

# info matters



A newsletter to Medical Specialists and GPs throughout the Auckland, Hamilton and Northland regions

November 2014

## Healthpoint News

### Auckland Community Pharmacies are now being profiled on [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz)

Home What are you looking for? Sign in Register

Pharmacy in Central Auckland

BY LOCATION  
Central Auckland  
Select a subregion...

BY SERVICE  
Pharmacy

REFINE MY SEARCH  
☐ Open late night

Search for Pharmacy within Central Auckland

We have 57 pharmacies in Central Auckland.

Browse by Suburb

Avondale CBD Meadowbank Mission Bay Onehunga Otahuhu

The three Metro Auckland DHBs are supporting all community pharmacies within the region to profile their professional pharmacy services on the new pharmacy section of [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz)

Community pharmacies are often the first health professional contact for many patients. Services provided by community pharmacies are varied and while there are common services provided by most community pharmacies, there are often some differences.

**Those professional services profiled include the following amongst others:**

- smoking cessation service
- aseptic dispensing
- clozapine dispensing
- community pharmacy anticoagulant management service
- long-term conditions (LTC) service
- medicines use review service (MURS)

- methadone dispensing
- emergency contraceptive pill (ECP)
- influenza vaccines
- needle exchange
- trimethoprim dispensing

A webpage has been developed for each pharmacy and once this has been reviewed and approved is put live on the Healthpoint site. Each pharmacy page is accessible by interactive map, key word search or 'browse' by suburb. This is a great resource for GPs to refer patients to the nearest pharmacy which meets a specific need for them.

Over 200,000 people per month are using [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz) to access health service information. This is an easy way for pharmacy to have a significant web presence within the community.

[www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz)

To view go to: [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz)



## Electrophysiology & Radiofrequency Ablation

Auckland Heart Group and Mercy Angiography are pleased to report that we have a comprehensive private electrophysiology service at Mercy Angiography, for the investigation and treatment of cardiac rhythm problems.

We conduct complex procedures using 3D mapping technology in the treatment of Atrial Fibrillation (AF) with Pulmonary Vein Isolation (PVI) in selected patients.

In addition to radiofrequency ablation we use cryoablation to interrupt abnormal electrical circuits.

Health insurance companies cover most of these procedures according to agreed clinical guidelines. Drs David Heaven, Warren Smith, Nigel Lever, Andrew Gavin and Jonathan Skinner are nationally and internationally recognised experts in this area.

For more information please contact :

- ♥ Dr David Heaven [David.Heaven@middlemore.co.nz](mailto:David.Heaven@middlemore.co.nz)  
- Laura Kindley +64 9 623 1020
- ♥ Dr Warren Smith [WarrenS@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:WarrenS@adhb.govt.nz)  
- Joanna Teague +64 9 623 1020
- ♥ Dr Nigel Lever [admin@mercyangiography.co.nz](mailto:admin@mercyangiography.co.nz)  
- Maria McDonald +64 9 630 1961
- ♥ Dr Jonathan Skinner [admin@mercyangiography.co.nz](mailto:admin@mercyangiography.co.nz)  
- Maria McDonald +64 9 630 1961
- ♥ Dr Andrew Gavin [admin@mercyangiography.co.nz](mailto:admin@mercyangiography.co.nz)  
- Maria McDonald +64 9 630 1961
- ♥ Website: [www.mercyangiography.co.nz](http://www.mercyangiography.co.nz)



David Heaven



Nigel Lever



Jonathan Skinner



Warren Smith



Andrew Gavin



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Referrals: [ahg@heartgroup.co.nz](mailto:ahg@heartgroup.co.nz)  
[www.heartgroup.co.nz](http://www.heartgroup.co.nz)

## Dr Elizabeth Baird – Specialist Dermatologist

Elizabeth is a UK graduate who moved to NZ in 1985. She completed her dermatology training in NZ and Scotland.

She has been in private practice for 15 years. Remuera Dermatology offers a friendly and professional practice taking pride in high standards and quality care.

Elizabeth welcomes referrals.  
Urgent appointments are available.

Interests include:

- complete mole/skin/melanoma checks including surgical services
- acne, eczema, dermatitis, rosacea, psoriasis
- hair/nail disorders
- vulval dermatology.

