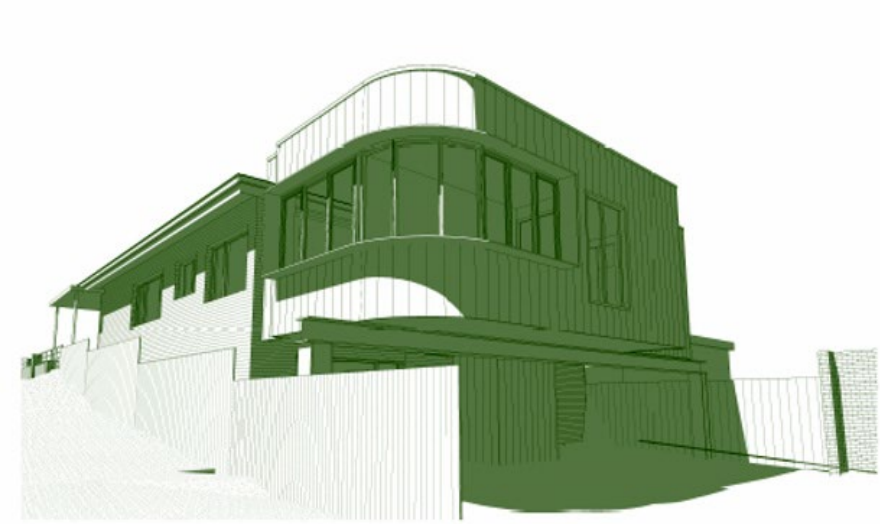
Merri-bek Family Doctors

Newsletter

October 2026

Fun Fact



You may have seen or heard of plans that went to council for Merri-bek Family Doctors. Good news! We now have a planning permit for an extension to the building over the car park. We plan to increase the size of our treatment room and have an additional consulting room and waiting area at the rear of the building. We aim for minimal disruption to our day-to-day running so hopefully our patients won't be too inconvenienced as we hope to build off-site. There will finally be indoor stairs to connect the building to the downstairs consulting room and pathology room. Above is an architect's drawing of the future extension.

Health Promotion

World Menopause Day

October 18th is World Menopause Day. At Merri-bek Family Doctors you can book in for a peri-menopause or menopause consultation for a thorough discussion of your symptoms, appropriate testing and development of an individualised plan to tackle this major change in women's lives.

Women develop so many changes at this time, including hot flushes, mood problems, weight gain, bladder symptoms, bone thinning, sexual problems. If unsure about the changes you are experiencing and what can be done it's best to book in and speak with your doctor for a 30 minute appointment for a full assessment.

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Pain Reprocessing Therapy

Pain Reprocessing Therapy (PRT) is an evidence-based treatment for chronic pain. Its goal is to significantly reduce or even eliminate pain. It was developed by Alan Gordon, a psychotherapist who specializes in the treatment of chronic pain. He developed the techniques of PRT to help himself and others recover from years of chronic pain and other symptoms.

PRT is based on the idea that most chronic pain states are due to the brain misinterpreting safe signals from the body as if they were dangerous. PRT retrains the brain to more accurately interpret signals from the body and break the cycle of chronic pain. It uses psychological techniques that promote a sense of safety in the body and in the world. It also aims to address some of the complex underlying factors that often drive pain.

In a 2021 study, Alan Gordon used PRT in people who had experienced chronic back pain for an average of 10 years. **After 4 weeks of PRT, about two thirds of these people were pain-free or nearly pain-free**. This study was a randomized-controlled trial – the gold standard study design to test a treatment. It was published in the prestigious JAMA Psychiatry journal. You can **read it here**:

Dr Julian Cassar is currently providing Pain Reprocessing Therapy at Merri-Bek Family Doctors. He is one of only a few doctors in Victoria who have completed PRT training through the **Pain Reprocessing Therapy Center**. To discuss this therapy further with Dr Julian, you can book in via our reception **or online**

Heart Food

Enjoy with us this poem by Lucille Clifton, 20th century American poet. Thankyou to Dr Julian Cassar for contributing this one.

won't you celebrate with me

won't you celebrate with me
what i have shaped into
a kind of life? i had no model.
born in Babylon
both nonwhite and woman
what did i see to be except myself?
i made it up
here on this bridge between

starshine and clay,
my one hand holding tight
my other hand; come celebrate
with me that everyday
something has tried to kill me
and has failed.