



As we come into winter, it's important to take care of yourself and your family. While flu season can get you down, so can seasonal depression. Don't forget to also take care of your mental well-being through these cooler months.

Tasman Medical Centre wanted to show our support for anti-bullying by wearing **PINK** on the 19th of May. Pink shirt day is an anti-bullying support day about celebrating diversity, kindness and inclusiveness. You can find education, resources and donate at www.pinkshirtday.org.nz.



FLU 2025

We have had an amazing response to our flu clinic, with an incredible number of patients through in the first two weeks. Thank you to everyone who showed up with patience and kindness – this was appreciated!

To those who still have the vaccine on the 'to do' list – this is still available. However, we are asking that you book in for the rest of 2025's vaccinations. If you are waiting in reception for an appointment, please ask a receptionist if they can fit you in. We may be able to do this without notice if we have space.

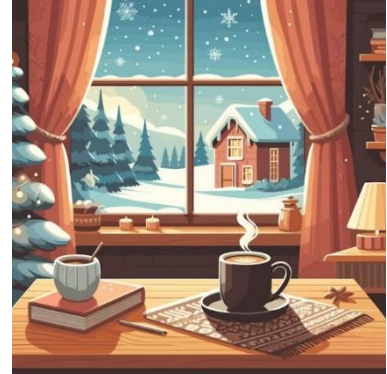
To prevent the spread of cold and flu to our vulnerable patients we ask that you don't come into reception if you have cold/flu symptoms. Please let our staff know and they will arrange an alternative entry to see your GP. Make sure to use the hand sanitizer at the practice entrance. Get plenty of rest and exercise to boost your immune system and get available vaccinations. Unfortunately, there are some winter immunizations that aren't funded by Pharmac, but if you have the funds, we can order the RSV vaccine, pneumococcal or Boostrix (for Whooping Cough). Please speak to a staff member to request.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

The appropriately named SAD is a form of low mood or depression that usually happens in the change of season from summer to winter. During the cold, darker months, people start to feel their mood affected. It's thought it might occur due to reduced sunlight lowering our serotonin and increasing our melatonin. Severity and function are varied, so if you're having a hard time, come in and see us.

Symptoms:

- Eating more or craving different food
- Sleeping more
- Wanting to spend more time on their own at home
- Feeling less energetic and less cheerful
- Change in sleep patterns
- Lack of focus
- Lower libido



Managing your symptoms: (for mild SAD)

- Accept the change in pace. Slow down, rest and enjoy your hibernation
- Light therapy or sunlight exposure
- Talking therapies or counselling
- Talk to your GP about anti-depressants/anti-anxiety
- Complementary therapies – yoga, exercise, music, mindfulness, self-care
- Open your curtains and trim back your garden to let in as much sunlight as possible
- Head outside as often as you can
- Try and maintain your routine
- Boost your diet with vitamin D supplements or vitamin D rich food
- Try not to increase your screentime significantly

Activities for SAD:

- Invite your friends over for a dinner party – a curry, soup or slow cooked meal
- Plan a holiday to look forward too – Picton, Golden Bay, West Coast, Hanmer Springs, Kaikoura, Marlborough Sounds, Nelson Lakes National Park are all very close or try your luck on Grab a Seat!
If you can't afford a holiday, think about an activity to schedule
- Maintain your connections online or on the phone
- Paddle boarding, kayaking
- Embrace the cold and hit the snow
- Volunteer
- Head to a local indoor swimming pool, sauna or spa
- Visit the trampoline parks or roller rink
- Find a new hobby that you can enjoy indoors under a blanket – like painting, puzzles, cross-stitching or gaming

If you are experiencing more severe symptoms or even if you aren't but you need some support, please don't hesitate to book in with a GP, nurse, Health Improvement Practitioner or Health Coach.

The Month of Appreciation

May was a big month for celebrations at Tasman Medical Centre! Not only did we celebrate Pink Shirt Day, but we also celebrated our wonderful nurses and health care assistants on the 12th of May and our fabulous receptionists and administrators on the 14th of May.

Our nurses and health care assistants are kept pretty busy supporting nearly 8,500 patients with their recalls, requests, medication requests, general enquiries and results. Their dedication and skills are deeply appreciated.

Our receptionists are the welcoming first face you see and voice you speak to – and they are always willing to help. They work hard both out front and behind the scenes. The practice could not function without them and all the support they give your patients.



Forever Active – Ages 55+

Every Thursday from 10-11am, Forever Active is a free outdoor exercise class for those aged 55+. Located at Tahuna Outdoor Gym, on the left when driving into the Beach Café/Volleyball carpark.

Science in Society, trust, influence & impact

9th June 7pm – 8.30pm Annesbrook Event Centre. Presented by the Cawthron Institute, this lecture will explore how science can better inform and influence decision making at both national and global levels – and what must change for that to happen.

Community Law and You – Enduring Power of Attorney

12th June 12.30 – 1.30p, Elma Turner Library. Learn how to safeguard your future by appointing someone you trust to make important decisions on your behalf. This session will cover the essentials, answer your questions, and provide valuable insights into the process

Te Huihuinga-o-Matariki (Matariki Festival)

20th June, 11am – 9pm. Koha entry, donated to charitable trust and Nelson Youth. Performances and night market selling kai, arts and crafts.