Elizabeth is a Southern Cross Affiliated Provider for selected services.

**For appointments and enquiries:**  
**Ph: (09) 520 2586, Fax: (09) 520 2786**  
**Email: [appt@remueraderm.co.nz](mailto:appt@remueraderm.co.nz)**  
**[www.remueraderm.co.nz](http://www.remueraderm.co.nz)**



## Mr Murray Beagley – Plastic and Hand Surgeon

Murray Beagley offers a broad range of cosmetic, paediatric, skin cancer and reconstructive plastic surgery in his private practice - Plastic Surgery Auckland.

He is now a Southern Cross Affiliated Provider for skin lesion removal and skin cancer treatment.

Murray consults regularly in Whangarei, Warkworth and Pukekohe in addition to his Auckland clinics.

Murray's special interests include:

- dupuytren's fasciectomy and other complex hand surgery
- genitoplasty surgery (hypospadias, labiaplasty, circumcision)
- breast surgery and abdominoplasty
- otoplasty
- eyelid rejuvenation.

**Appointments in Remuera, Pukekohe, Warkworth and Whangarei**  
**Ph: (09) 529 2029, EDI: [mbeagley](mailto:mbeagley)**  
**Email: [manager@cosmeticsurgeon.org.nz](mailto:manager@cosmeticsurgeon.org.nz)**  
**[www.cosmeticsurgeon.org.nz](http://www.cosmeticsurgeon.org.nz)**



*\*For skin cancer diagnosis and treatment only.*

## Dr Paul Dawkins – Respiratory Physician

Paul Dawkins is a consultant respiratory physician and honorary senior lecturer at Middlemore Hospital. Interests include COPD, bronchiectasis and lung cancer.

He welcomes private referrals in conditions across the spectrum of respiratory medicine including sleep disordered breathing.

He has access to full lung function, sleep investigation laboratories and bronchoscopy facilities. He aims to provide a responsive, efficient and high quality respiratory opinion for local GPs.

He sees private patients fortnightly at Pukekohe Family Health Care.

**For appointments and enquiries: Ph: (09) 237 0280, Fax: (09) 238 3377**



## Fillan Healthcare

Based in St Heliers, Fillan Healthcare's vision is to provide the highest quality private mental healthcare in Auckland.

By having three psychiatrists and three psychologists in the same clinic we are able to offer prompt appointments for your patients and timely clinic letters to referrers after any consultation.

We offer comprehensive, evidence-based care for all mental health disorders and specialise in ADHD, depression, anxiety and alcohol use disorders. All of our psychologists are DBT trained.

**For appointments at eastMED, Ph: (09) 214 7284, Fax: (09) 963 7470**

## Mr Michael Flint – Orthopaedic Surgeon - Joint Replacement, Sports Surgery, Tumours

Michael Flint is an orthopaedic surgeon with special interests in hip and knee replacement and sports injuries of the knee and shoulder. He is also a recognised expert in the diagnosis and management of musculoskeletal tumours, giving advice to other NZ specialists in this challenging area.

He is a consultant surgeon at Middlemore Hospital in Auckland where he helps run the NZ Bone and Soft Tissue Sarcoma Unit as well as teaching medical students and junior staff.

Michael is in private practice where he is available for advice and management of problems involving the hip, knee and shoulder as well as musculoskeletal tumours.

**For further information and appointments at Mercy Specialist Centre:**  
**Ph: (09) 630 0214, Fax: (09) 630 3981, Healthlink EDI: [orthoclin](mailto:orthoclin)**  
**Email: [enquiries@orthoclin.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@orthoclin.co.nz)**





## FOCUS RADIOTHERAPY

Focus Radiotherapy is proud to have introduced Intrabeam single dose radiotherapy for breast cancer to New Zealand to replace the 3-6 weeks of daily radiotherapy in 30% of breast cancer patients. This is not a new technology; used in 1995 initially for brain malignancy and expanded to the breast in 1998. The evidence for its use is from the *Lancet* published Targit A Trial of over 3,500 women randomised in 33 centres in 11 countries. It showed this treatment to be non-inferior to the standard with it favoured in the following analyses: side-effect profile, toxicity, cosmesis, cost-benefit and patient preference. The key to its use is patient selection: women >45 years, solitary tumour <3 cm, grade 1 or 2, node negative and estrogen receptor positive.

