and continuing on to learn various health therapies.

Why? Some of you may say.

Throughout my travels and my learning experiences I came aware that although we are similar as human beings, we are all unique individuals. Therefore one therapy may not suit all of us. Please see below some of the therapies I practice.



Bowen Therapy

Bowen Therapy is my main modality because it treats the body via neuromuscular system, works on digestive system, lymphatic system, emotions...and much more. To me it is the most complete therapy one can receive as it addresses most ailments including off course PAIN.



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Buyer beware: Battery issues with second-hand electric cars

Just like your mobile phone, electric vehicle (EV) batteries deteriorate over time – and it's causing headaches for Kiwi buyers.

BY JACKSON THOMAS

The Motor Vehicles Disputes Tribunal recently ruled against a woman who bought a used EV, only to later find out the battery level indicator was inaccurate, meaning her new car would run out of juice much sooner than advertised. It's a trap for buyers on the EV resell market.

As impressive as the range is on new model EVs, battery life in older cars fades over time.

Most new EVs have warranties that guarantee the battery for a certain length of time,

typically 5-8 years, or distance (such as 100,000km).

Over time however, battery capacity gradually decreases the more it's used, like with a mobile phone.

It means the onus is squarely on the buyer when it comes to second-hand EVs, often nearing the end of or starting to have problems with battery life.

The buyer in the recent tribunal case paid \$8940 for her 2012 Nissan Leaf. Upon receiving the import, she found the car's range indicator was broken, and the car would run out of power quicker than adver-

tised. She said the trader misled her at the point of sale, and also alleged she was told the vehicle would be supplied with a new warrant of fitness. It was not.

Ultimately the tribunal ruled that under the common law (let the buyer beware), that a claimant needed to show that the other party had made a positive representation before it could succeed in any claim.

Silence, or the failure to disclose a fact, was not enough.

Most new EVs have warranties that guarantee the battery for a certain length of time, typically 5-8 years.

Ultimately, the Nissan with the dodgy battery was the buyer's problem. It's an issue the Automobile Association is seeing more and more of – particularly with the Nissan Leaf.

Motoring advisor Cade Wilson said most affordable EVs these days are second-hand, and all suffer from battery deterioration. He also said some people have complained about "electronic wind-backs" on import cars, essentially traders tampering with the charge or range counter to show a healthy battery. It's nearly impossible to check for, but mechanics are beginning to have their suspicions, he said.

"Like anything second-hand, there can be issues with EVs," Wilson said.

"Every car is different, but EVs mostly in New Zealand have had another life. And it's (battery life) all dependent on how the other person drove it, how it was charged etc."

More and more, the roadside team were fielding calls of EV breakdowns around the country. And in Wellington, there was currently a mobile "power bank" for EVs being tested around the city, with plans to roll out one in Auckland, in 2021.

Enriching the lives of older people

*Activities every day at the Celebrating Age Centre,
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OFFICE REPORT

Welcome to the New Year and wishing you all health and happiness!

The office reopened on 2 February and volunteers have been busy sending out membership renewals for 2021/22 year (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022). Membership fee is \$20.00 single and \$30.00 double. (Note bank dates for cheque non-acceptance.)

Our income is from memberships and donations. This year we have emailed renewal invoices to those with addresses and members without an address received a postal invoice. For internet banking our account number is shown on the membership form. Please enter your membership number and name as reference.

Cheques are being phased out this year and the following banks have given their end dates:

ANZ	ending 31 May
Kiwibank	no cheques accepted
ASB	not known
Westpac	ending 25 June 2021
NZ Post	no cheques accepted
BNZ	ending July 2021

Please remember to pay your Grey Power energy bill to PULSE ENERGY not to Grey Power. We have to give you a refund and it takes time. The payment details are on the reverse of your bill, bottom left-hand corner. Thanks.

The volunteers look forward to meeting you all again and for your convenience we have EFTPOS in the office.

Hamilton welcomes our new national President, Jan Pentecost.

Grey Power's Aims and Objectives

1. To advance, support and protect the welfare and well being of older people.
2. To affirm and protect that statutory right of every New Zealand resident, to a sufficient New Zealand Superannuation entitlement.
3. To strive for a provision of a quality health care to all New Zealand residents regardless of income and location.
4. To oppose all discriminatory and disadvantageous legislation affecting rights, security and dignity.
5. To be non-aligned with any political party and to present a strong united lobby to all Parliament and statutory Bodies on matters affecting New Zealanders.
6. To promote and establish links with kindred organisations.
7. To promote recognition of the wide-ranging services provided by senior citizens of New Zealand.
8. To gain recognition as an appropriate voice for all older New Zealanders.

Visual Personality of our Organisation

- Strong and active but not militant
- Friendly and mature
- Acting with dignity and integrity
- Having the wisdom of age
- Adding to quality of life
- A positive organisation to be associated with

GOOD READING

A regular weekday morning veers drastically off-course for a group of strangers whose paths cross in a London cafe - their lives never to be the same again when an apparently crazed gunman holds them hostage.

But there is more to the situation than first meets the eye and as the captives grapple with their own inner demons, the line between right and wrong starts to blur. Will the secrets they keep stop them from escaping with their lives?



Why do New Zealanders drive on the right side of the road?

AA DIRECTIONS.CO.NZ

It's back to the bloody and lawless English Middle Ages for the best answer to this.

Under the constant threat of being robbed, or worse, it was common to carry some sort of defensive weapon – typically a sword.

It was more efficient to draw your sword from the left side of your body, as most people were (and still are) right-handed.

People passed by on the left so they could swish, slash and hack to the right if needed.

As the movement of people increased and the speed of travel hastened over the centuries – from horses to horse driven wagons, carriages and then motorised vehicles,

the tradition of passing on the left stuck.

Take a look at the list of countries who drive on the left and a pattern emerges. Australia, Hong Kong, India, South Africa and, of course New Zealand, all drive on the left – a legacy of British colonial days.

Righties include most of Europe, after Napoleon conquered the continent in the 1800s.

Legend has it he made the move due to his disgust of all things British as a show of absolute power, and because he was left-handed. In the USA, perhaps in a bid to shed its British influence, New York State regulated right-hand driving in 1804 and other states soon followed, but the real deal-breaker came in 1908.



Henry Ford felt that the driver should always be closest to the centre lane so he put the steering wheel on the left of his best-selling Model T Ford. The car's immense popularity meant that the rest of the car industry followed suit.

Motoring experts believe New Zealand has lost its chance to join the "righties".

It will be just too expensive

and too hard to do. If there was an opportunity, it would have been 40-50 years ago when roads were quieter.

Sweden was the last "comparable" country to make the switch in 1967. Samoa went the other way in 2009, driven by the need to make car buying more affordable by ending its reliance on expensive US imports.

