



OUR CENTRE LOCATIONS

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WHO DO YOU KNOW?

We welcome you to pass on a referral and introduce a friend or loved one.

Dr Darren J Gray

Chiropractor, Certified Rehab Therapist

BSc, MChiro, MClinRehabNeuro (MCAA, ClinFellIAAFN)

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

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025



KNOW YOUR KNEES



LEGUME POWER



PINS AND NEEDLES



PREGNANCY & BACK COMFORT

What stress can do to your body

Stress isn't just in your head – it can affect your posture, muscles, and energy levels. And when it becomes ongoing, it can take a real toll on how you feel, move, and function day to day.

Let's explore how stress affects the body, how posture plays a role, and what simple steps can help you feel better.

Effects of long-term stress

When you're stressed, your body's "fight or flight" mode switches on. This is a normal and helpful response in the short term, preparing you to act quickly. But when this becomes constant, your body can stay stuck in that alert state – muscles tensed, breathing fast and shallow, and digestion slowed.

Over time, this can lead to:

- **muscle tightness** – particularly in your neck, shoulders, jaw, and back, causing tender points and discomfort
- **tension headaches and jaw pain** – often from clenching or grinding your teeth during sleep
- **digestive issues** – such as bloating, constipation, or irritable bowel symptoms
- **fatigue** – even when you've had enough sleep
- **postural changes** – like slouching, rounded shoulders, or a forward head position
- **weakened immunity** – chronic stress lowers immune function, making you more prone to illness.

These signs can build gradually, and you might not immediately connect them to stress.

The link between stress and posture

We often see how stress and posture affect each other, creating an unhelpful cycle. When you feel stressed, you may unconsciously tense your muscles or adopt a slumped posture. Poor posture can then place more strain on your joints and muscles,

leading to discomfort or pain – which in turn may lower your mood and increase stress.

Research suggests that maintaining an upright posture – whether sitting or standing – may improve mood, confidence, and energy levels.

Six ways to ease tension

1. **Move regularly** – stretch, walk, exercise, dance – movement helps release muscle tension and lift your mood.
2. **Practice mindful breathing** – while seemingly simple, slow breathing has profound effects. Try this exercise: inhale for four counts, hold for four, and exhale for four. Repeat several times.
3. **Reset your posture** – sit or stand upright, relax your shoulders and draw your chin in gently. Imagine a string lifting you from the crown of your head. Set reminders to do this every 30 minutes.
4. **Use self-care tools** – foam rolling or tennis ball massage can ease tight muscles. Warm baths can help relax your body.
5. **Prioritise sleep** – deep rest helps your body and mind recover.
6. **Address the source** – if there's something specific causing ongoing stress, try taking small steps to manage it. Mindfulness, meditation, journaling, or speaking with someone you trust can all help.

When to Seek Support

If stress-related muscle tension or postural strain doesn't ease with self-care, reach out to us. Our chiropractors can evaluate how your posture and joint movement might be contributing to discomfort and offer guidance to help your body manage physical stress.

Your body often gives early signs when it needs attention – and acting promptly can make a big difference.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

Love your legumes: simple nutrition, big benefits



Legumes — such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and peas — are nutritional powerhouses. They can support your heart, help manage blood sugar, and supply long-lasting energy.

Legumes are rich in essential nutrients, including:

- **protein:** muscle growth and repair
- **fibre:** Promotes digestive health and a healthy weight
- **complex carbohydrates:** Provide steady energy
- **vitamins and minerals:** vital for various bodily functions.

Lentils are an excellent source of folate, a B-vitamin that helps your body make healthy red blood cells and supports cell repair. Chickpeas are also rich in iron, which is vital for carrying oxygen in your blood and energy, especially if you follow a plant-based diet.

Heart health benefits

Regular consumption of legumes has been linked to improved heart health. They may help lower cholesterol levels, reduce blood pressure, and decrease the risk of heart disease.

The high fibre content helps lower levels of LDL cholesterol — often called “bad”

cholesterol — by binding to it in your digestive system and helping your body remove it. This can keep your arteries healthier over time.

Blood sugar control

If you're managing diabetes or aiming to prevent it, legumes may be particularly beneficial. Their low glycaemic index (GI), and high fibre content contribute to better blood sugar control by slowing the absorption of sugars into your bloodstream. This can lead to more stable blood glucose levels.

Weight management

All legumes are naturally low in fat and their combination of protein and fibre can help you feel fuller for longer, which may reduce overall kilojoule intake.

Ideas for adding legumes

Adding legumes to your meals adds extra flavour and nutrition. Try them in salads, soups, dips like hummus, and main meals such as veggie burgers and casseroles.

If you're not used to eating legumes, the high fibre content may cause some digestive discomfort at first — yes, we're talking about gas! But don't let that put you off — your gut usually adapts pretty quickly.

