



Hello reader

A warm welcome to Millhouse and other readers,  
What a disappointing summer it has been with the stormy weather culminating in Cyclone Gabrielle's devastation. Many have experienced restlessness, worries, anxiety, mood changes and unrefreshing sleep. I was interested to listen to Radio NZ's Jim Mora interview [Dr Melis Yilmaz Balban](#) a researcher at Stanford University studying stress reduction techniques. In the busyness of life few dedicate themselves to hours of mindfulness meditation or even exercise, but the Stanford researchers found that people who engage in cyclic 'sighing' - breathing exercises - for five minutes each day had a greater reduction in stress, improved mood, less anxiety than those engaging in mindfulness meditation. Try the simple exercise in below and I think you might be surprised how much better you feel.

### **SIMPLE BREATHING EXERCISE**

Set a timer for 5 minutes.  
Sit in a chair or lie down.  
Inhale (through nose) slowly to expand your lungs.  
Slightly exhale (through mouth) and take a smaller quicker second IN breath (nose).  
Then slowly fully exhale (mouth), sighing, all your breath.  
Vocalising helps.  
Repeat for 5 minutes then breathe normally.

### **In this month's newsletter**

- A simple exercise for handling stress
- Warning about whooping cough and value of Vitamin D for babies
- Doctors' specialist areas
- Making use of our Nurse Practitioner and Health Improvement Coach
- Welcome to new staff Reece and Amanda on Reception and Practice Nurse Cindy
- Flu and Meningococcal vaccinations

*and Dr Ric begins a new series  
on Changes towards a Positive  
Lifestyle -  
this month  
Reducing Alcohol*

*(The four country Covid review is discontinued but Dr  
Ric will report occasionally.)*

**Sadly, another baby died of whooping cough** infection at the beginning of April, the third in NZ this year; another 11 pertussis cases have been reported. [Dr William Rainger](#) of the National Public Health Service has expressed concern that "the ratio of fatalities to identified cases is much higher than in previous years and there may be undetected spread in the community." Please vaccinate your children against childhood illnesses.

The pertussis outbreak reminded me again of the protective influence Vitamin D has on the immune system of babies and infants. One [worldwide study](#) found that 54% pregnant woman and 72% of newborns were vitamin D deficient with levels less than 50 nmol/litre. A [controlled trial at Starship](#) a few years ago demonstrated that babies with low Vitamin D had more than twice the risk of developing

respiratory infections. Please consider supplementing your children with Vitamin D as we go into winter, and don't feed them high sugar foods and drinks as these inhibit the body's immune protective function.

## Millhouse News

Gabriella is a highly skilled and insightful **Nurse Practitioner**, trained to diagnose, investigate, and manage illness as well as prescribing treatment. She is a valued member of the medical team and has a particular interest in child, teenager and women's health and the management of diabetes. Some of you will have experienced her skill in assessing acute problems when your doctor has been unavailable. Don't hesitate to see her to discuss any concerns and she will liaise with your doctor.

Vani our **Health Improvement Practitioner** is now working side-by-side with the Millhouse Medical Team, using brief targeted behaviour changes to enhance preventive and clinical care for mental health, substance addiction, emotional distress and for any suffering adverse effects of chronic illness. Vani is a skilled therapist who will explore wellness strategies with you. Don't hesitate to ring Reception for a free 30min appointment to discuss your concerns and crises.

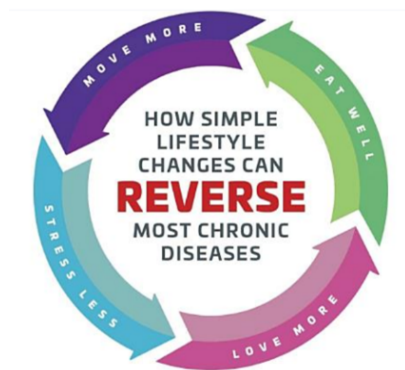
**Staff changes** continue in **Reception** with Brianna opting for a gap year, and Adam commencing university. In their place, you will meet the friendly newcomers Amanda and Reece. We wish Practice Nurse Phyll well as she has left to commence a new position - no more congested daily travel from Pukekohe! We have been fortunate to replace her with experienced Practice Nurse Cindy.

**Having your own Doctor** is a core value of the Millhouse clinic. When registering at Millhouse, you select a doctor of your choice, and we endeavour to maintain that ongoing relationship.

However, there are times, especially during emergencies or when your doctor is on holiday, when you will need to consult another member of the medical team - a doctor, Gabriella our Nurse Practitioner or one of the Practice Nurses. The website outlines [our doctors' special interest areas](#) and the alternate languages in which they can communicate.

## Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Positive lifestyle choices have far reaching impact for 'undoing' or reversing a wide range of chronic diseases.



In 2018 the Harvard School of Public Health [30-year large-scale study](#) found that those adopting five healthy lifestyle habits had an 82% lower risk of dying from cardiovascular disease, 65% less chance of dying from cancer and a 74% lower risk of dying from all other causes. Those who were not overweight, never smoked, exercised an average of 30 minutes each day, did not drink alcohol to excess and ate a healthy diet lived on average 12 - 14 years longer.

[Read more on this...download full newsletter.](#)

Be proactive this year; why not choose one small change in this area in favour of a healthy lifestyle?

## Alcohol in Moderation - Good or Bad?

Wine and beer have been brewed since antiquity and will always be with us. In the 1980's it was suggested the French Paradox (France's low incidence of heart disease, despite their high-fat diet) might be their consumption of red wine.

Today it is universally agreed that excess alcohol consumption - binge and heavy drinking - is **bad** for your health. But what about alcohol in moderation?

In January Canada's Public Health leaders announced a [change in health advice](#), advising that consuming **No Alcohol** improves health, drinking less than two drinks per week minimises any adverse risk, and drinking more than that has harmful consequences. Canadian media report a mixed reaction to the advice but that 40% of Canadians are considering [reducing their consumption](#) of alcohol.

Alcohol consumption is also a contentious topic in NZ. Our Parliament has recently defeated a Private Members Bill which endeavoured to limit liquor outlets and alcohol sponsorship in sport. Contrary to popular opinion that alcohol prolongs life chiefly by reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, the World Heart Federation states "alcohol is not good for the heart."

Want to know more about Canada's Alcohol advice?

[Go to the full article on our website....](#)

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Noho ora mai - look after yourself and stay well.  
Ma te wa, Dr Richard J Coleman