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Why Countdown and Foodstuffs may be offering better deals in 2021

Wellington shopper Frank Wilson McColl says supermarket prices seemed to increase when the country went into lockdown earlier this year, and never quite returned to their previous level.

BY TOM PULLAR-STRECKER

// Looking back at invoices for this time last year these things are more expensive – soy milk, soy yoghurt, produce and meat has gone up... I've stopped buying the soy yoghurt and chicken sausages we used to get regularly."

Another, Jen Stewart in Nelson, says she's feeling the crunch, too. "I did definitely notice they went up during Covid-19 lockdown, but it was a bit more complex than that – what actually happened was the 'sales' and 'specials' that we had come to rely on suddenly disappeared.

"I can see how they can claim 'our prices never changed!' Because the full retail prices maybe didn't actually change. But in practice, the routinely discounted prices disappeared, and people like us who plan their shops around their discounts were in for a bit of a shock."

Stewart says she wonders whether New Zealanders are being given enough choice.

"I guess as an immigrant from overseas, I don't in general feel that there's enough competition here. Food costs account for way more of my weekly budget than I was used to in the United States. Part of that is that there's fewer suppliers of food here in New Zealand, so less competition. But a big part of it is because we act like a third-world country in a lot of ways – exporting our premium produce and animal products overseas for top dollar – meanwhile the average Kiwi finds our best products out of reach financially.

The good news for them and other shoppers is that customers

can expect supermarkets to woo them with some new sweeteners as they try to put their best foot forward during a Government-ordered competition review next year. Last year, BP gave away free petrol at some of its service stations as a promotion while it was being put under the spotlight of the Commerce Commission's first ever "market study".

The fuel study resulted in a law change that will force petrol stations to display the price of premium fuels on their roadside signs and moves to help independent petrol companies grow their market share.

The \$21 billion supermarket industry will be next to face the commission's scrutiny.

Labour committed in its election manifesto to getting a market study into the industry under way before the end of the year, saying groceries were a core household expense and there was a need to ensure prices were fair.

Don't expect "free food hours" from Countdown.

But a smart response might be for it to open up a bit of shelf space to more local and artisan food producers on flexible terms, to create more of the vibe of a street market within their stores.

It would be no surprise either if Countdown and Pak 'n Save and New World owner Foodstuffs cut their margins on some closely-watched staples that commonly cause gripes such as milk, cheese and veggies.

Competition lawyer Andrew Matthews of Matthews Law says supermarkets will be well-resourced to address the threat of regulation and will "of course" try to win over public



opinion during the review.

"That would be the smart thing to do. They know the game and there will be a strategy.

"I am not suggesting bad intent, but you put your best foot forward – it is just 'advocacy'."

Labour appeared mainly concerned in its manifesto that the supermarket chain duopoly was exploiting its market power over consumers. It cited research that spending on food had risen 9.2 per cent over the three years to June last year and that profit margins were high when compared to variable costs and that competition had weakened.

That echoes the Government's rhetoric during the fuel study, when Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern claimed motorists were being "fleeced at the pump".

Consumer NZ research director Jessica Wilson says high margins and pricing practices are also its major concern.

A particular complaint is that supermarkets are tricking consumers by too frequently promoting prices as "specials".

Wilson says Consumer NZ would like to see some form of price monitoring for groceries introduced.

But the other topic that will concern the commission is whether supermarkets are exploiting their market power over food producers and their other suppliers. New Zealand Food &

Grocery Council chief executive Katherine Rich says demands being made of suppliers by stores sometimes "overstep the line between robust negotiation and bullying".

Matthews says supermarkets around the world have imposed terms and conditions on suppliers "that you wouldn't normally see in competitive markets" and then sometimes unilaterally change them. Issues that can cause problems include rules relating to stock damage and returns, requiring additional payments from suppliers, and who covers the cost of promotions.

Supermarkets also have both clear market power and a "conflict of interest" when promoting their own-label home brands, Matthews says.

"In some categories house brands can be 30 per cent of a product range."

From consumers' perspective, the consequences of that market power could manifest themselves in them not getting the variety of boutique new products they might otherwise expect, he says.

Matthews expects the supermarkets' defence will be that driving hard bargains with suppliers and investing in their own-label brands helps them deliver good value to consumers.

"That has been the traditional argument," he says.

Continued on page 11

From page 10

But while supermarkets may ask people to trust that they are passing on the efficiencies to consumers “what guarantee do we have on that when there is a duopoly?” he says.

The supermarket chains will inevitably argue that they are not really the duopoly they are often painted to be, and that trends in the industry are changing. They will point out they compete with a growing number of food producers that are selling online and delivering direct to consumers in the wake of Covid-19, speciality stores, street markets, takeaway stores and eating out.

If the fuel review sets the precedent, they may readily offer some concessions with regard to making their pricing and specials clearer. If they are genuinely frightened by the review, they may even voluntarily “unbundle” a bit of shelf space to make it easier for small producers to sell on their shelves on their own terms. More awkwardly for the Commerce Commission, they

may point out that if it still has concerns about them abusing market power over suppliers, there is already a law change in the pipeline to address that.

Last year, the Government announced that it intended to extend the Fair Trading Act so it also banned unfair contract terms in commercial contracts, and not just between businesses and consumers. But that is unlikely to be enough to completely stave off new regulation.

Wilson says it is hard to introduce competition back into a market once it has been reduced.

But Food and Grocery Council spokesman Brent Webling believes the upshot of the market study may be that New Zealand ends up with a new code of conduct for supermarkets.

“New Zealand is behind the rest of the world on this sort of stuff.

“We think it is time to look under the bonnet of the whole sector,” he says.

On the supplier side, an industry code could be something

similar to Australia’s Food and Grocery Code of Conduct, or the UK’s Groceries Supply Code of Practice.

The latter is designed to protect food suppliers from the power imbalances they face dealing with Britain’s 13 largest supermarket chains that have an annual turnover above £1 billion (NZ\$1.96b). The Groceries Supply Code of Practice has its own independent adjudicator and some teeth.

Last year, Britain’s Co-Op supermarket was forced to cough up £1.3m and change its practices after it was accused of stopping stocking some products abruptly and altering supply agreements unilaterally.

Australia’s code was beefed up this month after a government review to require – among others things – the appointment of an independent government reviewer and new confidentiality rules that are designed to protect suppliers who lodge complaints from retaliation. Countdown and Foodstuffs should have at least the best part of next year to

convince shoppers, the commission, and the Government that the minimum of interventions is needed here. In the meantime they are largely keeping their thoughts to themselves.

Countdown declined an interview but said in a statement that it “worked hard every day to make food as affordable as we can for our customers” and would cooperate fully with the Commerce Commission.

Foodstuff chief executive Chris Quin said in a statement that it was “fully open to a Commerce Commission market study that takes into consideration the retail grocery sector and we are committed to doing all we can to ensure any future study is effective for the future benefit of all New Zealanders”.

