

WELCOME TO SUMMER!

Many of us enjoy sitting in the warming sun, however in Australia we need to balance the risk of skin cancer from too much sun exposure with maintaining vitamin D levels.

SUN SAFETY

According to the Cancer Council, approximately, two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer by the time they are 70, with more than 750,000 people treated for one or more non-melanoma skin cancers in Australia each year.



Annie practices good sun protection during her respite outings

Non-melanoma skin cancer is more common in men, with almost double the incidence compared to women. Fortunately, being sun smart is a simple and effective way to reduce your risk of developing skin cancer. Most skin cancers can be prevented by the use of good sun protection. That's why all Australians are urged to use the five forms of sun protection:

- slip on sun-protective clothing
- slop on SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
- slap on a broad-brimmed hat
- seek shade
- slide on sunglasses.

A NATURAL SOURCE OF VITAMIN D

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is both the major cause of skin cancer and the best natural source of vitamin D that promotes bone growth and assists the body to absorb calcium. It can be tricky balancing too much sun exposure with maintaining vitamin D levels. Another complication is the ageing process. As we age, we also lose some of the ability to synthesize vitamin D from sunlight.

A vitamin D deficiency may contribute to poor general health in older people, arthritis, osteoporosis, muscle weakness, hip fractures, diabetes, cancer and heart disease.



The Byron carer

November 2018
Volume 17 Issue 11
www.byronrespite.com.au

Byron Shire Respite Service is located at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Rd, Brunswick Heads.

Our incorporated non-government community based organisation is managed by a local committee and covers the shires of Byron, Ballina and Lismore. Respite care is delivered through our Changed Behaviour, Day Respite and Social Support projects, with a person centred enablement approach across the respite continuum.

Telephone Barbara Chambers on:
02) 6685 1619
or Colin Munro: 02) 6685 1921

Website: www.byronrespite.com.au
Email: service@byronrespite.com.au



Byron Shire Respite Service acknowledge and pay respect to the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land on which we live and care – and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.

continued overleaf ►

HOW MUCH SUN DO WE NEED FOR VITAMIN D?

When the skin is exposed to UV radiation from the sun, vitamin D is formed through a series of processes that start in the skin.

The amount of sun exposure you need to make vitamin D depends on a range of factors such as the UV level, your skin type, and your lifestyle. UV levels vary across Australia and throughout the year. Therefore, the amount of time you need to be in the sun to make vitamin D will vary according to your location, the season and the time of day.

The amount of vitamin D you make is also related to the amount of skin exposed to the sun – if you expose more of your skin, in most cases you'll make more vitamin D.

However, prolonged sun exposure does not cause your vitamin D levels to increase further, but does increase your risk of skin cancer.

In addition, some medications are associated with photosensitivity (a phototoxic reaction), so older people should check their medications before they head out into the sun.

When UV levels are higher, most people need just a few minutes of sun exposure, such as walking to the local shops, to get enough vitamin D.

To find out more and read the original transcript of this article, visit www.cancer.org.au

Groups within the population that are at higher risk of vitamin D deficiency include:

- People with naturally very dark skin, as the melanin in dark skin affects UV penetration.
- People with little or no sun exposure including older adults, people living in residential care or people who are housebound
- People who wear concealing clothing
- People who deliberately avoid sun exposure for cosmetic or health reasons
- People hospitalised for a long time.

Dementia and Communication

Losing the ability to communicate can be one of the most frustrating and difficult problems for people living with dementia, their families and carers.

As the illness progresses, a person with dementia experiences a gradual lessening of their ability to communicate. They find it more and more difficult to express themselves clearly and to understand what others say.

Try a caring attitude

People retain their feelings and emotions even though they may not understand what is being said, so it is important to always maintain their dignity and self esteem. Always allow plenty of time for a response and communicate with feelings of warmth and affection.

Try the right environment

- Avoid competing noises such as TV or radio
- Stay still while talking and within the person's line of vision
- Maintain regular routines to help minimise confusion
- It is much less confusing if everyone

uses the same approach. Repeating the message in exactly the same way is important for all the family and all carers.

Try body language

You may need to use hand gestures and facial expressions to make yourself understood. Pointing or demonstrating can help. Touching and holding their hand may help keep their attention and show that you care. A warm smile and shared laughter can often communicate more than words can.

Ways of talking

- Remain calm and talk in a gentle, matter of fact way
- Keep sentences short and simple, focusing on one idea at a time
- Always allow plenty of time for what you have said to be understood
- It can be helpful to use orienting names whenever you can, such as "Your son Jack".

What NOT to do

- Don't argue. It will only make the situation worse
- Don't order the person around
- Don't tell them what they can't do. Instead suggest what the person can do
- Don't be condescending. A condescending tone of voice can be picked up, even if the words are not understood
- Don't ask a lot of direct questions that rely on a good memory
- Don't talk about people in front of them as if they are not there.

Visit www.dementia.org.au to view more great help sheets.

