



Darling Street
Health Centre

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Darling Street Health Centre
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Beating the Winter Blues

Amanda Haberecht - Naturopath

In winter, we not only find that our physical health can be challenged, but our mental health and mood can also be influenced by the change in season.

Our moods during winter are affected by reduced energy and vitality, slower metabolic rate and lack of sunlight. Seasonal studies have confirmed the link with anxiety and depression commonly seen during the darker colder months.

There are many tried and trusted therapies that can be used to lift our mood or augment conventional medications. It is important that we view the brain like any other organ system of the body, and for a healthy mood and neurotransmitter balance we need to nourish the brain like any other organ system. Many traditional therapies are now being investigated within scientific communities as potential treatment options. Fish oils, B vitamins and amino acids are also exhibiting encouraging results for many conditions including depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disease, anxiety and insomnia. We now also have reliable means to test the metabolic pathways for patients who are suffering these conditions and consequently tailor appropriate treatment protocols.

Here at Darling St Health Centre we are finding this an exciting area of medicine and are happy to explore these health concerns with you further.

Acupuncture for Labour and Prebirth

Lina Thornton - Acupuncturist

Prebirth treatments are usually recommended by acupuncturists/doctors/midwives from 36-37 weeks onwards. Acupuncture can be used in two main ways in the later stages of pregnancy

1. Prebirth treatments help prepare a woman's body for birth, with an emphasis on preparing the cervix and pelvis for labour
2. Acupuncture deals with medical conditions such as pregnancy-induced-hypertension and symptoms such as heartburn and oedema.

Studies in 1997 with midwives using prebirth acupuncture treatments reported it consistently increased the chances of a woman experiencing a natural labour, and those that received acupuncture had a noticeably shorter active labour. Acupuncture also contributed to reduced intervention rates, including medical induction and caesarian sections.

About the treatments

A full case history is taken with the details of the pregnancy to date, any information on previous births, general health, and the results of any tests that have been carried out.

Treatment is in two stages (treatment time 45mins)

1. Sitting on the edge of the bed, points on the shoulders are used, followed by acupressure/massage of these areas.
2. Then you are settled in a chair and points on the arms and legs are used.

Results

- During the treatment you will have a feeling of calm and reduced anxiety levels. Shoulders and lower back will feel relaxed.
- Post-treatment you will have a feeling of wellbeing, with better sleeping patterns, reduced swelling of the hands and feet, and a reduction in headaches/backache.
- During the treatment you may find an increase in foetal movement. If you are on or past your due date, pre-labour may start within 24-48 hours.

Treatment period recommended

weekly from 36 weeks

On/past due date, twice weekly treatments are advised.

Acupuncture treatments are available Thursday and Friday afternoons, and Saturday.

Children's Health

Belinda Kirkpatrick – Naturopath

Raising healthy and intelligent children can be the joy of parent's lives. By carefully looking after our children's diet and lifestyle and through proper care during illness, we can help raise our children to their highest potential.

Children in today's world are exposed to a myriad of unnatural environmental and dietary elements. A typical child and their developing immune system are exposed to overly refined foods, excessive sugar, artificial flavourings, colourings, preservatives, pesticides, herbicides, second-hand smoke, environmental poisons, vaccinations, antibiotics and other pharmaceutical medicines. This can create a toxic effect on children and contributes to many health problems.

Children's health problems are not only a problem for the child's growth and development but can also cause a significant amount of stress for the parents. Naturopathic treatment aims to find and address the cause of the problem and provide individual and lasting treatment for your child or family.

Among the many conditions treated by Belinda at the Darling Street Health Centre are:

- Food allergies and intolerances
- Ear and sinus infections
- Eczema and rashes
- Asthma
- ADHD and behavioural disorders
- Autism and Asperger's syndrome
- Poor immunity
- Colds and flu
- Obsessive/Compulsive disorder, Tourette's syndrome and other neurological disorders.