Specialists include Dr Maria Pearse, Dr Belinda Scott, Dr Richard Harman, Dr Erica Whineray-Kelly.

Dr Stephen Benson from Mercy Breast Clinic is also accredited to deliver Intrabeam.

**For referrals/consultations please Ph: (09) 488 9179**

**Email: [info@aucklandbreastcentre.co.nz](mailto:info@aucklandbreastcentre.co.nz)**

**or [info@breastassociates.co.nz](mailto:info@breastassociates.co.nz)**

### Dr Jovina Goh – Endocrinologist, Diabetologist & Specialist Physician

Jovina is a NZ trained endocrinologist and specialist physician of Malaysian Chinese descent. She speaks fluent English and conversational Mandarin, Cantonese, Malay and Hokkien.

Jovina is currently working as a consultant at Middlemore Hospital and now offers a private clinic at the MacMurray Centre in Remuera.

She welcomes referrals for patients needing specialist care for all aspects of endocrinology and diabetes, including:

1. thyroid, parathyroid and calcium disorders
2. diabetes
3. osteoporosis and Paget's disease
4. pituitary and adrenal disorders
5. polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS); male hypogonadism
6. hypertension management.

**For appointments and enquiries, please contact the MacMurray Centre: Ph: (09) 550 1080, Fax: (09) 550 1081  
5 MacMurray Road, Remuera, Auckland**



**If you are interested in profiling  
yourself and your services please  
email: [info@healthpoint.co.nz](mailto:info@healthpoint.co.nz)  
or phone (09) 630 0828**

### Dr Phill McChesney – Gynaecologist, Laparoscopic Surgeon, Fertility Subspecialist

Phill is a locally trained gynaecologist who has returned to the Waikato.

He has subspecialty expertise in:

- complex endometriosis
- advanced laparoscopic surgery
- operative hysteroscopy
- menstrual disorders
- PCOS
- reproductive endocrinology
- fertility.

Phill also welcomes general gynaecology, pelvic floor and colposcopy referrals.

In addition to general gynaecology, Phill has undertaken 3 years of advanced training, making him one of the few fertility specialists in NZ to complete the Certificate in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (CREI) subspecialist qualification.

**Appointments in Hamilton, Te Awamutu and Tauranga.**

**For further information and appointments:**

**Ph: (07) 839 2603, Fax: 07 839 2604**



PRM



### MercyAscot Neck Lump Clinic

New Zealand's first truly 'one stop' specialist neck lump clinic.

Now there is a service that provides a specialist radiologist, pathologist and surgeon in each of our Neck Lump Clinics. Your patient receives an immediate diagnosis and treatment plan at one appointment. Contact our practice manager for an appointment today:

**Email: [info@ahns.co.nz](mailto:info@ahns.co.nz), Mob: (022) 450 2245**

**Healthlink EDI: [aklheadn](mailto:aklheadn)**

**To find out more about our head and neck services visit the MercyAscot website [www.mercyascot.co.nz](http://www.mercyascot.co.nz)**

### Making Endoscopy easy six days a week

MercyAscot Endoscopy has extended its service to six days a week so your patients have the opportunity to have their procedure on Saturday.

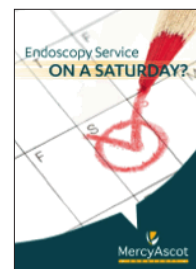
They have also made referring your patients directly to Auckland's largest group of leading endoscopists easy. You or your staff can simply:

- call 0800 4 ENDOSCOPY (0800 43 63 67)
- fax a referral form\* or
- refer online via Healthlink EDI: [escopema](http://escopema).

Together with the 22 endoscopists who work with them, MercyAscot Endoscopy offers the most comprehensive service in Auckland: gastroscopy, colonoscopy, bronchoscopy, ERCP and TOE at two convenient locations - Takapuna and Epsom.

Recent quality audit results and patient satisfaction surveys point to the outstanding care they provide for patients and their relentless commitment to quality.

