



OUR CENTRE LOCATIONS

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NEW CLIENTS AND MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

Thanks for your referral to our centre.

Grab this free newsletter and pass it on - thank you.

If you or your family need assistance at Wauchope, we are open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays. Call us for an appointment.

Dr Darren (Chiropractor) is on leave from 30/6 to 14/7

Dr Darren J Gray

Chiropractor, Certified Rehab Therapist

BSc, MChiro, MClinRehabNeuro (MCAA, ClinFellAAFN)

Dr Melinda Burke

Chiropractor

BChiropractic, MastChiropractic

Port Macquarie Monday–Saturday

Wauchope Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

We attempt to cater for same day appointments, however forward booking your appointments is always recommended to avoid disappointment.

YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

JULY/AUGUST 2025



**STIFF NECK?
HERE'S HELP**



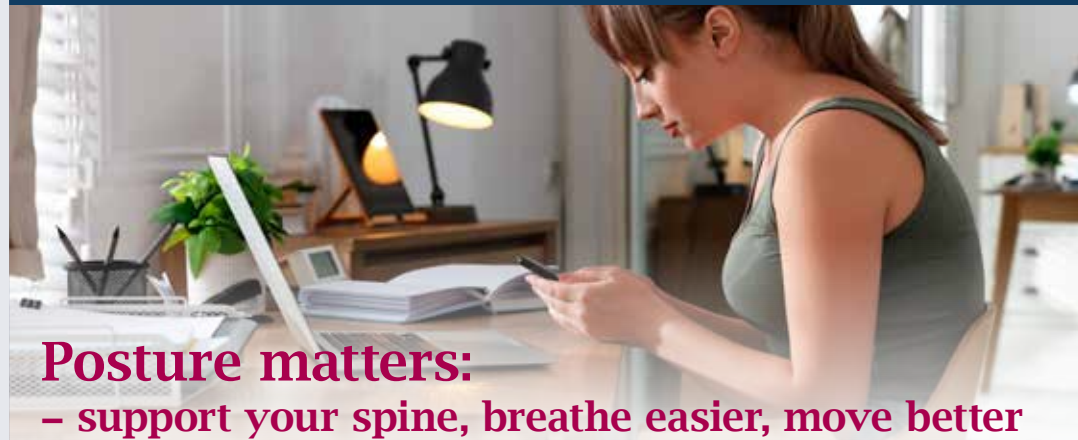
**CARING FOR
YOUR ACHILLES**



**EASING
WINTER ACHES**



**CURCUMIN &
YOUR HEALTH**



Posture matters: – support your spine, breathe easier, move better

Good posture isn't just about standing upright — it's essential for your overall wellbeing. When you hold yourself well, your spine is supported, and your joints and muscles work efficiently. In today's screen-filled world, where many of us slump over phones or sit for hours, posture can easily suffer.

Why your posture matters

Your spine is incredible — strong, flexible, and designed to support your body and protect your spinal cord. But poor posture can place extra pressure on your spinal joints, discs, and surrounding muscles. Over time, this may:

- limit diaphragm movement, leading to shallow breathing
- contribute to joint or muscle stiffness and discomfort
- affect how your body moves, which may increase injury risk
- reduce abdominal movement, possibly affecting digestion
- even lower mood and confidence.

6 simple ways to improve posture

Improving your posture doesn't mean being stiff or perfect all the time. It's about building small habits that help your body feel more balanced and at ease.

1. Mind your device use

Phones and laptops are part of daily life, but the way we use them matters. Raise your screen to eye level and avoid bending your neck for long periods. Use a laptop stand or external keyboard, and take screen breaks often. Try to keep your ears in line with your shoulders, not jutting forward.

2. Strengthen your core

Your core muscles play a big role in supporting your spine. Exercises like planks, bridges, or bird-dogs can help you build

strength and stability. If you're unsure how to begin, we're happy to guide you.

3. Check your sitting setup

Whether working or relaxing, ensure your chair supports your spine's natural curves. Keep feet flat on the floor, knees bent at 90 degrees, and elbows relaxed by your side. A rolled towel or lumbar cushion behind your lower back can improve comfort and support.

4. Stretch tight areas

Tight muscles — especially in your chest, shoulders, and hips — can draw your posture forward. Gentle stretching can help restore movement and ease tension.

5. Practice "posture check-ins"

Set a reminder every hour or so to reset your posture. Stand or sit tall, imagine a string lifting you from the top of your head, relax your shoulders, and lightly engage your core. Over time, this body awareness can become second nature.

6. Stay active

Regular movement is one of the best ways to support your posture and overall health. Walking, swimming, yoga, and Pilates help keep your body mobile and strong. Even regular quick stretches between tasks can make a difference.