Law firm Simpson Grierson says there is no set timeframe for a market study. But it said Labour’s plan seemed to be to complete it by late next year, clearing the way for the next study, into the building materials industry, to get under way before the start of 2022.

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Hobbies for People with Arthritis

Pain and inflammation associated with arthritis is a serious problem that most seniors need to deal with.

For some people, this means staying away from the things you used to love such as sports and other physically engaging activities. However, this does not have to be the case.

Furthermore, having arthritis should not rob you of your fun life. There are creative ways to stay active, which will help you take the edge off arthritis-related pain and stress.

1. Yoga

Doctors often advise arthritic patients to engage in some physical activity. Low-impact exercises done in the right manner can be great in the reduction of pain. Yoga is one such exercise that has proven invaluable in managing arthritis pain.

It helps loosen as well as strengthen the muscles around the joints. When the muscles become stronger, they can take most of the force that the joints

would normally handle. As a result, there is less friction hence less inflammation.

So, make yoga one of your new hobbies and see your mobility improve a great deal. However, make sure to inform your instructor about conditions in advance so that they can know which yoga exercises to prescribe for you.

2. Dancing

Dancing is one way of working your sore joints and muscles while having fun.

You will not need to turn into twinkle toes to reap the benefits of dancing in arthritis management. But you might want to learn a few moves to help relieve inflammation in your muscles.

Slow-style dance moves such as ballroom and line dancing are the most recommended. Special Zumba sessions are also gaining popularity.

3. Walking

Walking is a great hobby for arthritis patients since it delivers a host of benefits. To begin with, it helps to relieve the tension in the cartilages and muscles in the affected areas. Consequently, walking promotes the distribution of synovial fluid to provide better lubrication.

The fluid will also help flush out respiratory waste from the muscles and nearby tissue to prevent further re-infection. Finally, the sight of nature and the smell of fresh air that you experience during hikes have immense benefits in managing arthritis-related stress.

To make the most out of walking, make sure to ease yourself into it by doing light warm-up exercises. Also, start with easy or shorter trails. As your body gets used to it, you can upgrade to steeper terrain. In addition, you might need some walking aids such as poles to provide you with better balance. At the end of the walk, make sure to do cool down exercises to relieve the tension in your joints and muscles.

4. Swimming

Swimming is a highly recommended exercise for arthritic people. It is among the few activities that work your entire body at the same time. As the water buoys your body, you are able to build up your muscles with minimal pressure while keeping the joints intact. Not only does it reduce the pain, but it also prevents further friction that often causes secondary degeneration of joints.

5. Golfing

The elderly who golf get a lot of health benefits. These range from easy motion, strength, improved flexibility and relaxation, making golf a favourite hobby for most retirees. Because golfing can be done at any age, seniors can enjoy it for satisfaction, healthy competition, and also improve their mood and hand-eye coordination. It is known to keep older people happy and stimulated. Golfing has the same benefits as yoga as it is known to maintain endurance and increase flexibility.

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Mastermind behind stunning Hamilton Gardens retires

Dr Peter Sergel has been a driving force behind the Hamilton Gardens since 1979 when he was asked to develop a concept plan for the park.



He had just joined the Hamilton City Council and this was one of the first jobs he was given. The seeds of success were well and truly sown for the award-winning Gardens and Dr Sergel went on to develop the Gardens' unique concept of telling the story of gardens throughout civilisation. Dr Sergel was appointed Director of the Hamilton Gardens in 1995, but he has been at the forefront of the Gardens' development and operations for the last four decades,

meticulously designing the more than 20 gardens at the site (the only exception being the Te Parapara Garden).

With Dr Sergel at the helm, Hamilton Gardens has grown to become a major visitor destination loved by residents and tourists alike and receiving international recognition, including the 2014 'International Garden of the Year Award'. The Gardens receives around one million visits each year including more than 440,000 visitors to the enclosed gardens. Lance Vervoort, Hamilton City Council's General Manager Community and Deputy Chief Executive, says Dr Sergel's outstanding vision and talent for design are simply irreplaceable.

Back in the 1980s, when Dr Sergel first started out, there was no budget set aside to develop the Gardens, so he worked tirelessly with community groups to raise the funds.

He has set up trusts to fundraise and promote the Gardens and enjoyed a long, productive working relationship with the Friends of the Hamilton Gardens. Dr Sergel has also driven

other local projects such as the 1980's Riverbank Development Scheme and the redevelopment of Woodlands.

He has instigated several events, the best-known being the Hamilton Gardens Arts Festival, which he established in 1998 and ran for the first few years before creating the Foundation that now runs it.

Dr Sergel has worked closely with the community to develop Hamilton Gardens into the world-class visitor destination it is today. He leaves some very big boots to fill when he retires as Director at the end of 2020.

Dr Sergel will remain involved in the development of the next few gardens – Ancient Egyptian, Medieval, Pacifica and Baroque Gardens – in a part-time role. Mr Vervoort says the Council will be starting the search for a new Director shortly, but it could take some time to find the right person.

"Given the uniqueness of the role and the calibre of candidate we are looking for, we want to make sure we get the recruitment right.



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How many veges can you grow in one square metre?

Every five years or so there is a breathless rush of stories about the “new” way to grow more fresh food in less space, which is known as a square metre (or square foot) gardening.

BY JO MCCARROLL

But actually, this technique has been around for at least 40 years – the term “square foot gardening” was popularised by the retired American engineer Mel Bartholomew in his 1981 book (which is said to be the bestselling gardening book in America ever).

And actually I would say that square metre gardening (I am going to use the metric version from now on for convenience) owes a large debt to the traditional French method of intensive market gardening which has been used since the 1500s. The concept of square metre gardening is remarkably

simple. You grow your edible crops in a bed that is – you guessed it – 1m square. Usually square metre gardens are in raised beds about 30 centimetres high (it would be possible to apply the same principles to a ground-level bed, although for best results with this system you need great drainage and soil that is rich in organic matter which is much easier to control in a raised plot).

The Mel Bartholomew system is based on a simple grid, so you divide that bed up into 16 growing cells that are 25cm by 25cm – you can create the matrix on top of the soil using twine and stakes, or pieces of bamboo or plastic pipe.

Then you plant each cell

separately with different crops; based on a formulation of either one, four, nine or 16 plants per square depending on the plant's overall size at maturity and speed of growth.

(Live in an apartment, or are renting and can't build beds? You can create about a square metre of growing space using about six or seven pots with a 40cm diameter; group them closely together and treat each one as an individual cell or double cell. See these tips on growing veges in pots.)

So you might plant four lettuces in one cell but only one tomato in the next one; and 16 baby carrots in the one next to that. Keep tall plants on the south side to avoid shading the small plants (you can also add a trellis or climbing frame to the south side of the bed).

