



July 2026

### Fun Fact

#### Beating the winter blues

A lot of people feel sad over winter and their mood can be quite low. There is a condition called SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) that relates to a significant mood drop over winter. We think it has something to do with how your body processes light, and with movement and routine. Australian winters

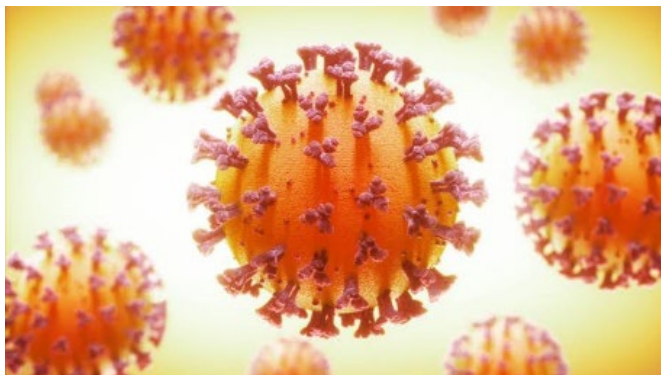


bring shorter days and longer nights and our internal biological clocks can fall out of sync and lead to lower serotonin levels (serotonin is the 'happy' hormone). June 21 was the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year for Australia, and after that the days start to become longer. To combat the winter blues make sure you get some light exposure within an hour of waking up, make your house as light as possible during autumn and winter, and sit close to windows as often as you can. Getting outside as much as possible and exercising regularly also helps lift the winter blues as does a regular sleep schedule and healthy diet.

### Health Promotion

#### Protection against pneumonia

The government are funding a new vaccine for pneumonia, called Capvaxive. We have seen a lot of changes to pneumonia vaccines over the last decade. Many of our elderly have been vaccinated with Pneumovax 23 and more recently Prevenar 13. Children are also vaccinated against Pneumonia. Capvaxive (21vPCV) is the new standard pneumococcal vaccine for adults in Australia. Those eligible for this vaccine are adults aged 65 and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults aged 25 and over,



and individuals over 18 years with specific risk conditions such as severe asthma. If you have previously received a different pneumococcal vaccine, you will need to wait 12 months from your last vaccine in order to receive the new pneumococcal vaccine. Speak with your doctor if you think you qualify.



### Did you know?



#### You could be missing out!

We're getting to the time of year when you might have paid enough out of pocket medical expenses to have reached your Medicare safety net. This means your rebate on medical services is higher, and your out-of-pocket costs much lower for the rest of the calendar year. But there's a trick to it: if you have more than one person on your Medicare card, then you need to confirm each year who is in your family to get these higher rebates. Medicare will notify you when you need to do this – either through a myGov Inbox message or by post –

so look out for those. You can also go onto your myGov app, select 'Medicare' then 'Safety Net', and the app will tell you whether it's time for you to confirm who is in your family. While you're in the app, you could also select the 'MyMedicare' tab and make sure that you're enrolled with Merri-bek Family Doctors as your preferred practice.

### Heart Food



Enjoy with us this beautiful and thought-provoking poem by 20th century Australian poet Judith Wright

#### At Cooloolah

The blue crane fishing in Cooloolah's twilight  
has fished there longer than our centuries.  
He is the certain heir of lake and evening,  
and he will wear their colour till he dies;

but I'm a stranger, come of a conquering people.  
I cannot share his calm, who watch his lake,  
being unloved by all my eyes delight in  
and made uneasy, for an old murder's sake.

Those dark-skinned people who once named Cooloolah  
knew that no land is lost or won by wars  
for earth is spirit; the invader's feet will tangle  
in nets there and his blood be thinned by fears.

**Merri-bek Family Doctors**  
**223 Melville Rd, Brunswick West 3055**  
**ph. (03) 9383 2493 | [reception@mbfd.com.au](mailto:reception@mbfd.com.au)**