A few small, consistent actions may ease spinal strain, help you breathe better, move freely, and even feel more confident. If you have questions or want support with your posture, feel free to ask us for advice.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

Achilles tendon: power, pain, and how to protect it

Winter sports like AFL, rugby, and netball are popular across Australia during the cooler months. These sports demand agility, strength, and endurance, but they also carry a higher risk of injury. The physical demands can take a toll on your body, but with the right precautions, you can stay in the game.



The Achilles tendon is a 'powerhouse' – thick, strong, and built to bear incredible loads, just like the Greek hero it was named after. It connects the calf muscles to the heel bone and springs into action every time you walk, run, or jump.

Although it's the strongest tendon in your body, it's not invincible. Achilles tendon injuries are common, particularly in people aged around 20 to 40. Weekend sports enthusiasts and elite athletes are especially at risk. Basketball, soccer, and racket sports tend to be the main culprits.

What does the Achilles tendon do?

The Achilles plays a key role in movement. It transmits force from the calf muscles to the heel, enabling plantarflexion – pointing your foot downward. This motion is essential for walking, running, jumping, and standing on tiptoes.

It also acts like a spring: storing energy as your foot hits the ground and releasing it as you push off. This energy helps drive you forward.

During high-impact activities like sprinting or jumping, the Achilles can endure forces of up to twelve and a half times your body weight. That helps explain why it's so commonly injured!

When things go wrong

Injuries to the Achilles tendon are often caused by overuse, poor movement patterns, or sudden increases in activity. Risk factors include high-impact sports, tight or weak calves, reduced ankle mobility, hard training surfaces, and unsupportive footwear.

When the tendon is injured, symptoms can range from mild to more severe. Pain may feel dull or sharp. The back of your heel might feel weak, stiff, or swollen, and you may notice reduced strength or limited

movement. In some cases, the tendon can tear – often with a noticeable “snap” or the feeling of being kicked in the leg.

Inflammation and degeneration

Achilles pain isn't always straightforward. It may involve inflammation (tendinitis), degeneration (tendinosis), or both. Repeated small injuries and incomplete healing can lead to long-term changes in the tendon, making it more prone to re-injury.

Treatment and prevention

Whether you're managing an existing injury or aiming to prevent one, early care works best. The right approach depends on your injury type, age, and activity level. While elite athletes may need to regain peak performance, complete ruptures might require surgical repair.

Modifying aggravating activities – reducing the intensity, frequency, or duration – along with ice, gentle stretching, massage, and supportive footwear, may offer relief and assist recovery.

From a chiropractic perspective, addressing movement patterns and joint mobility – particularly at the ankle – may also help reduce strain on the Achilles and support recovery.

WORD SEARCH

- ACHES
- ACHILLES
- ANXIETY
- ARTHRITIS
- BALANCE
- CHIROPRACTOR
- CURCUMIN
- DIAPHRAGM
- ENERGY
- EXERCISE
- INFLAMMATION
- LUMBAR
- MOBILITY
- NECK
- PAIN
- PIPERINE
- PLANTARFLEXION
- POSTURE
- SPINE
- STRENGTH
- STRESS
- TENDON
- TURMERIC
- YOGA

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Winter aches: why your joints feel stiff and what you can do about it



As the temperature drops, do your joints feel stiffer? You're not alone – many people experience more joint pain in winter. But why does this happen, and what can you do about it?

Cold weather can cause muscles to tighten, making joints feel stiff. Some researchers suggest that changes in air pressure during winter may also play a role, possibly affecting the tissues around joints. However, studies on this link show mixed results. If you already have arthritis or past injuries, you might feel these effects more.

Colder weather often means we stay indoors more and move less. But inactivity can make joints feel even stiffer, reducing flexibility over time. Try a winter walk to warm you up and keep your joints moving!

How does this affect your body?

Stiff joints can make simple movements like getting out of bed, climbing stairs, or even holding a cup of tea more difficult. While occasional stiffness isn't usually a cause for concern, ongoing discomfort can reduce flexibility and affect your quality of life.

What can you do to stay flexible?

- **Keep moving:** gentle stretches, regular walks, yoga or Pilates help keep your joints flexible. Even small movements throughout the day can make a big difference.
- **Stay warm:** dress in layers, use heat packs, and keep your home at a comfortable temperature to help relax stiff muscles.
- **Stay hydrated:** dehydration can make joint stiffness worse, so keep up your water intake, even if you don't feel as thirsty in winter.
- **Eat for joint health:** foods rich in omega-3s, like fish and walnuts, may help reduce inflammation and keep joints feeling more comfortable.