Need support?

| **My Aged Care** 1800 200 422 for information about the Australian Government's aged care system and services. www.myagedcare.gov.au

If you require emergency respite, please call: 1800 052 222 (24hrs)

- | **Call Colin or Barbara at Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. to discuss any aspect of your role as a carer.** ph: (02) 6685 1921
- | **National Dementia Helpline** ph: 1800 100 500
- | **Carers Counselling Service** ph: (02) 6628 6416
- | **Carers NSW** ph: 1800 242 636
- | **Sandra Kimball Counselling** ph: 0458 175 962
- | **Far North Coast Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre** ph: 1800 052 222
- | **National Continence Helpline** ph: 1800 330 066
- | **NSW Elder Abuse Helpline** ph: 1800 628 221

Aids:

- | **Byron Ballina Home Maintenance and Modification Service (HMMS) Inc. 1/65 Centennial Circuit, Byron Bay** ph: (02) 6685 7312
- | **Bright Sky Cards for Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)** ph: 1300 886 601

Need Transport?

- | **Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport** ph: 1300 875 895
- Transport to medical appointments, weekly & fortnightly shopping outings & monthly social outings. The service is funded to support older people living at home independently or have a permanent disability or Indigenous Australians aged over 50 years. Phone Kathryn in the Byron office on: 1300 875 895 for transport to medical appointments or Amanda for any shopping bus or social bus enquiries.

Travel for medical appointments free with travel voucher or for Veteran and Widow Gold Card holders:

- | **Byron Shire Limousines** ph: (02) 6685 5008
- | **Brunswick Limousines** phone David on: 0412 855 747.

Upcoming holiday closures at the Brunswick Centre

The summer and festive season is fast approaching, and now is a good time for carers to start planning for the Christmas and New Year break.

The last day of centre-based respite will be Friday the 21st of December.

The centre will re-open again on Monday January 7th.

If you think you may require service during this time, please contact Barbara on: 6685 1619.

If you require emergency respite during the holidays or at any other time, please telephone the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre on 1800 052 222.

Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. Activity Timetable

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday
10am – 2:30pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific	10am – 3:00pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Older people	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific

Lunch, morning and afternoon teas are provided and the cost for the day including transport is \$20.

DEMENTIA AND STAYS IN HOSPITAL



When a person with dementia or cognitive impairment spends time in hospital, they may experience high levels of anxiety and the value of carer information cannot be underestimated.

THE TOP 5 LIST

The TOP 5 was developed by the Central Coast Local Health District and has since been implemented in hospitals across NSW. It is an opportunity for carers to give hospital staff real insight into the history and preferences of their loved one, so they can provide personalised care.

It may not be easy for staff to communicate effectively with a person with dementia, or understand the often subtle signs that may indicate that the person's anxiety is escalating.

Carers can complete the information on the TOP 5 form at home before the person is admitted to hospital, and talk through strategies that they find successful with nursing staff once the person is admitted. The form should be made available

to every staff member to improve communication (and therefore care) between the patient, the carer and the health care team.

Up to five strategies may be recorded, however it is noted that in some cases, carers may only document one or two relevant strategies that work well to reduce their loved-one's anxiety when their routine changes, or if they are in a strange environment.

The questions below are about the person that you care for and will assist with personalising their care:

- Are there things/situations that you know of that may cause distress? e.g. colours, topics, gender of staff, visitors
- If unsettled, are there words or actions that will help settle and calm? e.g. listening to music, a cup of tea, reading the paper
- Are there any set routines that have been developed to help keep the person reassured? e.g. at bedtime, with meals, personal care, when taking medication
- Are there any repetitive questions or recurring issues that may need specific answers? What is the preferred answer?
- Is there somebody that might be called out for? A person or a pet?
- Are you aware of any signs or triggers that indicate a need or a want? e.g. fidgeting to indicate a need to go to the toilet.



New to caring?

Join our Carer Coffee Club

If you and your loved-one have only recently visited us at Byron Shire Respite Service or are a new carer in our area, we would love to meet you. Byron Shire Carers is an opportunity to chat to others new to caring or the Byron shire.

If you are interested in attending a meeting at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Road, Brunswick Heads, please register your interest by telephoning Barbara on: 6685 1619.

If you need assistance, or would like to discuss any aspect of your caring role before that time, please call Barbara on: 6685 1619

If you are caring for a person with dementia, and like to be prepared - its a great idea to fill in a TOP 5 form and keep it in a handy place for emergencies. You may like to laminate the form or place it in a plastic sleeve, so you can blue-tac it to the wall above the person's bed and reuse it as often as necessary. You may also like to print yourself a spare copy to update information and strategies to communicate and care for the person if required.

If you have not received the Top 5 form with this newsletter, ask your doctor or member of your health care team for a copy.

Surname..... MRN.....
Given Names.....
Date of Birth..... Sex.....
(Affix patient label here)



Strategies to Support Care and Communication

Please keep this form in a central place where staff can access it. If the individual is in hospital, place the form on top of the bed chart notes. The TOP 5 form should travel with the individual if transferred to a health care service or to their home.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Carer Name: Date:

Staff Member: Date:

The Clinical Excellence Commission would like to acknowledge the Carer Support Unit, Central Coast Local Health District for the integration of their concept and materials to support the further uptake of the TOP 5 initiative. The Clinical Excellence Commission would also like to acknowledge the support of the HCF Health and Medical Research Foundation.