



Kia ora koutou reader - warm greetings to the Millhouse community and other readers.

As the weather begins to brighten, we welcome spring with its energy and optimism. Warm thank-yous are due to the entire Millhouse Team for their commitment and teamwork while I was on leave. The willingness to go the extra mile has been deeply appreciated,

The winter brought a sharp rise in respiratory illnesses across New Zealand, with influenza, RSV, and COVID-19 infections creating extra pressure. [The new COVID variant](#) Nimbus (NB.1.8.1) became the dominant strain mid-year. Although it spreads more easily, it has not so far been linked to increased hospitalisations or deaths,

However public-health experts are now reporting a [rise in measles cases](#) across the motu, 17 infections have been confirmed with Health New Zealand describing the [risk as "escalating."](#) Only about 82 percent of two-year-olds are fully immunised, and among Māori coverage of under-5s is closer to 72 percent – well below the 95 percent needed to achieve herd immunity.

Please check your children's vaccination records and book catch-ups with [our nursing team](#) if needed. Strong community immunity protects our most vulnerable — including babies too young to be vaccinated and those unable to receive the MMR vaccine for medical reasons.

Millhouse News

We're continuing our search for a new GP or Nurse Practitioner to join the team and help with the workload. In the meantime, thank you for understanding—it's much appreciated while we ensure appointments remain available and care stays personal and consistent.

If you're unwell and need urgent help..... If your problem is acute, and you can't book an appointment online, please phone to speak with one of our nurses. They'll assess your situation and arrange a timely appointment; in an emergency they will coordinate ambulance transport to Middlemore.

In this month's newsletter

- Updates on infectious diseases
- ADHD assessments must still be referred to Community Mental Health
- Pressure on appointments until doctor replacement found
- Finding a balance when considering private Health insurance
- More on GLP-1 agonists (obesity drugs)

and Dr Ric introduces the ***hormone theory of obesity*** found in Dr Jason Fung's work on

Fasting as part of Dietary Management



Dont forget our **in-house Health Coach, Rebecca**, who is available to help you with practical support for better sleep, relaxation, weight management, diabetes care, and blood pressure control.

Our Health Improvement Practitioner, Vani, offers brief, focused guidance to support mental health, substance-use concerns, emotional wellbeing, and coping with chronic illness.

Both Rebecca and Vani work closely with your healthcare team—and their sessions are available at no cost.

ADHD Assessment and Treatment

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder affects about 5 percent of New Zealand children and 3 percent of adults. [New national guidelines](#) now allow specially trained GPs and Nurse Practitioners to assess, diagnose, and prescribe for, ADHD, thus making care more accessible.

Each assessment includes careful screening to rule out medical & neurological disorders (thyroid, sleep, hearing & vision impairment), psychological conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, autism & substance abuse, and developmental & learning disabilities. This process ensures accurate diagnosis and safe treatment and planning.

Our medical team **have not completed** ADHD assessment training and accreditation. Until they do, we will refer patients to the [Community Mental Health Service](#) at Counties Manukau. There are long wait times for this public service; private referral can be made to the Howick [Psychology Group](#) or other specialist providers.

Comprehensive private assessment typically takes 3–4 hours, and is self-funded, but once a formal diagnosis is confirmed, it does provide the necessary documentation **to enable ongoing GP monitoring and prescribing**.

Health Insurance?

Dr Coleman gives his opinion on Balancing Cost, Cover, and Common Sense in the decisions around health insurance and provides a useful chart of elective surgery costs. [Read more in the full newsletter...](#)



Noho ora mai - stay well and care for yourself.

Ma te wa, Dr Richard J Coleman

Obesity and Fasting

For most of history, humans faced frequent food shortages, leading our bodies to store energy as fat and conserve it during scarcity. In today's environment, processed foods loaded with sugar and additives override appetite controls, causing constant hunger and a spike in obesity and type 2 diabetes. In the [last newsletter](#), I covered GLP-1 agonist drugs (Ozempic, Wegovy), which copy a natural gut hormone that slows digestion, increases fullness, and reduces hunger. About 30% of users lose significant weight, but long-term usefulness is uncertain.

On holiday in Canada, I caught up on reading [Dr Jason Fung's](#) series of books, including *The Obesity Code*, and *The Diabetes Code*. This Canadian kidney specialist became disheartened treating diabetes patients with end-stage kidney failure. He wondered if the disease could be prevented before reaching that point? His research led him to the "**hormone theory of obesity**"—the idea that chronic weight gain and type 2 diabetes are driven by persistently high insulin levels.

Insulin helps the body use and store glucose from our food, but any extra carbohydrate is turned into visceral fat. Normally, insulin rises after meals and lowers in between. However, changing dietary patterns and highly processed foods can keep insulin continuously elevated, giving the body little time to recover. Furthermore, in obesity and type 2 diabetes, the body resists the action of insulin, leading to more fat storage. Some diabetes drugs raise insulin and weight, while newer ones lower both. Stress and poor sleep can also contribute to obesity.

Dr Fung's [Intensive Dietary Management Program](#) shows that fasting (short, longer or intermittent) helps reset insulin receptors and restore metabolic balance. Practising the ancient ritual of fasting can help people lose weight, reverse diabetes, and reduce cravings.

I'll write more about fasting next time.

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