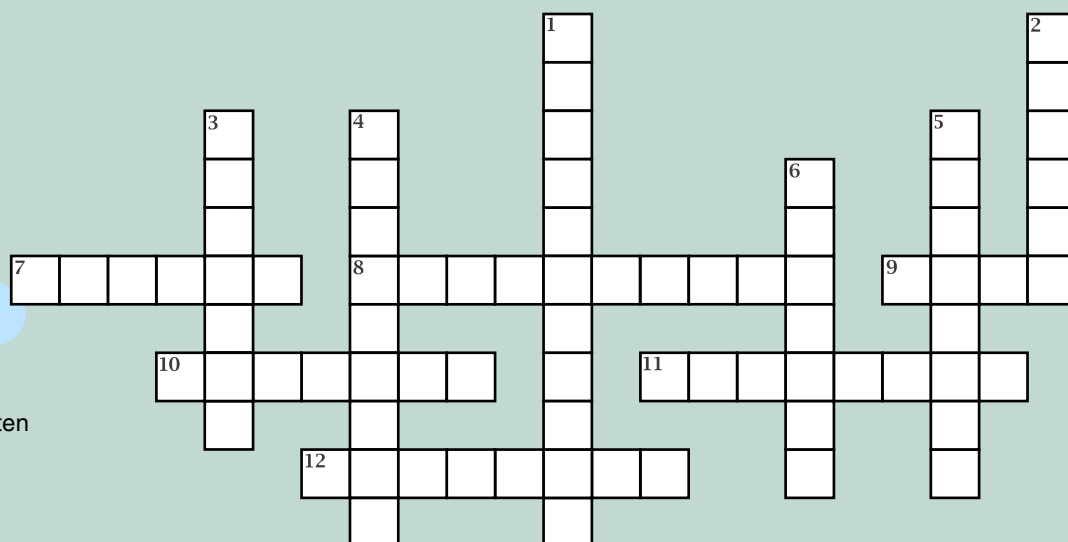
Legumes are readily available, cost-effective, and versatile, offering numerous health benefits. Start your health journey by trying our easy recipe for chickpea fritters.

**Want more energy, better heart health, and weight control?
Legumes may help you get there.**



DOWN:

- 1: A tingling sensation on the skin, often called pins and needles.
- 2: A form of Vitamin B.
- 3: A type of plant (such as a pea or a bean plant) with seeds that grow in long cases (called pods).
- 4: The branch of medicine that uses prosthetics to support weakened limbs.
- 5: Relating to pregnant women and their unborn babies.
- 6: The way in which someone usually holds their shoulders, neck, and back, or a particular.



ACROSS:

- 7: A soft food made of ground chickpeas, garlic, and oil.
- 8: Muscles at the back of the thigh.
- 9: The joint that bends at the middle of your leg.
- 10: Of, relating to, or involving genes.
- 11: The power to keep yourself from being affected by a disease.
- 12: Pain in the lower back, hip, and especially the back of the thigh that is caused by pressure on the sciatic nerve.

Pins and Needles: what your body's telling you



Most of us have felt pins and needles – maybe from sitting cross-legged too long or bumping the (not-so) funny bone. Usually, it's harmless, but understanding why it happens can help you know when to get it checked.

That tingling feeling is called paresthesia. It happens when nerves are compressed or irritated, disrupting the normal signals to your brain. It can feel like tingling, prickling, burning, itching, or numbness. Common causes include:

- external pressure – like crossing your legs or sleeping on your arm
- nerve irritation – from conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome, a bulging or herniated disc, or sciatica
- poor circulation
- injuries that affect the spine or nerves
- vitamin deficiencies – especially B1, B6, or B12
- anxiety or panic attacks.

Preventing mild pins and needles

Keep active — gentle movement improves circulation and supports nerve health. When sitting, change positions and move often. Daily stretching can also help relieve tightness in areas like the wrists, shoulders, and hips.

Keeping warm may make a difference too, as cold temperatures can reduce blood flow to your hands and feet.

Check that your desk and chair height support good posture and your wrists are in a neutral position when typing.

Stay well-hydrated and eat a balanced diet that includes foods rich in B vitamins such as whole grains, eggs, leafy greens, and legumes.

When to seek professional help

Occasional pins and needles are common, but see a health professional if they last more than a few minutes, are accompanied by weakness or muscle loss, worsen over time, have no clear cause, or occur after an injury.

These signs could indicate nerve compression, circulation problems, or other medical conditions that may need further investigation.

Listen to your body

Temporary pins and needles are usually just your body's way of saying "time to move." If your symptoms seem related to posture, tension, or movement, your chiropractor can help assess your spine and joints and offer advice on improving your comfort.

Caring for your spine during pregnancy



Pregnancy brings remarkable and natural changes to your body. While some can cause discomfort, there are simple ways to stay supported and comfortable.