The idea is, rather than sowing thickly and thinning plants to the required spacing, you sow only as many seeds as you want to grow (or as close to it as possible), reducing the waste of seed ... and the waste of your time having to thin the rows later on...

Commercial crops were grown in a linear system, he theorised, in order to leave room for tractors and harvesting equipment. But actually, in smaller backyard plots, rows left up to three-quarters of the potential growing space empty.

Plus gardeners were wasting their time weeding the space between the rows, and wasting water and fertiliser, when they applied it to their crops, on growing weeds.

I have practised the square metre system in my own garden for several years, although I have been greatly influenced by Australian gardening writer Lolo Houbein's updated approach to intensive small space food production in her 2007 book *One Magic Square*, as her system allows a lot more design flexibility (she suggests dividing beds into triangles, quarters around a central tepee or diagonal rows for instance).

But there are real benefits to any intensive and orderly approach.

- You end up with crops growing in clumps, rather than rows, which is a much more efficient way to use the space.
- The plants are so closely planted that they form a living mulch which reduces the need to weed.
- Because you are continually harvesting as different things are ready, you are naturally practising crop rotation to prevent pests and diseases building up (having a large variety of different plants in a small space also prevents plant-specific pests and diseases from spreading as easily).
- It keeps the workload manageable, as you never have that much to do on any one day, and you produce food steadily rather than a glut of something coming ready all at once.

You do have to be prepared to be in the garden regularly though, as you will get the best results by doing a little fairly often (especially when it comes to weeding) and the intensively planted crops will take up water quickly, so you need to keep a careful eye on irrigation and in summer usually water every day. Also, although the true believers will claim you can grow anything at all in this system, my experience is it better suits smaller plants with a relatively compact habit (such as lettuces and herbs) or which can be trained vertically (like well-staked tomatoes or cucurbits trained up a trellis).

I personally don't use it to grow bulky crops like potatoes or onions, or crops which both grow slowly and take up space, such as brassicas. But it is a great system to use as part of your garden, and worth a try if you are new to growing your own fresh food as, if you follow the rules, it is really almost failsafe.



JO'S SQUARE METRE SALAD PLOT

1. Divide the 1sqm bed into sixteen 25cm x 25cm squares. In the top northwest corner plant the perennial New Zealand spinach; in the next square, four bok choy; next to that chives; and in the top northeast corner, plant one cucumber in late October (if you don't want the space to go to waste this month, sow microgreens thickly now and harvest as sprouts).
2. In the next two rows down, sow eight different sorts of lettuce of your choice. You can usually get four lettuces to one square although sometimes I only plant two if it is a bigger hearting variety.
3. In the bottom row on the southwest corner grow rocket (just sprinkle a spoonful of seed on the soil), in the next square sow 20-25 radish seed; next to that grow one sorrel plant; and in the bottom southeast corner, plant one tomato in late October (once again, use the space for microgreens until then).

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Perversely, one of the few positives to come out of the pandemic—in Aotearoa, anyway, at least—has been a reduction in deaths due to the less spreading of germs and fewer road accidents, something Julie Gilchrist, business manager of Return to Sender, the ecofriendly casket-makers, has certainly noticed.

But, as the saying goes, as one of the life's only two certainties (along with taxes), the business of death doesn't shut up shop for a lockdown. And it's a business that Return to Sender has set about changing for the better.

"We do everything as sustainably as possible," says Julie. "All of our raw materials are from sustainable plantations and untreated. Our finishes are either water-based or natural wax. The decision to replace rimu with the faster growing and sustainable Silver Beech has not only been positive for the planet but also a firm favourite with families.

When buried, Silver Beech breaks down up to three times faster than rimu. It's another way we're trying to alter people's perception of caskets and sustainability, while making it more affordable."

Is the sustainable casket industry growing? "Definitely. I just spoke to somebody recently whose father had passed, and she said that he just wanted a sustainable coffin. It was such a shock for her that he died but she found comfort knowing that he could get what he wanted. Something that suited his beliefs and represented the way that he lived life."

Since the company's inception, Return to Sender has donated more than 15,000 trees, but, three years ago, Julie decided that they could do more "to give back to the land" and partnered with Trees for Survival, who work with schools to restore natural habitats. "We donate a tree for every casket sold. The children who grow them then have planting days," says Julie. "And the species are always targeted to the local area. For example, cabbage trees are used in places with soil erosion as they have good root systems, and kōwhai trees are used to attract birds like the tūi and the kereru."

Julie makes the point that sustainability is not just about renewable forests and the like, but educating future generations to be excited about the land and their guardianship of it.



Resting In Peace - Changing the Narrative



Dear homeowner, flood letters on the way

Thousands of Hamilton properties could be tagged as at risk of flooding as council bosses work to identify the impact of a major storm on the city.

BY AARON LEAMAN

Letters are already being sent to about 1600 landowners in the city's south after their properties were identified as being impacted by flooding in a one-in-100-year event.

The information is captured in a new mapping tool being trialled by the city council and shared online.

Explaining what the flood mapping means for households looms as a must-do for council bosses after an earlier flood risk project caused widespread panic.

In 2012, more than 28,000 Hamilton properties received letters from the council warning that their homes were at risk of flooding.

The letters were deliberately vague to prevent panic but the strategy backfired as ratepayers responded with scorn and confusion. It eventually prompted a public apology from then mayor Julie Hardaker.

The latest flood information models how a "very large rain event" would impact the city's Mangakōtukutuku catchment which takes in the suburbs of Melville, Glenview, Deanwell, Bader, Fitzroy and

Peacocke. The mapping identifies flood hazards as low, medium or high.

To meet requirements laid out by the Waikato Regional Council, the city council has an ongoing programme to understand the impact a once-in-a-century storm would have on the city. To date, the flood mapping has been applied to about one third of Hamilton.

The chance of a one-in-100-year flood happening in any one year is one per cent. The last 100-year flood struck Hamilton in 1958.

City Councillor Martin Gallagher said elected members were briefed on the flood mapping project which wasn't the case back in 2012.

Gallagher has memories of the 1958 flood in Hamilton and recalls one end of Radnor Street being flooded.

The Waikato River was last at a 100-year flood level in 1998. Previously, flood hazard mapping has featured in the city council's district plan. The new flood mapping uses a more up-to-date process, which factors in climate change information, and will be included on properties' LIM reports.

Flood letters started being mailed out to residents on Monday. All the letters will be

sent by mid-December – including 200 letters sent to Rotokauri residents with updated flood mapping.

Hamilton Mayor Paula Southgate has had oversight over the letter mail-out and said her focus is on clear communication with residents.

"I've talked to staff about putting the technical information into very plain language so that people understand that the risk is low to their properties but, even still, we're obliged to note that risk," Southgate said.

