



BeWell news



Welcome to BeWell News for April 2023

Over the next few months the weather will change and get colder. As we approach winter, the changing of the seasons provides us with a timely reminder to review our vaccination status, not only for a COVID-19 booster that might be due, but also for the coming flu season. Free seasonal influenza vaccine is funded under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for people aged 65 and older.

In the colder months, it is important to be safe around portable heaters, and reduce the risk of falls from loose mats and rugs. In this edition we also have updates on our Social Inclusion programs and an Aged Care Navigator

program, which offers you advice on how to navigate the aged care system.

This year includes a small update to the Victorian public holiday calendar, with the **King's Birthday on 12 June** marking the first year of King Charles III.

We have lots of other information on how to stay safe at home in this edition. We look forward to bringing you regular updates throughout the year.

For more information about preparing for the flu season, visit:  www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/seasonal-influenza-vaccine

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Feedback on  9518 3553

 communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au

Next edition: August 2023

Public Holidays 2023

- Anzac Day: Tuesday 25 April
- King's Birthday: Monday 12 June

Council's Domestic Assistance and Respite Services are not available on public holidays.



STAYING SAFE AROUND MATS, RUGS AND RUNNERS

ARE YOU FALLING FOR IT?

Mats, rugs and runners. We've all had them, and some of us still do. The reasons may be decorative or functional (for wiping your feet or keeping your feet from feeling cold). Some use them to cover up unsightly flooring. Some of us have them just because "we always have".

However, loose rugs and mats are a trip hazard and the cause of falls for many in our community. As an occupational therapist who visits clients over the age of 65 in their own homes, I have come across mats that slide across the floor, mats that curl at the edge and rugs that buckle. Some rugs that may seem stable can still be a trip hazard due to the difference in terrain level. You only need the smallest change in height difference to catch your toes and tumble.

It's important to do what we can to minimise the risk of falls at home. According to New South Wales ambulance data, 70% of fall-related calls occurred at home or in a residential institution. A study by Rosen et al. in 2013 found that falls are a leading cause of unintentional injury among adults over the age of 65, with loose throw rugs and mats among the most frequently mentioned extrinsic factors to increase the risk of falls. The study also indicated that loose rugs and mats were among the most common object in the home associated with falls resulting in hip fractures.

WHAT CAN I DO?

If you can, remove all loose rugs and mats. Decreasing your risk of falls, and hence potential hospitalisation, far outweighs the reasons to keep them.

Other helpful considerations include ensuring that there is adequate lighting in walkways, hallways and access points and ensuring that you wear appropriate footwear (lightweight, rubber-soled, enclosed shoes which are well fitting). If you have a habit of wearing socks indoors (which is also a falls risk) consider fall preventative socks with anti-slip soles. Don't leave it until you have to remove these loose floor coverings because of a mishap. If it isn't you tripping on the mat, it may be a visitor to your home.

If it feels overwhelming to remove all your mats, start by removing one or two. Each one that you remove will keep you safer.

Marilyn Lee
Monash Council Occupational Therapist



ASK THE NURSE: TIPS FOR SKIN HEALTH

A common concern people have as they get older is the health of their skin. Skin loses collagen when it ages, resulting in wrinkles, dry skin, thinning skin and skin that appears paler and clearer. This leaves the skin more vulnerable to wounds or delayed wound healing.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR SKIN AS IT AGES