Helping you move all year round

Chiropractic care focuses on assessing and supporting your musculoskeletal system. Many people find that hands-on care and regular movement are helpful for managing stiffness and staying active – whatever the season may be.

Warm water can relax muscles and ease joint stiffness — try a gentle swim or a soak in a spa.



Curcumin: could it be nature's anti-inflammatory?

You've probably heard turmeric being praised for its health benefits. It's the bright yellow compound found in turmeric — called curcumin — that researchers are most interested in when it comes to health.

Curcumin is a natural part of turmeric with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. These effects have made it a key focus in research for its potential to help manage issues like joint pain and stiffness, as well as other inflammation-related problems.

How curcumin works

Curcumin may block certain molecules in the body that trigger inflammation. Some studies suggest it can lower levels of CRP (C-reactive protein), a marker linked to inflammation. This may help ease symptoms such as swelling, stiffness, and pain — especially in conditions like osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

It may also support heart and gut health — for example, by helping maintain a healthy balance of gut bacteria — and help reduce oxidative stress, which can damage cells.

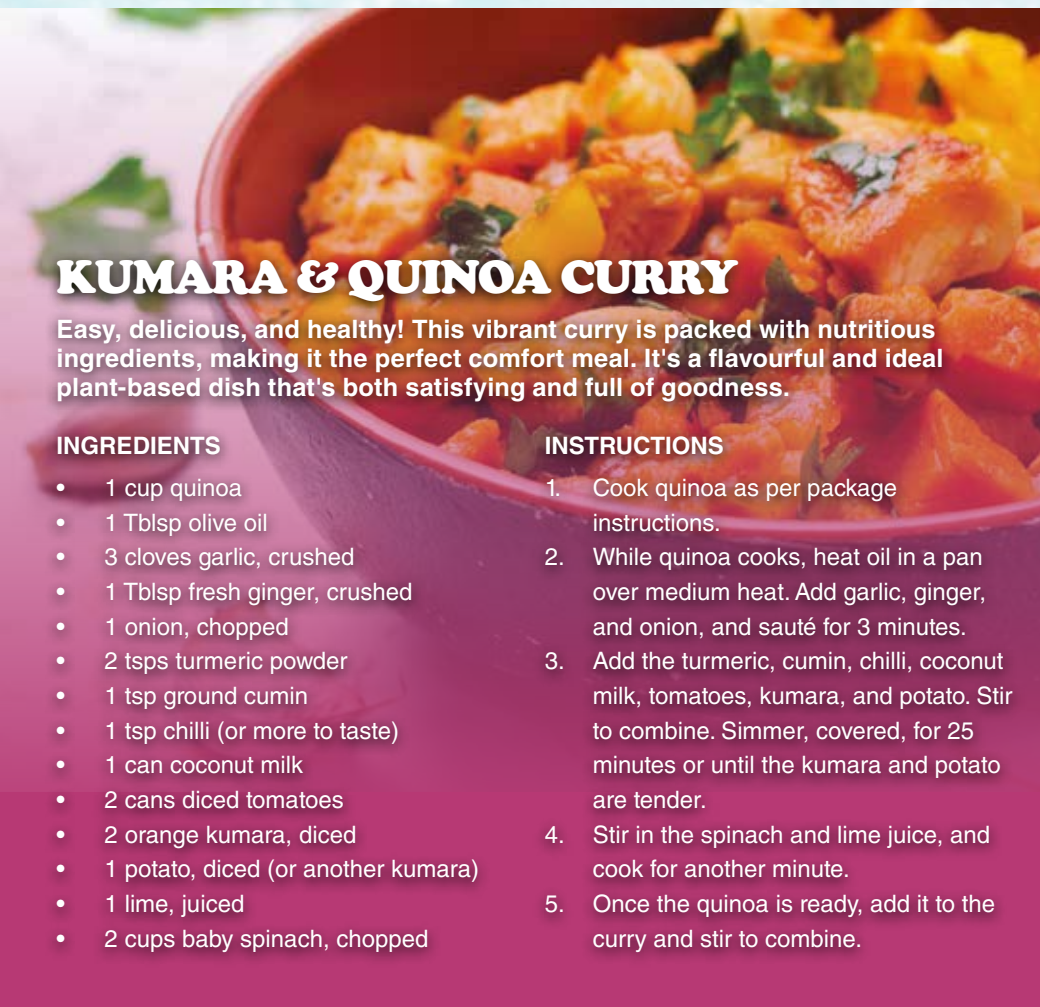
However, curcumin isn't easily absorbed by the body, that's why many supplements combine it with piperine (a compound from black pepper), which helps your body use it more effectively. Choosing a high-quality supplement that includes piperine can make a difference in how well it works.