**\*If you do not have a MercyAscot referral pad please call their friendly team on: (09) 623 5725 (Epsom) or (09) 486 4346 (Takapuna) or visit [www.mercyascotendoscopy.co.nz](http://www.mercyascotendoscopy.co.nz)**



## Mr John Mutu-Grigg – Orthopaedic Surgeon

John is a NZ trained orthopaedic surgeon. After training he spent a further two years in some of North America's most prestigious hospitals, sub-specialising in hip and knee replacement and hand and wrist surgery.

John's practice is a combination of both general and sub-specialist orthopaedic surgery. He is happy to consult and/or provide advice to GPs on any orthopaedic condition.

He has a public post at North Shore Hospital and consults in private around Auckland. He has rooms in Henderson (west), Ponsonby and Ascot (central), Ormiston (south and east) and from January, Albany (north). He also operates around Auckland for patient convenience.

John works very hard to see all referrals within 2-3 weeks. If it is urgent and the patient is happy to travel he can see patients within a week.

**For appointments Ph: (09) 845 2509, Fax: (09) 845 2510**  
**Healthlink EDI: johnmutu, Email: john@oxfordorthopaedics.co.nz**  
**www.johnmutugrigg.co.nz**  
**www.oxfordorthopaedics.co.nz**



## Jonathan Wheeler – Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon

Jonathan has been working in Auckland since 2010 after returning from overseas fellowships in Brisbane, Australia and Toronto, Canada. He is one of two Plastic Surgeons in New Zealand who have completed sub-specialty craniofacial surgery training through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and has appointments as an honorary senior lecturer at the University of Auckland and an associate editor for the plastic surgery education network.

Middlemore Hospital and Starship Children's Hospital are where his public practice is based and his private practice is in Remuera. He is experienced in the following areas:

- skin surgery and treatment of skin cancer and melanoma
- Southern Cross Affiliated Provider for skin cancer diagnosis and treatment
- body surgery including abdominoplasty, liposuction, breast reductions and augmentation
- facial restoration and rejuvenation
- adolescent and paediatric skin and soft tissue problems.

**For appointments and enquiries Ph: (09) 529 5782, Fax: (09) 524 6043**  
**www.plasticsurgeons.co.nz**



## Dr Paul Ockelford – Haematologist, Haematology@Gilgit

Paul is consulting at 15 Gilgit Rd Specialist Centre, Epsom. He is available to see patients with both malignant and non-malignant disorders of the blood, including those with abnormalities of bleeding and clotting. He is a senior clinician with wide experience.

Paul was previously the Director of Clinical Services at Diagnostic MedLab and is a former chairman of the NZ Medical Association.

He works part-time at Auckland City Hospital where he directs the Thrombosis Unit and maintains an active clinical research programme.

**For further information and appointments: Ph: (09) 623 7506, Fax: (09) 623 7519, Email: surgeons@ihug.co.nz**



## Mr Rupert van Rooyen – Orthopaedic Surgeon

Rupert came to New Zealand in 2002 from South Africa, where he obtained his MBChB at the University of Stellenbosch. He completed orthopaedic training in New Zealand, and returns from fellowships in musculoskeletal oncology and lower limb arthroplasty in Brisbane and Bologna.

He is currently at Waitemata DHB, and offers his services in private where he is happy to see patients with hip and knee problems, and also of a general orthopaedic nature.

He is setting up his rooms at 119 Apollo Drive in Albany, and also consults at Fred Thomas Health in Takapuna and Silverdale Medical Centre.

**For further information and appointments:**  
**Ph: (09) 280 3344, Fax: (09) 280 3345, Mobile: (021) 529 366**  
**Healthlink EDI: rupertvr, Email: rupert@aklorthopaedics.co.nz**



## Mr Matthew Tomlinson - Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Surgeon

Matt is an orthopaedic surgeon with a dedicated interest in the area of foot and ankle surgery. He has considerable expertise in dealing with all types of foot and ankle problems with over 15 years of experience in this specialty area.

Some of the areas that Matt deals with include:

- arthritic conditions
- accidents affecting the lower limb or foot
- sports injuries
- deformities
- bunions
- minimally invasive surgery
- congenital problems
- arthroscopy of the foot and ankle
- ankle replacement
- revision surgery.