Because of her background serving on the Waikato Regional Council, Southgate said she understands the need to identify flood risk areas across the city.

"I think it's only right that people understand the risks

relating to their own properties, however low they are.

One-in-100-years is a very low risk and of course it might only affect a portion of your yard or not very much of your property at all.

"[But] the news has highlighted that rare events do occur."

City council principal planner Nathanael Savage said letters have only been sent to property owners where the impact of flooding in a one-in-100 year storm is "a bit more than minor".

A timeframe hasn't been set on flood mapping the whole city but the number of Hamilton properties impacted in a once-in-a-century storm is expected to run into the thousands.

It took about two years to complete work on the Mangakōtukutuku catchment. Work has already started on the Te Rapa catchment and the Te Awa o Katapaki catchment in north Rototuna.

"Having this information is not just about showing where flooding is expected, just as importantly, it shows where it isn't," Savage said.

"For example, landowners can see that, while some flooding is expected within their property boundary in this rare event, it's only one corner, or on a shared driveway, or some other area away from their house or living areas."



Poverty protection or reward for years working: What's the pension for, anyway?

Many New Zealanders have different ideas of what New Zealand's retirement income system is for, but Retirement Commissioner Jane Wrightson says getting a clear definition is an important part of assessing any future changes.

BY SUSAN EDMUNDS

New Zealand's retirement system is made up of two parts: New Zealand Superannuation, or the pension, and KiwiSaver.

But Wrightson said, until now, there had been no agreed-upon definition of what the system should achieve. There was no definition of NZ Super in relevant laws.

"During the Review of Retirement Income Policies last year it was clear New Zealanders had deeply held views on the role of NZ Super, but they differed," she said. "Some considered it was there to prevent poverty and ensure people retained dignity in old age, others saw it as providing a basic standard of living, as a gesture of care for the elderly or as a reward for working hard and paying taxes.

"My role as Retirement Commissioner requires me to monitor and advise Government on retirement income issues, but to do that I need to start from a base of what our retirement income system is for."

Wrightson formed an Expert Advisory Group of academics and policy specialists to help her to test and debate issues.

She said if the country was to look at retirement income policies in depth in the next few years – "and you can't think it won't be post-Covid" – the first thing that was needed would be a framework against which proposals could be examined.

The panel had decided that "a stable retirement income

framework enables trust and confidence that older New Zealand residents can live with dignity and mana, participate in and contribute to society, and enjoy a high level of belonging and connection to their whānau, community and country".

New Zealand Super would need to ensure an adequate standard of living for New Zealanders of eligible age and would be the Government's primary contribution to financial security for the rest of a person's life. It was also intended that Government would support New Zealanders to build and manage independent savings that contributed to their ability to maintain their own relative standard of living.

"This statement acknowledges the dual role of Government and the individual in preparing for their retirement," Wrightson said.

"The review recommended that NZ Super be retained at its current settings in the medium term and made a number of recommendations to strengthen KiwiSaver. Whether people use KiwiSaver or another vehicle to build independent savings, they must be supported in putting money away for retirement because for many, NZ Super alone will not be enough."

Some people thought the pension was a reward for having paid a lifetime of tax but it was also available to people who had not been in paid work for some or much of their lives, she said.

Wrightson said policy in areas such as healthcare and housing should also be viewed



through a retirement lens, as they had significant bearing on standards of living in retirement.

"This is particularly true for many Māori, whose disparity in living standards throughout their lives, affect their quality of life as they age," she said. "I hope to influence progress in addressing these disparities before people reach retirement."

This year's Global Pension Index from Mercer showed that New Zealand's retirement income system had slipped down the rankings, from eighth to 10th.

Wrightson said that might sound worrying but the country was still in the "B team". Only Netherlands and Denmark scored an A. International comparison helped to facilitate an opportunity to stop and think about the findings, she said.

New Zealand achieved an index value of 68.3 overall, 63.8 for adequacy, 62.9 for sustainability and 82.9 for integrity. The decrease from the overall 2019 rating of 70.1 was primarily due to reductions in net replacement rates published by the OECD.

Mercer New Zealand chief executive Martin Lewington said that "sustainability had traditionally let down New

Zealand's retirement system, however adequacy dropped this year as well".

"While still above average overall with a B-grade, from an adequacy and sustainability lens our retirement system has dropped to a C+ grade. It's disappointing that our ratings here have gone backward, and as an industry, creating the best outcomes for New Zealand retiree's is now more important than ever.

"Changes can be made to increase our rating, however as we enter a challenging economic environment, raising the level of KiwiSaver contributions and placing more focus on income streams in the place of lump sums becomes more difficult to achieve. The growing gender inequality is also a concern and something the system must address. This further highlights the importance of investing in responsibly invested funds which help tackle gender issues head on as part of their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policies."

Wrightson said it was important that, with only two tiers to the retirement income system, the country was focused on making sure they were fit for purpose.



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- A one-off refurbishment fee covering the cost of bringing the unit to near-new condition
- A one-off facilities fee of 12.5 percent of your selling price.

You can discount the facilities fee to 10 percent of your buy price if you choose to pay this upfront, or another alternative is that you can fix the weekly fee at \$100/week with the facilities fee at 25% of the sale price.

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Karakapines Rototuna intends to apply for registration of the village under the Retirement Villages Act 2003

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Our range of modern, well appointed, spacious homes are designed for retirement living. Choose from a range of two or three bedroom homes - stand alone, duplex or apartment. All this within an aesthetically pleasing village environment where site management will take care of maintenance and other concerns and a strong sense of community will thrive.

The community centre overlooks the village green and gardens. Bowls, petanque, billiards and a gymnasium will be on offer and a communal area will cater for games, cards, crafts, Melbourne Cup nights and movie nights.

Parks, a golf course, cafes, a supermarket and health care are in close vicinity with Radius Glaisdale Aged Care facility just across the road.



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Just as we recognise that no two residents will be the same, we know housing wants and needs will differ. And so... we've ensured Karaka Pines Rototuna offers a mix of housing options.

Our accommodation comprises a mix of stand-alone houses, duplex units and apartments. Some feature single garages, some double. Some are two-bedroom, some three, and there are studies too. With the apartments you have a choice of ground or first floor. On the ground floor you can walk out to your patio and garden. On the first floor, accessed by elevator, you can enjoy the views from a generous deck. Select what sort of home and living style best suits you.

All dwellings are architecturally designed and incorporate a blend of traditional NZ style with modern flavour. They're waiting for you to add your individual stamp.



Wide-sweeping retirement village law change mooted, owners reject suggestion

Wide-sweeping changes are recommended to the multi-billion dollar retirement sector, home to a “vulnerable” population estimated at 43,000 people.

BY ANNE GIBSON
NZ Herald

Retirement Commissioner Jane Wrightson's office released a discussion paper on the Retirement Villages Act 2003, its regulations and code of practice, noting lack of significant reform in 17 years.