Five tips to get the most out of your GP this winter

– adapted from stuff.co.nz, first published by Katie Townsend in 2023, and still very applicable now.

1. Book early

“General Practice is under a lot of pressure and winter illnesses always add to the work load,” Nelson GP Graham Loveridge said. That’s further exacerbated by pressure on the hospital system, which sees patients being pushed back to their GPs for care as there’s no space in the hospital system. The result is that the days of realising your pills are going to run out, and calling up to get an appointment the following day are gone. Instead, it could take up to two weeks to get an appointment, Loveridge said. People who know they are going to need an appointment to review medications, or for non-urgent ailments needed to think ahead and book early. This was particularly important when you want to see a specific doctor, which helps maintain continuity of care. “It’s just better for everybody if you see the same doctor”.

2. Understand what’s urgent

While some problems could wait a couple of weeks for an appointment there are always going to be times you need to see someone that day. For adults, having a bad cough or cold wasn’t likely to be enough to warrant taking up a precious slot, but chest pain, trouble breathing, or new serious pain would always be reasons to get to the doctor that day, he said. “If this is the situation you must make that clear to the reception. “Likewise, injuries and infections would be seen that day. For kids, the threshold to be seen that day is lower, with things like very high temperatures, trouble breathing and being unenergetic are all signs, you should call up for an urgent appointment.

3. You may not need to see a doctor

To help manage workflow most GP practices would triage patients – particularly those looking for urgent appointments, Loveridge said. This would usually involve a nurse or doctor calling you back to determine the best course of action, which “could be a face-to-face appointment, phone consultation, arranging some tests prior to an appointment later or arranging urgent transfer to ED”. Once you are triaged, you may not need to see a GP, and could instead be seen by a nurse, particularly for management of ongoing conditions, he said. “Much of the care is now provided by a team.”

4. Avoid shopping lists

“Don’t come with unrealistically long lists of things to deal with in one consultation,” Loveridge said. “It is not possible to make safe and accurate decisions if several complex issues are presented in one 15-minute consultation. “There was a common phenomenon where patients would talk about mild ailments through their appointments, then casually mention the most serious issues as they were about to leave”. Patients needed to think about what the most pressing issue was and bring that up at the start of the appointment to make the most of their 15 minutes, he said.

5. Prevention is the best medicine

“The more people can do to stay well and not need to seek care from their GP the better, and vaccination is just a very simple way. People needed to get vaccinated against flu, Covid, measles, and whooping cough, Loveridge said. “While not 100% guaranteed, vaccination will significantly reduce your risk of catching these illnesses – and reduce your risk of passing it to other household members”. All babies in New Zealand can be immunised for free against whooping cough as part of their childhood immunisations, with booster doses given to children at 4 and 11 years of age. Current low vaccination rates meant the population was vulnerable to both measles and whooping cough outbreaks. Children were often “super-spreaders” of respiratory illnesses, so getting them vaccinated would help limit spread.

Featured Service: Just a Thought

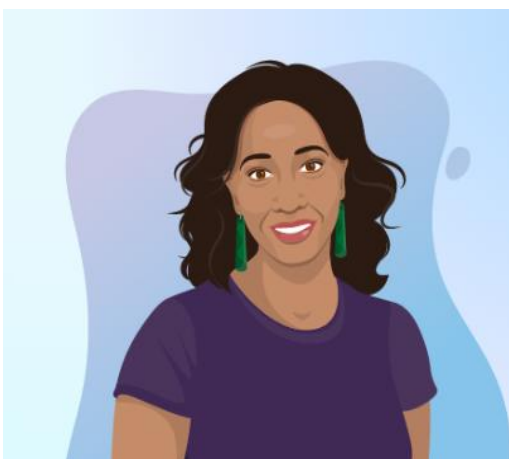


Just a Thought offers free evidence based cognitive behavioural therapy courses. So far, over 60,000 New Zealanders have participated in mental well-being courses since 2019. Choose from over 15 free (and counting) online therapy courses to support your mental health and wellbeing including:

- Generalised Anxiety
- Depression
- Staying on Track (for stress, support and wellbeing)
- **Managing Insomnia**
- Social Anxiety
- Health Anxiety
- Alcohol and drug
- Pregnancy and postnatal wellbeing
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Panic
- And NZ Sign Language – mixed anxiety and depression & staying on track

Managing Insomnia: As the seasons change, our nurses have seen a big increase in the amount of people requesting sleeping medications, which can have harmful side effects. The long-term consequences of poor sleep include depression, anxiety, lowered immune system functioning, obesity and increased diabetes and heart disease.

Evidence shows increasing effectiveness when using cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) – with clinical trials showing 70-80% of persons with CBT-I citing improved sleep and better long-term management when poor sleep redevelops following a period of acute stress. For some people, they even find CBT-I more effective for sleep than medication.



Managing Insomnia course

If you've been having problems falling or staying asleep and you find that this is affecting your daily life, you may be experiencing insomnia.

Insomnia can have a big impact on your energy, mood and concentration. You may find yourself worrying about your lack of sleep, especially at night - making it even more difficult to get to sleep. The good news is, insomnia can be treated and many people who seek help get better. This course will teach you practical skills to help you get your sleep back on track.