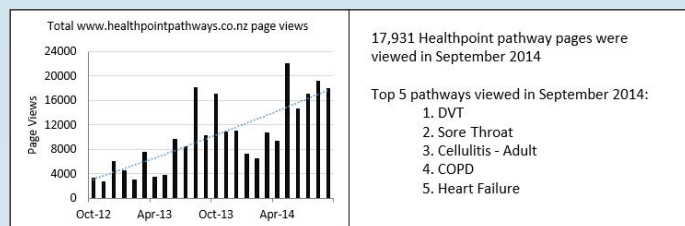
**For further information and appointments at Mercy Specialist Centre:**  
**Ph: (09) 630 0214, Fax: (09) 630 3981, Healthlink EDI: orthoclin**  
**Email: enquiries@orthoclinic.co.nz**

**www.healthpoint.co.nz**



## Regional News

### Northern Region Clinical Pathways: News



#### New Pathways added in September 2014:

- Asthma - Acute Paediatric
- Asthma Management - Chronic
- Cough > 4 Weeks

#### New Pathways added in August 2014:

- Heart Failure
- Constipation - Paediatric
- An updated version of the Sore Throat Pathway (2014)

#### New Pathways added in July 2014:

- At Risk Individuals

#### Pathways Currently in Development:

- Acute Lower Back Pain
- Hoarseness
- Rheumatic Fever
- Pneumonia in Aged Residential Care
- Women's Health (Heavy Menstrual Bleeding)
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome

#### About

Clinical pathways are a tool to promote and optimise organised and efficient care. This allows for patient-focused evidence-based best practice. By application of agreed process management, pathways provide continuous quality improvement and standardise care processes.

The development team for each pathway published on this site include the Regional Work Program, the Northern Region District Health Boards and a group of specialists and general practitioners. Please use the feedback buttons on the pathways if you would like to provide your feedback.

Healthpoint Pathways currently has 50 pathways live with new clinical pathways added every month.

## Auckland DHB

### GP training up-skilling at Auckland DHB



Are you interested in learning more about the management of problems in ORL, general medicine and dermatology?

These departments have agreed to host GPs in outpatient clinics, in theatre or on ward rounds depending on your interest. If you are interested in attending please contact Rosamond D'Souza at Auckland DHB on: (09) 307 4949 ext. 23208 or email [rosamond@souza@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:rosamond@souza@adhb.govt.nz). Dr Stephen Child who is organising this project will then liaise with the department and yourself to organise a suitable time.

### Alliance Agreement

Auckland-Waitemata DHBs have signed a Health Alliance agreement for primary care. Deputy Director of Funding Tim Wood says all signatories believe it will lead to significant improvements in services for enrolled patients. In addition, Tim sees this as a strengthening of the relationships between Mana Whenua and Mataawaka organisations, the Boards and PHOs. The plan, at a high level, is to drive improvement by:

- creating the conditions for patient and whanau-determined care through the locality approach
- increase integration of services and social services building capability and capacity across the sector supporting, where appropriate, infrastructure development within primary care
- reducing health inequalities through a reorientation of the sector
- supporting clinical governance through engagement with clinicians and design of services and change processes
- driving performance through quality improvement, transparent reporting and effective mechanisms for public accountability.

## Northland DHB



Over the last few months there have been a few updates to the material on the various sites:

1. update on the DEXA criteria making it clear that repeat DEXA requests need to be discussed with a geriatrician prior to request
2. guidance on risk assessment and management of patients with a family history of breast cancer.

Based on feedback we will be working on making the options for vasectomy available on the urology site given there is no publicly funded service.

With the advent of a new drug for managing MS we will work with Nicole McGrath to develop guidelines and when to consider these and how to access them.

If there are other gaps in information on hospital services, please let us know so we can address them.

We do see a steady stream of eReferrals coming in to the wrong service. These appear to largely be from locums so can we ask that you orientate them to the local Northland services. Ensuring they can access Healthpoint and know where to find information to guide their hospital referrals would prevent delays in patient care.

**Di Davis**

**GP Liaison Northland DHB**  
**021 830 938**

### Counties Manukau Health

#### Counties Manukau Health Volunteers now live

Volunteers play an important part helping with patient and visitor experiences and there are many volunteers helping at Counties Manukau Health.

Middlemore Hospital has a variety of volunteer roles and over the next months will be expanding numbers to an army of volunteers assisting all over the hospital.

No medical training or experience is needed and training will be given. And if you are a medical professional not now practicing, we'd love to hear from you.