- **Use a soap-free hand wash or body wash**, which is gentle and nourishing for your skin. Brands such as Cetaphil, Dermaveen and QV make excellent, gentle soap-free washes.
- **Pat skin dry gently**, and never rub.
- **Always dry well under your abdomen, under your chest, in the groin area and between your toes.** If you are prone to redness in these areas, you can use an anti-rash powder such as Curash to prevent this. If the redness gets worse, speak to your GP as it may require an antifungal cream or other forms of treatment.
- **Apply moisturiser, especially to your arms and legs**, to help look after your skin. Apply moisturiser after washing and drying your skin.
- **Choose a moisturiser that works for you.** Cetaphil, Dermaveen and QV are commonly used brands. A cheaper alternative is Sorbolene.
- **Consider using moisturising lotion.** It goes on easier and often feels better on your skin than moisturising cream.
- **Consider purchasing a one-litre pump pack.** They are easy to use, lasts a long time and is economical.
- **Check areas of the body that are prone to pressure**, such as elbows, heels, toes, sacrum, buttocks and ears. These areas can become red and develop pressure wounds. If you have a pressure wound, consult your GP as soon as possible.
- **If you see an area of your skin turning red from pressure**, try to identify and change the cause of the pressure, for example adjusting the arm of your glasses, wearing different shoes, or trying to sleep in a different position.
- **Pawpaw cream** is great for behind ears and on lips.
- **When outside, protect your skin from UV rays with Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide:** Slip on a shirt, Slop on sunscreen, Slap on a hat, Seek shade and Slide on wrap-around sunglasses.



Tania Heywood
Monash Council Home Support Nurse

SAFETY TIPS FOR PORTABLE HEATERS

A portable heater can be a useful way to ward off the cold in autumn and winter, but it can also be a fire hazard if not used properly. If you use a portable space heater, make sure you follow these safety tips:



- Do not place heaters under desks, inside cupboards, or in small/confined spaces without proper ventilation.
- Keep the heater away from water (and away from the kitchen/bathroom), and areas where water could spill onto the heater.
- Turn off the heater when leaving the house. When switched on, heaters must be monitored.
- Plug heater directly into a wall socket.
- Do not use heaters in rooms that are not in use and switch off the heater when you leave the room.
- Keep doors and windows closed, to keep the warm air circulating.
- Keep heaters away from doorways, walkways such as hallways and corridors, and other pathways, as this can be a tripping hazard.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's safety recommendations.

 <https://publicsafety.tufts.edu/firesafety/portable-space-heaters>

ACTIVE COMMUNICATION EDUCATION (ACE)

Soundfair is once again running the Active Communication Education (ACE) Program in Mount Waverley to help people with hearing loss live well and build great communication habits with their partners, family and friends.

During this course, people with hearing loss and their communication partners are given the support, tools and strategies to ACE their communication in a variety of situations, from dealing with noisy backgrounds to communicating with difficult speakers and more.

Past attendees of the course have said how enlightening it has been for their partners to get a fuller understanding of what it is like to live with hearing loss, but also empowering to know how to manage it better. The tips and tricks to support smoother communication have been invaluable.

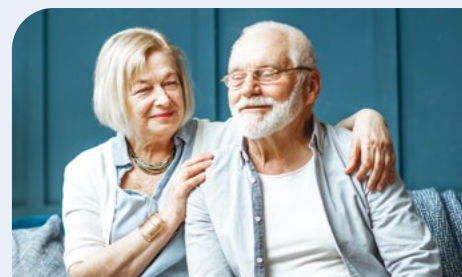
The next course begins in May and places are limited.

To book your place:

Wednesdays 17, 24 and 31 May 2023

Mount Waverley Community Centre

Call Soundfair on  03 9510 1577



 <https://soundfairaustralia.thinkific.com/collections>

DROP OFF YOUR RECYCLING

Did you know you can recycle many 'hard-to-recycle' items at the Monash Recycling and Waste Centre, some for free and others at a fee? Present your valid pension, seniors, veterans affairs or health care cards for the reduced disposal rate.