Guaranteed retirement unit buyback periods when residents move or die, limits to how long weekly fees are charged when people leave, more voice for residents and a consumer protection probe are mooted.

The Commission for Financial Capability document recommends stronger protection for the population which real estate agents and property consultants JLL estimate number at least 45,000 New Zealanders, with a further 12,000 places now under construction.

But the head of an industry body which represents village owner/operators rejected the recommendations and said the whitepaper contains inaccuracies. Graham Wilkinson - Retirement Village Association

president and the managing director of national village chain Generus Living Group - questioned findings.

“The white paper is designed to stimulate discussion but we as an industry don't see any need for big changes. The industry is one of the heroes as well as a solution to the housing crisis. There are many inaccuracies in the report which limits its usefulness. Most of the stuff is ill-conceived and ill-considered,” Wilkinson said.

But the paper recommends improving resale and buy-back processes - now in the hands of powerful owner/operators.

Introducing a guaranteed buy-back timeframe, interest being paid to an estate when a unit is empty and the owner paying a capital gain once the place is sold are moves recommended.

Currently, estates or families of deceased are powerless to sell retirement village units or apartments because this is entirely in the hands of owner/operators. And weekly fees can be charged without any end, despite a place being empty.

Villages shouldn't charge weekly fees six months after someone dies or moves, the paper recommends. Those fees should be halved after three months.

The sector lacks a simple complaints system or authorised advocate and residents need to be given more of a voice, it says.

On emerging consumer issues, a policy review should analyse trends to see if consumers were protected enough.

Documents residents sign when they buy into villages must be simplified and online resources offered to make the processes clearer and easier for older people to understand.

Documents have previously been labelled so complicated that not even lawyers advising their clients could understand them.

“The intention of this paper is to describe the environment, discuss core issues, and start a conversation between industry, residents and government about if and where change is desirable,” Wrightson said.

“We have indicated areas that, in the opinion of the commission, warrant further work.”

The paper proposes it is timely, effective, and efficient for a policy review of all elements of the framework, to

be undertaken by the Ministry for Housing and Urban Development with the commission's support.

An industry-focused regulatory and monitoring system had resulted in residents' associations saying elderly vulnerable residents were exposed to exploitation through harsh treatment or unfair terms.

“The difference between an independent unit and a higher level of care is not easily understood when care facilities are co-located within RV sites. Some residents or their families only understand the full impacts of some transfer terms when their individual

circumstances change, often after they have been in a village for a few years or are older

and at their most vulnerable,” the document said.

People who have lived for years in an independent unit might not have enough capital to transfer to a serviced apartment. Yet the owner/operator reaps the capital gain, has access to the vacated unit, carries on charging fees, sometimes refurbishes that place, and sells it again for a far greater price.

New Zealand's “vulnerable” population of residents is relying on laws made nearly two decades ago”, the document says.

When will life return to normal?

A vaccinologist looks into her crystal ball

OPINION: The pandemic is having a profound effect on the world as we knew it and right now it is getting worse, not better.

BY HELEN PETOUSIS-HARRIS

While we enjoy relatively unfettered freedom in New Zealand, thanks to smart decisions based on good advice, we still face a closed border to the rest of the world.

Given the state of most of the world right now not even the promise of a bargain in the Maldives or skiing in France could entice me out of my bubble until coronavirus is beaten back. So when might that be?

Basically, there are two things that need to happen before we can have visitors or go back out and play. One, generate immunity in most of our population and two, beat the pandemic back in other countries.

It is likely we will start vaccinating against Covid-19 here in NZ after March. The first doses of vaccine are scheduled to arrive between now and then and also, additional data required by our regulatory authority (MedSafe) to authorise the use of the vaccines is anticipated by then. Once MedSafe is satisfied the vaccine is suitable for New Zealand then we can start using it. This will be the case for all other Covid-19 vaccines.

Potentially, we could have most people vaccinated by the fourth quarter of 2021 but this will largely depend on a) the arrival and approval of enough doses of vaccine; and b) the availability and training of enough vaccinators to administer the vaccines.

We cannot throw open the borders until most people here are immune to the virus and until this time we also need to keep up the use of the Covid-19 track and trace app and masks

where they are required, along with the other behaviours we have been asked to stay mindful of, such as hand hygiene (tedious I know, but try to suck it up).

The other thing that needs to happen at the same time is getting control of the escalating pestilence across the rest of the globe.

New cases appear in our managed isolation almost daily and this is with only limited numbers of arrivals. Imagine if we were receiving the normal weekly number of people flooding directly into the community, in a few weeks we would look like the UK.

As of writing there have been tens of millions of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered, mainly in the US, China, Israel, UAE, and the UK. We need to get to the billions and this needs to be spread evenly. No point just vaccinating a few countries, we need to vaccinate them all. There are several hurdles to jump in order for this to be achieved.

Firstly, the production and authorisation of enough doses of vaccine (if other front-line vaccine contenders complete their trials successfully then this is possible).

Secondly, the systems and resources to deliver these vaccines. (On this I have some concern. Already countries like Canada and the US are well behind in the numbers of doses administered and I don't think there has been enough attention on this rather significant aspect of proceedings.)

Thirdly, vaccines must also be deployed in low and middle-income countries as thoroughly as they are in high-income countries.

These are no mean feats but



Vaccinologist and Associate Professor at Auckland University Dr Helen Petousis-Harris

given we can even have this discussion only eleven months after discovering the cause of this plague gives me optimism.

We need to see a massive reduction in Covid-19 cases across the world and at the same time achieve a highly vaccinated NZ population.

Then we can take that over-

seas vacation, visit relatives, and relinquish Zoom for face-to-face events.

Hang in there – it will happen!

Dr Helen Petousis-Harris is a vaccinologist and Associate Professor in the University of Auckland's Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.



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Meet the Essential Workers in Kensington

Radius Kensington rest home is excited to introduce its new Facility Manager, Kristine Homewood (pictured).



Kristine has a long career in nursing and aged care. She graduated from the Waikato Institute of Technology and joined Radius St Joans as a graduate nurse.

Between then and now, Kristine has done agency nursing, Plunket nursing, and was a registered nurse and team lead for the aged care providers Cascades and Vision West. Seeing as she's worked as a Clinical Manager at Kensington for several years, she knows the staff and families well and couldn't be happier in her new role as a Facility Manager at Radius Kensington.

When asked what appeals to her about aged care, Kristine answers that it is the privilege of being able to take part in the last chapter of people's life. She also notes how special it is when she's invited to sit beside residents in their final hours.