The types of roles our volunteers do are:

- direct visitors to wards and answer general questions
- make tea for patients in the discharge lounge as they await a lift home
- collect patient feedback on their stay and what could be improved
- read a book or play cards with a patient who doesn't have visitors
- help feed a patient, or help them walk after an operation
- garden; CM Health would like to establish a volunteer gardening crew to maintain our gardens and develop some new ones.

If you're interested email [Dot.McKeen@middlemore.co.nz](mailto:Dot.McKeen@middlemore.co.nz) who will provide the relevant application forms and explain the process, which includes a police screening.

#### Counties Manukau Health bio-containment facility

CM Health has established a bio-containment facility to treat and contain highly infectious diseases, following international concern about the latest outbreak of Ebola virus disease.

While the risk to New Zealand from Ebola remains unlikely but possible, CM Health has worked with the Ministry of Health, Auckland Regional Public Health Service, other DHBs and primary care to develop a comprehensive plan to respond to any suspected case of Ebola in a traveller arriving from overseas, or family or friend who has had close contact with a traveller.

The team at CM Health has expertise in treating serious infectious diseases, and staff are trained and prepared to care for patients in the unlikely event of an Ebola case presenting to Middlemore Hospital.

Information on the bio-containment facility can be found on CM Health Infectious Diseases Healthpoint page.

#### Recently added or amended guidelines

CM Health Urology have developed multiple guidelines and pathways and these are now live on their site.

#### Access, training and feedback

If you have any GPs or practice nurses new to your practice or who may like a quick training session on accessing and using Healthpoint please contact Nikki Rhind, Primary Care Communications Co-ordinator, and she will arrange a time to visit.

**If you have any feedback or requests for referral information please either contact Nikki Rhind directly or click on the feedback box found on all clinical information pages.**  
**[Nikki.rhind@cmdhb.org.nz](mailto:Nikki.rhind@cmdhb.org.nz) Ph: (09) 276 0044 ext. 9077**



### Waitemata DHB

#### Services undergoing a complete information review



As a regional service Community Alcohol and Drug Services (CADs) information for referrers and the public has undergone a complete review with significant changes. The new information will outline more clearly service expectations, deliverables and referral criteria and a number of GP resources.

Specific service information has been split into the following:

CADs Counselling Services, CADs Medical Detoxification Services, CADs Auckland Opiate Treatment Service and CADs Altered High Youth Services.

There are also great resources and information available for medical professionals including:

Alcohol and other drug resource kit

Patient presenting to GP requesting support to withdraw from alcohol

Alcohol abuse – assessment

Alcohol screening tools

MOH legal requirements for prescribing and other.

**The Elective Surgery Centre (ESC)** at North Shore Hospital has also updated information on what they provide, access criteria and general information for the public.

#### Northern Region Fertility Service

The Northern Region Fertility Service (NRFS) provides coordination of referrals for funded fertility services for the Northern Region publicly (Auckland, Waitemata, Counties Manukau and Northland region).

From May 1st 2014, there were three providers of publicly funded fertility services in the Northern Region.

#### These are:

- Fertility Plus
- Repromed
- Fertility Associates

The three facilities offer a range of specialist Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) assessment and treatment. If you have patients who would benefit from and are eligible for this service please go to the service page on Healthpoint for all the referral criteria and expectations.

Healthpoint Limited manages a web based portal of information about health services, which helps the public and referrers better understand and use health services.  
[www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz)

Better understanding means more effective use, leading to better health outcomes and less cost.





## Dr Anil Sharma – Gynaecologist

**FRCOG FRANZCOG DGM Dip Legal Aspects Med Pract**

Anil is UK and NZ trained and has a special interest in HMB, urogynaecology, endometriosis and fibroids. He also undertakes advanced hysteroscopy, laparoscopic hysterectomy and ovarian cystectomy. He also offers colposcopy and loop excision (LA). His clinic has a nurse manager, a pelvic floor physiotherapist and a urodynamics nurse. He believes in informed choice where treatment options exist and this includes hysterectomy, Mirena and Novasure Ablation. He has the largest NZ series of the latter. His design award winning clinic is at Ascot Central and he undertakes visiting clinics in the East and North Shore.