The initial consultation will involve a thorough case history and dietary assessment. My aim is to educate both the child and parent to ensure an understanding of the problem in addition to explaining the reason behind each aspect of treatment. Testing of allergies, hair mineral analysis, stool or blood testing may be ordered depending on the individual case. Treatment methods may include dietary and nutritional supplements and herbal medicine, in addition to diet and lifestyle modifications. Changing a child's diet and lifestyle can at times be difficult, however I will help you and your child to make gradual changes which can often in themselves create a significant difference.

To begin making changes to your child's health today. See Reception to make an appointment with Belinda.

A Doula provides nurturing support during Pregnancy and Labour

Tarsha DeSaxe – Doula and Massage Therapist

Many women and their partners can find pregnancy and labour a daunting time as planning for your birth can be overwhelming and the options can seem endless. Your pregnancy and birth is life affirming and can be an extraordinarily profound event in your life. As an experienced Doula and Remedial Massage therapist I offer continuous one on one support during pregnancy, labour, birth and post natally.

History of the Doula - Continuous support provided by caring experienced women called Doula's.

The first exposure to the word came from Dana Raphael's use of the term to describe "*one or more individuals, often female, who give psychological encouragement and physical assistance to the newly delivered mother*". The term is now widely accepted sense of an experienced labor companion who provides the woman and her partner both emotional and physical support throughout the entire labor and delivery, and to some extent afterward.

In the past 25 years studies have been done in the effects of restoring to the childbirth experience this important element of having women as helpers during labor. It has proven dramatically beneficial to have continuous support from an experienced labor companion. In studies of over 5000 women involving comparisons of outcomes, with and without support we have seen a major reduction in the length of labor, study results show the following:

- 50% reduction in caesarean rate
- 25% shorter labor
- 60% reduction in epidural requests
- 40% reduction in oxytocin use
- 30% reduction in analgesia use
- 40% reduction in forceps delivery

Here are some guidelines of what the beliefs for a Doula may be:

She is a great listener

She is respectful

She doesn't impose her own thoughts and beliefs

She allows the space for her to have the freedom of choice

She trusts the mother instinct

She believes in the power of birth

She recognises that birth is a non medical event, unless medically needed

She offers continuous support to the birth team throughout the labor

As a Doula, I hope to regain trust in women that has been there instinctively for centuries -- and to hold the space for birthing women in the hospital and or at home. To help women and their partners make well informed choices about all procedures that may present themselves - and mostly, to help the birth become a positive supported event.

"If Doula's were a drug it would be unethical not to use them"
Suzanne Arms.

A 'Tune and Balance' For Your Body

Thanuja Rebera - Osteopath

As your car needs regular maintenance so does your body! If you have a bad wheel alignment in your car, the tyres tend to wear on one side as opposed to the other. This concept carries onto your body! If your body is out of alignment you are creating wear and tear of your joints, ligaments and placing excessive strain on certain connective tissue and organs leading to poor posture and such conditions as:

- headaches
- neck pain
- sciatica
- back pain to name a few; and also to more long term conditions such as osteoarthritis.

As with your car...prevention is better than cure! So make sure you get a regular "tune and balance" for your body by getting an Osteopathic treatment every month with one of our highly experienced Osteopaths here at Darling St Health Centre.

Osteopaths - Samantha Barker, Kate Spiller & Thanuja Vanderhoek

Mindfulness-

The Art of Living in the Moment

Gail Rice – Registered Psychologist

Many of us spend much of our short time on this planet living in the past or anticipating the future. We often treat the present moment as a prelude to the future or postscript to the past, almost as if it is too insignificant to bother with. But the truth is that what we are doing, thinking and feeling *right now* is what matters most. Mindfulness encourages us to be in the present moment, exactly as it is, not trying to change it or alter it, just to live it.

Much of the anxiety and depression we experience originates from worrying about the future or ruminating about the past. Mindfulness is an approach to living that is about being curious, inquiring and accepting of this moment, the one we are experiencing right now.

This philosophy of being in the *now* is in sharp contrast to the way many of us in the western world live. We often strive towards the future and run away from the past, or shun the future and run back to the past. Most of us have lived our lives based on a few common stories. The '*Once, then ...*' story focuses on the future. *Once* I get a job, a relationship, a house, a car, or lose weight etc *then* I will be successful, happy, or loved etc. The '*If Only, then ...*' story focuses on the past. *If only* X hadn't left, *if only* I was still 21, *if only* I hadn't met X, *if only* I had studied, *if only* I had bought x, eaten x, not smoked etc. There is a constant striving that creates an anxiety and a regret and sadness that often rules our lives in the present moment.