There's nothing like a career in aged care, and for professionals interested in joining Radius Kensington, being dedicated, warm and caring means you will fit in well at the care home. The staff aim to make their residents feel like they are a part of a family. During the disruption and isolation of 2020, the essential worker staff provided residents opportunities to socialise and exercise – Tai Chi was popular – within the rest home, including



celebrating Easter and commemorating ANZAC. When lockdowns lifted, residents enjoyed a more normal life with day trips to Lake Karapiro and visits from canine friends for cuddles.

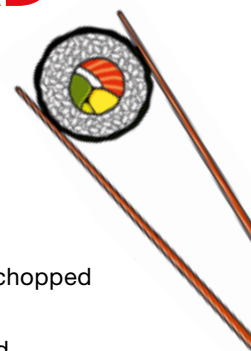
Teamwork is very important, and Kristine says it's key that staff support each other to be successful and happy in their role. Kristine is a case in point, as the previous Facility Manager at Kensington, Jane Morgan, is one of her closest friends and they still go for bike rides every weekend together.

Kristine is keen to showcase Kensington's warm and friendly staff to the community. She welcomes you to organise a tour of Radius Kensington rest home.

You can visit Radius Kensington at 135 Maeroa Road, Maeroa, Hamilton. Phone ahead on (07) 846 6489.

- Supplied copy

SALMON AND SUSHI SALAD



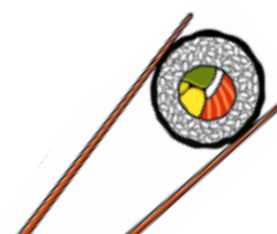
Ingredients

- 2 cups basmati rice
- 3 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2.5cm piece fresh ginger, peeled, chopped
- 1/2 cup tamari or soy sauce
- 3-5 chillies (or less), finely chopped
- 3/4 cups cider vinegar
- 8-10 nori sheets (seaweed sheets)
- 1 x 360g can salmon
- 1/3 cup sesame seeds, sunflower seeds mix
- 1/2 bag baby spinach
- 1 avocado



Method

1. Cook rice.
2. Meanwhile, place a little sesame oil in a pan and cook garlic, half the ginger and a dash of tamari for 3 minutes on high.
3. When rice is cooked, rinse under warm water and drain. Place in a large bowl. Add heated garlic and ginger mix, diced chillies, remaining ginger, sesame oil, tamari and cider vinegar.
4. Tear nori sheets in pieces and add to rice. Add salmon, sesame seeds and baby spinach to rice. Stir together. Taste and adjust dressing to your liking.
5. Serve topped with sliced avocado.



What seed oils are really doing to your body

Vegetable oils are highly unstable.

BY DAVID GILLESPIE

When they interact with oxygen, they release neurotoxic, DNA mutating chemicals which are known to cause cancer (at least).

Recent improvements in measurement technology have now thrown a spotlight on the quantity of these chemicals released by normal use. And the results are truly terrifying.

Cheap vegetable oil made from seeds (canola, sunflower, corn, safflower, grapeseed, rice bran and soybean oils) is a new addition to the human diet. Unlike animal fats and oils made from fruit (olive, avocado and coconut oils), they're very high in polyunsaturated fats

and in particular something called an omega-6 fat.

A recent study found that when seed oils containing these fats are heated at a normal cooking temperature (of 180 degrees Celsius), they create highly toxic chemicals known to be involved in cancer causation.

And each time the oil was re-used the concentration increased massively. The study showed that by the fifth day of oil re-use, it had five times the concentration of these chemicals that it had on the first (which was already alarmingly high).

But worse than that, the researchers also made the point that all they could measure was the amount of these chemicals left in the oil.

Since they are highly volatile, they are constantly escaping into the air around us when the food is being cooked.

According to another recent study, it is likely that this volatility explains the stubbornly high rates of lung cancer among women in Asian countries (where smoking

is rare among women, but wok frying with Canola oil is a daily task).

Those toxic molecules are dangerous because they interact destructively with our DNA. This significantly increases the chances that cancer will develop.

These seed oils are now a core component of our food supply and Australians are sicker now than at any time in our history.

We are almost four times more likely to have thyroid cancer than three short decades ago.

We are more than three times as likely to have liver cancer.

Continued on page 34

Hamilton Grey Power Inc.

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APPLE MOLASSES TEA LOAF



By Chelsea Sugar

Serve this loaf sliced with butter, or toast a slice and serve warm with maple syrup and thickened cream for dessert.

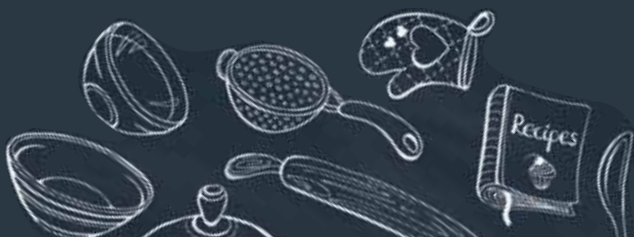


Ingredients

- 125g butter
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Chelsea Soft Brown Sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Chelsea Blackstrap Molasses
- 2 granny smith apples, grated including skin
- 1 cup sultanas
- 1 cup fragrant tea (earl grey or herbal)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups self-raising flour

Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a medium to large loaf tin.
2. Place the first 8 ingredients in a medium saucepan and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes then stir in beaten eggs, oats and sifted flour. Pour mixture into prepared tin and cook for 35-45 minutes until golden and a skewer is removed cleanly.



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Active listening is a pivotal skill.

Not everyone knows how to do it

People often tell Barbara Clifford that she's a wonderful listener. "They'll say, 'Wow, I can't believe you remembered that' or 'I can't believe you remembered everybody's name in the room'," the 48-year-old says.

BY EVELYN LEWIN
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

It's not like Barbara was born with an exceptional memory. Instead, the time-management strategist at The Time Tamer consultancy, based out of Northern Territory, Australia, says she's a natural "talker" who's had to knuckle down to master the art of active listening.

"People love to talk, especially about themselves; people love to be heard," she says.

"So if you can communicate that you've heard what somebody said, that's probably the most powerful tool you can utilise to build credibility with people you connect with."

To access that tool, Barbara relies on a range of different techniques. These kick into gear the moment

she meets someone new.

"I'll say, 'Did you say your name was Hilde? Oh, thanks, Hilde. What do you do for a living, Hilde?' The more you reaffirm their name with them, the more likely you are to remember it."

But active listening isn't just about memorising what people say. It's also about making them feel heard as they speak. Barbara does that by pausing often, using body language, focusing on the tone of the speaker, and then paraphrasing what they said.

It also helps to pepper conversations with the other person's name, Barbara adds.

"The sweetest sound to anybody is their own name, so they will feel like they're being listened to if you say it."

Karen Winfield was a corporate trainer in professional

development skills before becoming the managing director and co-owner of Australian company PD Training. She believes active listening is a pivotal skill everyone should learn. "And it is a learnt skill. You have to be very conscious of making an effort to do it."