How pregnancy affects the spine

Creating precious new life demands space in your body, causing changes which can lead to spinal strain, muscle tension, and discomfort – especially in the lower back.

As your baby grows, your centre of gravity shifts and your pelvis tilts forward. This deepens the natural curve in your lower back and can strain surrounding muscles, joints, and ligaments. The added weight may also increase pressure on spinal discs and nerves, causing soreness and aches.

Pregnancy hormones loosen ligaments to prepare for birth, which can lead to pelvic joint instability and pain – often felt in the lower back, hips, and pubic area.

Everyday habits for spine support

Fortunately, you can often find relief through simple, everyday habits.

Start with your posture – stand tall rather than slumping, and when sitting, use a small cushion to support your lower back. Wearing a maternity support belt may help ease the strain on your lower back and pelvis.

Stay active safely with gentle walks, prenatal stretches, and pregnancy-safe exercises that help strengthen your whole body.

Sleep on your side with a pillow between your knees. A pregnancy pillow may provide extra support and help with restful sleep.

Take care when lifting – bend your knees instead of your back, and keep the object close to your body.

If pain continues or interferes with daily life, talk to your healthcare provider. Chiropractors may be part of a wider care team, depending on your needs and preferences.

Your spine works hard during pregnancy, but there are many ways to stay comfortable. Move mindfully, take care of your posture, and reach out if you'd like support or advice.



CHICKPEA, SPINACH & CHEESE PATTIES

A colourful, tasty way to enjoy legumes with a veggie boost!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 x 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 egg beaten
- ½ cup breadcrumbs (or rolled oats)
- ¼ cup crumbled feta or grated parmesan
- 1 tsp cumin or mixed herbs
- Olive oil for frying

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat a little oil in a pan. Sauté onion and garlic for a few minutes. Add spinach and cook until wilted and set aside to cool slightly.
2. In a bowl, mash the chickpeas until mostly smooth.
3. Add sautéed mix and remaining ingredients. Mix until firm enough to shape (add more breadcrumbs if needed).
4. Form into 6–8 patties.
5. Heat oil in a pan over medium heat. Cook patties 3–4 minutes each side until golden.

Serve warm with yoghurt and salad in a wrap or pita bread.

What your knee position says about your body

Your knees are engineering marvels – built to support your weight and keep you moving. But have you ever noticed how they align when you stand?

Knee alignment can reveal a lot about your biomechanics – how your bones, muscles, and joints work together. It can offer clues about joint health, posture, and performance. Let's look at common alignment types, and how to support healthy knee function.

Types of knee alignment

Knee alignment affects how your joints share weight and move. While not everyone's knees are perfectly aligned (some naturally bow out or angle in slightly), problems can arise when misalignment is more pronounced. This can lead to pain or a higher risk of injury. Both knees may be affected or just one.

1. "Knock knees" (Genu Valgum)

In knock knees, the knees angle inward and may touch or nearly touch when standing with feet apart. Causes can include genetics, infections, or past injury.

2. "Bow legs" (Genu Varum)

With bow legs, the knees curve outward, creating a gap between them when the feet are together. It can result from spinal conditions, vitamin D deficiency, or arthritis.

3. Neutral alignment

In neutral alignment, the knees stack over the ankles and hips – like building blocks in a straight tower. This is considered the "ideal" position, as it helps distribute weight evenly, reduce strain, and support smooth movement.

Keep in mind; knees don't have to be perfectly straight to be strong and functional. Slight variations can still work well for many people,



Neutral Alignment



Bowed Legs



Knock Knees

and temporary knock knees or bow legs are a normal part of childhood growth.

What influences knee position?

That's a great question! To clarify the causes mentioned above, knee alignment is shaped by a mix of factors, including:

- **genetic** – some alignments are inherited
- **muscle imbalances** – weak or tight leg muscles can shift knee position
- **foot mechanics** – like flat feet or high arches
- **past injuries** – particularly during growth stages
- **health conditions** – like joint inflammation or abnormal bone development
- **lifestyle** – repetitive movements, like those in certain sports, can affect alignment over time.

Tips for healthy knee alignment

Support healthy knee alignment by strengthening key muscles such as the glutes, quads, and hamstrings. Stretching tight leg muscles can improve mobility, while balance exercises help maintain joint stability.

Supportive footwear or orthotics may help address underlying foot issues that affect knee alignment.

Pay attention to how you stand, walk, and move. Avoid locking your knees when standing, and try to maintain even weight on both feet – habits like these can help protect your alignment over time.

While some variation is normal, noticeable misalignment may point to an underlying issue. If you're unsure, we're here to assess and guide you.



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.

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____
Date Time

Crossword Answers:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Paresthesia | 5. Prenatal | 9. Knee |
| 2. Folate | 6. Posture | 10. Genetic |
| 3. Legumes | 7. Hummus | 11. Immunity |
| 4. Orthotics | 8. Hamstrings | 12. Sciatica |

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