**Enquiries and appointments practice manager - Anne Whineray**

**Ph: (09) 520 0745, Fax: (09) 520 0743**

[practice.manager@dranilsharma.co.nz](mailto:practice.manager@dranilsharma.co.nz) | [www.dranilsharma.co.nz](http://www.dranilsharma.co.nz)

## Heavy Menstrual Bleeding (HMB)

HMB is excessive menstrual loss (around 20% of women) that interferes with a woman's physical, social, emotional and / or material quality of life. There are several effective treatment options available so it is ethically and medico-legally appropriate to discuss these. A woman's perception of the disruption her HMB causes is the important determinant of subsequent treatment.

Causes can be physical (endometrial polyps, fibroids, adenomyosis and most importantly but least commonly, malignancy and hyperplasia). Non-physical causes include dysfunctional hormonal cycles (the overall commonest cause), coagulopathies and iatrogenic (e.g. copper IUCD). A history (including severity, erratic versus regular bleeding and other symptoms including postcoital and intermenstrual bleeding) and a bimanual and speculum exam are useful to plan subsequent management.

### USEFUL TESTS

- FBC & ferritin (eligible for Pharmac Mirena if Hb <120 or ferritin <16)
- HCG if pregnancy possible / suspected
- tests for PCOS if suspected
- coagulation tests and / or TFTs if suspected
- current smear.

### RISK FACTORS FOR ENDOMETRIAL HYPERPLASIA

- obesity
- age over 45 years
- nullipara
- PCOS
- unopposed oestrogen therapy / Tamoxifen
- FH of endometrial cancer.

### REFER TO GYNAECOLOGY

- where 3 months of medical treatment for above patients has failed
- any irregular or erratic bleeding
- uterus size greater than 12/40 (needs USS if any pelvic mass)
- significant anaemia
- risk factors for endometrial hyperplasia (see other table)
- endometrial thickness on scan > 12mm
- fibroid(s) >3cm.

### WHO CAN BE MANAGED IN GENERAL PRACTICE?

- these patients don't need endometrial biopsy or scan before medical treatment
- regular cycle
- normal uterine size on examination
- no risk factors for endometrial hyperplasia (see other table).

### MEDICAL TREATMENTS

- Iron therapy.
- Cyclical Tranexamic Acid (1-1.5g QDS for up to 5 days of menses) +/- NSAID.
- COCP.
- Provera 10mg TDS for 3 weeks then taper every 3rd day (effective at stopping very heavy bleeding).
- The LNG-IUS (Mirena) is an efficacious reversible contraceptive device. It generally offers satisfaction rates for treatment of HMB in up to 80% with around 20% amenorrhoea at one year. Women can have 3-6 months of irregular bleeding / light spotting). Side effects include weight gain, depression, acne, and headaches. Overall a reasonably well-tolerated low invasive treatment option for women with uteri smaller than 12/40.

### HYSTERECTOMY

- Hysterectomy eliminates HMB and is also indicated for large fibroids and endometrial cancer. Whilst normal ovaries are usually conserved at hysterectomy, there is a small risk of premature menopause and possibly a small increased risk of prolapse. The surgery is major in nature and involves a 2-4 day stay with 4-6 weeks for full recovery on average. (If submucous fibroids are the cause these can be resected hysteroscopically).

### NOVASURE ABLATION

- This is an impedance-limited (safety mechanism) radio-frequency thermal endometrial ablation (usually as a day case under GA in NZ). Suitable patients have a thorough evaluation including hysteroscopy D and C at the time and a relatively normal sized uterus. No further pregnancies should be planned as these can implant on the myometrium leading to complications. Future contraception is needed (e.g. condoms, vasectomy or concurrent tubal ligation). Over 2 million procedures have been performed worldwide and the 5-year satisfaction rate is above 90% with amenorrhoea in up to 75% of women. Contraindications include previous classical caesarean section or incisional myomectomy. Side effects include cramping for 1-2 days and a thin watery discharge for a few weeks. Complications such as thermal bowel injury are rare, estimated to be less than 1 in 10,000.



### CONCLUSION

Management is not always straightforward but if in doubt always consider a transvaginal USS and possible referral. A pipelle biopsy can be of use.

A more detailed article is available please email [practice.manager@dranilsharma.co.nz](mailto:practice.manager@dranilsharma.co.nz).