In other words, says Winfield, you need to stop whatever else you are doing. "Then make the effort to decide, 'I am going to listen' rather than let your head run around and focus on a million other things."

Next, look at the person you're talking to and concentrate on listening, not just to their words and tone, but also to non-verbal cues such as body language.

"Someone might be saying that they're happy as Larry, but their tone might not be saying that," Winfield says. "Make sure you pick up on that."

To show you've really absorbed what the other person has said, summarise their main points, or ask questions. And, unless you have a good reason, don't interrupt. Jumping in to add to the story "breaks the speaker's flow", says Winfield.

The only time it's OK is to let the other person know something, such as if you need to dash off.

It's easier to talk than to listen, psychologist Dr Marny Lishman acknowledges, which is why listening is a skill worth honing.

"Usually people don't listen completely and are thinking about what they are going to say next," she says.

That leads to fewer meaningful interactions as we scramble to speak rather than absorb what we've heard.

Active listening, on the other hand, fosters a deeper sense of connection. Making others feel heard demonstrates that you care about them and value what they have to say. It can also help with problem solving, as ideas are often clarified when bounced around.

Furthermore, Winfield says, when you truly listen to what others say, you not only understand them better, you learn about yourself.

"There's so much growth you can have personally when you're actively listening to someone else."

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From page 30

We are twice as likely to have melanoma, motor neuron disease, kidney or anal cancer.

Men are more than twice as likely to have prostate cancer and 60% more likely to have testicular cancer. Women are 43% more likely to have breast cancer. And children are paying even more dearly. A child is 6 times as likely to suffer from leukaemia than at the start of the 20th century. And they are more than four times more likely to suffer from a life threatening allergic reaction than they were just 20 years ago.

The chronic disease tsunami is upon us.

Every day there are thousands of teenagers standing over vats of frying canola oil for eight hour shifts at every fast food restaurant in this country.

Every day, there are people cooking with high temperature seed oils in woks and frying pans. And every day

there are industrial quantities of heated seed oil being poured into commercial baked and frozen foods.

A century ago, exactly none of these fats were added to our food supply.

Every day 312 new cancer sufferers are diagnosed in Australia. That this is allowed to continue when the science is so clear on the likely cause is not merely a shame or an embarrassment. It is an outrage and a tragedy.

It is reasonably safe to assume all the fat in processed food comes from seed oils. The good news is that this only applies to food made by others (and usually shoved into a packet with a picture of real food on the front).

Nobody can stop you making and eating real food. All you need is a little know-how.

David Gillespie is probably best known as the author of Sweet Poison. His new book is The Eat Real Food Cookbook.

Congratulations to the following Waikato people who were honoured in the 2021 New Years Honours. You might know some of them.

Knights Companion (KNZM)

Professor William Te Rangiuwa Temara, CNZM, Pukete, Hamilton, for services to Māori and education

Members (MNZM)

Michelle Anne Crook, Cambridge, for services to the community

John McIntosh, Hillcrest, Hamilton, for services to people with disabilities

Michael John Sutton, Hamilton East, Hamilton, for services to education

Queen's Service Medal (QSM)

Kerry Patrick Clarkin, JP, Huntington, Hamilton, for services to agriculture and the community

Hokikau Kataraina Purcell, Nawton, Hamilton, for services to seniors and Māori

Lasalo Owen Purcell, Nawton, Hamilton, for services to seniors and Māori

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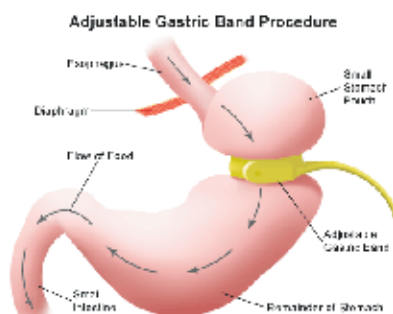
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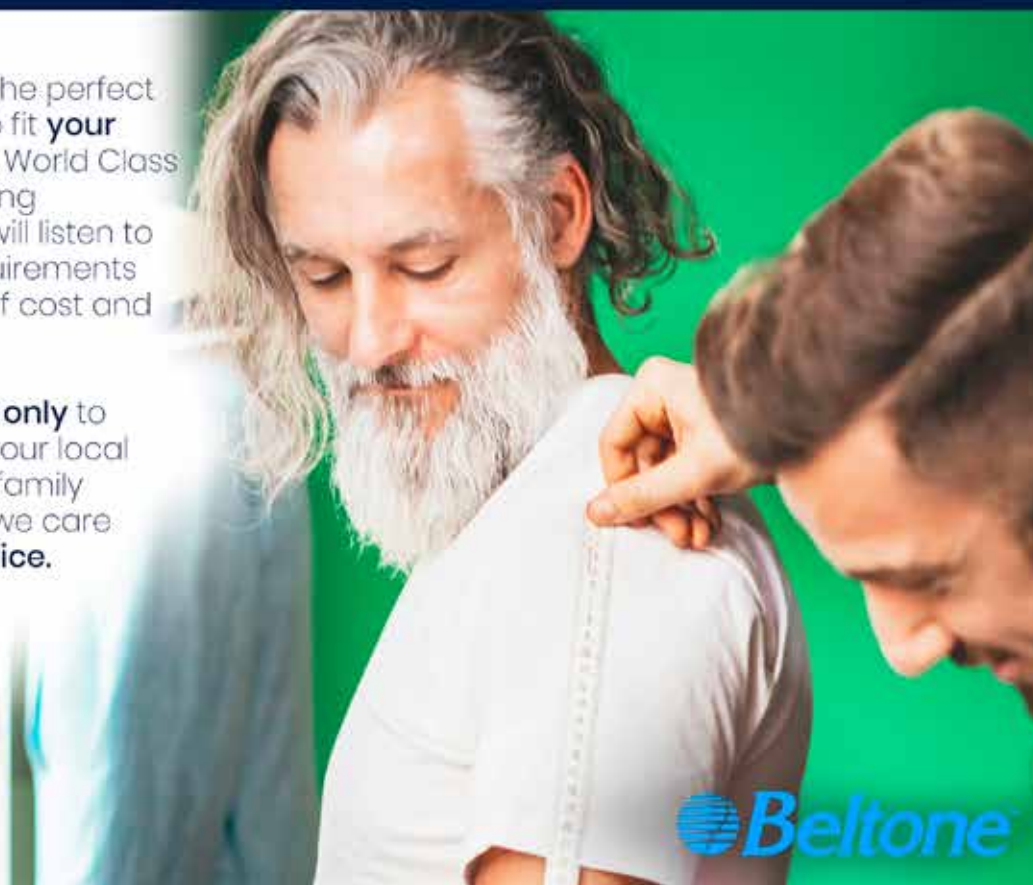
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