Are there any downsides?

Curcumin is generally safe for most people, but high doses can cause digestive issues. It may also interact with certain medications, such as blood thinners. It's advisable to check with your healthcare provider before starting a supplement or making big changes to your diet.

Chiropractic care and nutrition

We often see people dealing with ongoing discomfort, pain and stiffness linked to inflammation. While chiropractic care aims to improve movement and reduce tension in your body, natural options like curcumin may help support your recovery and overall wellbeing. If you're curious about how nutrition could support your care, we're happy to discuss it with you.



KUMARA & QUINOA CURRY

Easy, delicious, and healthy! This vibrant curry is packed with nutritious ingredients, making it the perfect comfort meal. It's a flavourful and ideal plant-based dish that's both satisfying and full of goodness.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 Tblsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 Tblsp fresh ginger, crushed
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tsps turmeric powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp chilli (or more to taste)
- 1 can coconut milk
- 2 cans diced tomatoes
- 2 orange kumara, diced
- 1 potato, diced (or another kumara)
- 1 lime, juiced
- 2 cups baby spinach, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook quinoa as per package instructions.
2. While quinoa cooks, heat oil in a pan over medium heat. Add garlic, ginger, and onion, and sauté for 3 minutes.
3. Add the turmeric, cumin, chilli, coconut milk, tomatoes, kumara, and potato. Stir to combine. Simmer, covered, for 25 minutes or until the kumara and potato are tender.
4. Stir in the spinach and lime juice, and cook for another minute.
5. Once the quinoa is ready, add it to the curry and stir to combine.



ON ARRIVAL AT THE PRACTICE

Please see the receptionist upon arrival.

This eliminates the possibility of you being overlooked and enables us to have your information ready.

APPOINTMENTS

Your appointment schedule is designed specifically to obtain the best possible results. Should you wish to change an appointment, we would appreciate as much notice as possible so that other patients can be offered your time.

ONLINE BOOKINGS

We have online booking available. Make your appointment with your favourite chiropractor by booking through

coastlinechiropractic.com.au

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

Prompt payment of your account will help us keep the fees down. However if you are experiencing difficulties with payment at any time please arrange a confidential meeting with our accounts person.

OUR COMMITMENT

This practice is committed to providing the best possible care to all patients. Our staff regularly attend short continuing professional education courses to update their knowledge and techniques.

Understanding stiff necks – and how to ease the strain

Have you ever woken up with a stiff neck or struggled to turn your head while reversing the car? You're not alone, neck mobility issues are common. But understanding the causes and learning ways to improve movement can help you feel better and move more freely.

What causes loss of neck mobility?

Neck stiffness can have many causes. Here are some of the more common ones:

Aging

The phrase, "I creak more than the floorboards" might sound familiar — and relatable. As we age, it's normal for our joints to become less flexible and lose some range of motion. But staying active can help you keep moving with ease.

Neck pain

Neck pain can result from a range of factors, including stress, anxiety, depression, certain medical conditions, and spinal issues. If you're already experiencing neck pain, reduced range of motion is more likely. Where possible, addressing these underlying issues may help.

Everyday habits

Poor posture — particularly forward head posture, or "text neck" — places extra strain on the neck and upper back. As your head moves forward, the added load increases pressure on the supporting muscles, which can lead to tension, stiffness, and even chronic pain.

Try holding a heavy book against your chest — not too bad, right? Now hold it out at arm's length. Notice how it feels heavier, and your arms tire faster. This mimics what happens to your neck muscles when your head juts forward!

How can chiropractic care help?

Chiropractic care focuses on joint function, including in the neck. Addressing joint

restrictions may ease stiffness and help improve mobility. Neck pain is one of the most common reasons people seek chiropractic care.

Some research suggests spinal adjustments may assist with neck mobility in some people. For example, a study published in *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice* reported improvements in neck movement after the first session, with further gains noted with continued care.

Gentle exercises can also help reduce tension and support better mobility. One simple but effective option is the chin tuck:

- Sit or stand upright
- Gently draw your head straight back to make a "double chin"
- Hold for 5 seconds, then relax
- Repeat 10 times, several times a day

This exercise activates the deep neck flexor muscles and can help improve posture. Consistency is more important than intensity, it's normal for this to feel mildly uncomfortable, but it shouldn't be painful.

If your neck mobility is limited or painful, addressing it early — through movement strategies, posture changes, or professional advice — may help improve function and comfort, and prevent long term issues.

Neck pain is one of the most common reasons people seek chiropractic care.

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____
Date Time

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional health advice, diagnosis or treatment. Decisions relating to your health should always be made in consultation with your health care provider. Talk to your chiropractor first.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you