Free items include:

<p>Computers, laptops, fax machines, printers, TVs and computer monitors</p> 	<p>Batteries (household batteries and car batteries - up to 15)</p> 	<p>Fluro tubes and bulbs/CFL globes (up to five)</p> 	<p>Printer cartridges</p> 
<p>Mobile phones</p> 	<p>X-Ray films</p> 	<p>Whitegoods (fees apply for fridges, freezers and air conditioners)</p> 	<p>CDs, DVDs and cassettes</p> 
<p>Commingled recycling</p> 	<p>Paper and cardboard</p> 	<p>Polystyrene (made of white clean balls) amounts up to 1/2 m³ are free</p> 	<p>Soft plastics (must show proof of residency)</p> 
<p>Cooking oil (up to 20 litres) please call ahead to ensure collection is available</p> 	<p>Engine oil (30 litres or less)</p> 	<p>Paint (check accepted products at Paintback www.paintback.com.au) please call ahead to ensure collection is available</p> 	<p>Scrap metal</p> 

ASSISTANCE IN YOUR HOME

Many of our clients use the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) entry-level Domestic Assistance Service provided by Monash Council, where staff assist with maintaining their homes.

Monash Council employs Community Care Workers who have completed a minimum Certificate III in Aged Care, and over 80 per cent of our staff go on to obtain a Certificate IV in Aged Care. Some staff members have a Diploma in Community Services or a Nursing qualification.

While these staff work with clients to maintain cleanliness in homes and assist with tasks clients find difficult to tackle (such as vacuuming, mopping, cleaning bathrooms/toilets and bed changing), they are not professional cleaners.

Our staff work with you in your home usually fortnightly for a maximum of 1.5 hours. This time is not designed to enable anyone to clean an entire home. The Client Information Booklet outlines limitations on what our staff can do.

During this time, you can prioritise your needs for the Domestic Assistance Service and can also ask the care worker to purchase items from the shops on your behalf if you cannot go out that day.

Our staff are trained to note changes in client conditions, work with grief/loss, negotiate, report back any issues of concern and offer support during the “in home” visit.

Monash care workers are trained to assist clients with personal care showering and respite services under CHSP services, all designed to enable you to continue to live in your home.

Please be mindful that our care workers work through hot weather conditions, bad traffic, wind and storms to deliver these services. We ask all our clients to be respectful and kind.



YOUR FEEDBACK

We welcome client feedback at Monash Council and have received many encouraging responses and appreciative words.

We recently received an anonymous feedback form which we'd like to answer here, as there was no way of directing the request directly. The question was if our care workers can remove their shoes on carpeted areas inside after mopping a wet area.

As trained professionals delivering a service, our care workers are not permitted to remove their shoes during the Domestic Assistance visit. Care workers must leave their shoes on during service as per the Occupational Health and Safety guidelines.

Thank you for your responses, and if you have feedback to share, please contact us on ☎ 03 9518 3553.



SOCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMS

As an Age-Friendly City, Monash Council offers a range of social inclusion programs to encourage and support older residents to participate in community life. The social inclusion programs help to keep people connected with others and improve health and wellbeing.

Monash Council's Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Social Inclusion offerings include:

Monash on the Move (MOMs)

This is a door-to-door outing program designed to give you the opportunity to visit various destinations while meeting new people and making new friends. The program includes a full day travelling out of Monash to interesting locations and stopping for lunch before heading home.



Oakleigh Positive Ageing Activity Centre (PAAC)

This program offers you the opportunity to meet on a weekly basis at one of our centres. You will connect with people while enjoying good company, social activities, healthy and active ageing programs and social outings.

Transport may be available (subject to availability and mobility screening).



Halcyon Positive Ageing Activity Centre, Glen Waverley: Dementia Social Group

This program is available to Monash residents who are frail, experience memory loss and other associated problems related to dementia. While members are enjoying themselves at the centre, their carers can enjoy some respite time knowing their loved ones are being cared for.

Transport may be available (subject to availability and mobility screening).



Neighbourhood Local Outings

This is a door-to-door local outing service taking small groups out to a local café for morning tea (cost not covered by the program) and an activity centre where you can visit the shops.



If you are aged 65 or over and have not accessed a CHSP service before, phone **My Aged Care** on **1800 200 422** or visit **www.myagedcare.gov.au** to request an assessment for a Social Group referral with City of Monash, Glen Waverley. The assessment is done in your home, and a family member, friend, advocate or health professional can be present.