Of course we need look ahead to the future and learn from the past but Mindfulness, based on an ancient Buddhist practice teaches us that the present moment is all we have. Mindfulness has been found to be effective in the reduction of stress and is currently used by a range of health practitioners for both emotional and physical pain.

In my practice, I use a range of approaches including: Mindfulness Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (MCBT), Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) which all use Mindfulness as a core strategy. The number of clients that I have seen benefit from Mindfulness techniques has motivated me to continue to develop my skills in these areas.

I have also incorporated Mindfulness into *Re-storying our Lives*, a six-week writing program for people struggling with anxiety and depression. Seven people attended the first workshop, which will finish at the end of June and there are more workshops planned for July and October. Some individuals may be eligible for a Medicare rebate for this workshop and/or individual therapy sessions.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions about Medicare rebates, therapy or the workshops.

RE-STORYING OUR LIVES

How writing can heal

Is past pain holding you back from enjoying the present?

Is depression or anxiety dominating your life?

Explore how writing *your* story has the potential to guide and empower you through difficult times of grief, loss or pain. Learn how to heal yourself through safe, guided writing exercises. You will also be introduced to the practice of mindfulness, which encourages us to be in the moment, exactly as it is, not trying to change or alter it, just to live it.

No previous writing experience is required, just a desire to express, explore and heal yourself.

The program is facilitated by registered Psychologist, Gail Rice

Wednesdays 7pm–9pm
July 25–August 29 at
Darling Street Health Centre
Cost for 6 weeks \$280.00
(Medicare rebates may be available for some individuals)

Women's Health Issues

Emma Sutherland - Naturopath

Do you know someone suffering from painful periods, pre menstrual tension, hot flushes or other female health concerns? These are very common complaints and most women will experience these or similar conditions at some point in their lives. We have become very used to viewing these debilitating symptoms as "normal" and something to simply put up with. However, having your period is not supposed to be painful, just like menopause is not traditionally a time of discomfort.

Naturopathy can provide the appropriate support for your hormonal health. There are many nutritional and herbal medicines that can help to alleviate these symptoms and correct hormonal imbalances that are often the underlying cause of many conditions. Lifestyle and diet are also important factors to consider in female reproductive health, for example essential fatty acid deficiency can cause inflammatory problems and is one possible factor in painful periods.

Many female reproductive conditions can be helped by naturopathy including:

- Painful periods
- PMT symptoms such as cramps, fluid retention and mood swings
- Menopausal symptoms including hot flushes, insomnia, anxiety and dry skin
- Heavy periods
- Thrush and Candida
- Endometriosis
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome (see below)
- Conception problems

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)

PCOS is a condition that affects 10-15% of women between the ages of 15 and 40. It is a metabolic syndrome characterised by *menstrual irregularities or no menstruation, acne, excessive hair growth, increased weight and difficulties conceiving*. Further complications of PCOS may involve diabetes mellitus and cardiac disease. There are several factors that contribute to the development of PCOS, these being, insulin resistance (blood sugar imbalance), genetic predisposition, as well as an imbalance in hormonal levels.

PCOS is generally under diagnosed and menstrual abnormalities, such as cycles shorter than 21 days or longer than 35 days, are often associated with the condition. Many young women with these abnormalities are prescribed the oral contraceptive pill, which masks the condition until they try to achieve pregnancy. Statistics show a prevalence of 5-10% of women in reproductive age have PCOS. The actual figures are presumed to be higher.

Naturopathic treatment of PCOS involves stabilizing blood sugar levels, encouraging weight loss and modifying hormonal imbalances. Diet plays a major role in PCOS and recommendations may include a low Glycemic Index (GI) diet and increasing essential fatty acids intake. Herbal, nutritional and homoeopathic remedies are also utilised depending on the individual.

If you would like to discuss the various natural options to support your health, make your appointment to see Emma today.