NAVIGATING AGED CARE

The aged care system is complex, and it can sometimes be confusing or difficult to find your way. Non-profit organisation Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria can help you with the right information at the right time to access aged care services.



COTA's team of Aged Care Navigators provide personal, free and independent advice, information and assistance to guide you through the aged care system. They can help you understand, identify, compare and select the right aged care services for you.

Aged Care Navigators can help you:

- Understand and navigate the My Aged Care system
- Determine if you are eligible for aged care services
- Take the next steps following your assessment
- With printed information if you are unable to access online services and resources
- Confidently choose a service provider from the range of options available
- Find out what respite care options are available
- By providing independent, accurate and up-to-date information about the process
- Plan as your needs change
- If you just need someone to talk through the process
- As a family member or friend, to assist someone in need of aged care services.



Contact

To find out more, call the **COTA WISE information line** on ☎ **1300 135 090** between 9.30am and 4pm weekdays or ☎ **03 9655 2100**. Please let them know if English is not your first language and you need an interpreter to support you.

Services Australia aged care line

Services Australia also provides assistance about aged care services, home care packages or aged care homes costs. ☎ **1800 227 475** 🌐 www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

VICTORIAN RAPID ANTIGEN TEST (RAT) UPDATE

The City of Monash is part of the Victorian Government's Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) Program, with FREE RATs now available to all community members to collect from:

Coronavirus Update

- **Monash Civic Centre**
293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley
(open 8.30am-5pm, Monday to Friday)
- **Oakleigh Service Centre**
3 Atherton Road, Oakleigh
(open 8.30am-5pm, Monday to Friday)
- **City of Monash Libraries**

If you have symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, please do not collect RATs until you are well. If you can't get to a location, a guardian or carer can collect your free RATs for you.

Who can get free RATs?

The free RATs are available to all community members. You do not need a Medicare card.

What if I have symptoms or I am a contact of a COVID-19 case?

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, do not go to a council location to collect your free RATs. Instead, please collect free RATs at testing sites which you can find through the State Government's coronavirus website:

🌐 www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/get-a-covid-19-test

Where can I get more information on the use of RATs?

For more information about getting tested and reporting a positive RAT result, visit

🌐 www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Alternatively, you can call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 📞 **1800 675 398**.



VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Victorian Child Safe Standards form part of the State Government's response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry (2012) and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013).

They require organisations to have policies, procedures and practices to keep children and young people safe. On 1 July 2022 a new set of standards were introduced to Victoria, moving from 7 to 11 Standards.

The new standards place greater focus on the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, involvement of families and communities in safeguarding children, record keeping, and safeguarding children in online environments.

Under the standards, organisations have a responsibility to protect children from harm, promote child safety and respond to child abuse allegations. All individuals, as well as the organisation, have a legal responsibility to report child abuse when they become aware of it. This may mean forming a reasonable belief that child abuse has occurred, witnessing child abuse, being told by a trusted source that it has occurred, or a child disclosing that child abuse has occurred.

As a child safe organisation and one which regularly interacts with all members of the community, Monash Council is committed to safeguarding children across the Victorian Child Safe Standards and requires all staff to report when they become aware of child abuse.

For more information on the Child Safe Standards, including the full list of Standards, visit:



 www.monash.vic.gov.au/safeguarding-children

NEW INTERPRETER PHONE LINES



Monash Council provides a free interpreting service for non-English speaking customers over the phone or in person at any Customer Service Centre.

Earlier this year we appointed a new interpreter service for our community and established new phone numbers for the top 10 spoken languages within the City of Monash. Previous numbers will be redirected until the end of April 2023; however, we encourage residents who require assistance with language to transition to our new phone numbers as soon as possible.

普通话	4713 5001	Italiano	4713 5008
廣東話	4713 5002	한국어	4713 5010
Việt Ngữ	4713 5003	සිංහල	4713 5020
Ελληνικά	4713 5004	தமிழ்	4713 5021
हिंदी	4713 5005	Other languages	4713 5000