



# PRACTICE NEWSLETTER NO.6

## Brand Switches:

From time to time Pharmac, NZ's medication buying agency sources cheaper formulations of prescribed medications. It is normal for pharmacists to advise a medication change has been made so patients are aware of this, but there have been instances where this hasn't happened. In most cases the change makes no difference because the new brand is always analysed to ensure equivalence.

Despite this, it occasionally can make a difference. Currently the anti-epileptic medication Lamotrigine is the subject of a brand switch. Because of the importance of effective seizure control, there are extra measures to ensure the safety of this switch.

We will be contacting our patients on this medication and offering them a free review.

Anyone taking Lamotrigine is eligible and you don't have to wait to be contacted if you are concerned.

## Christmas Hours:

The surgery will be closed on the weekends and public holidays over the Xmas, New Year holiday. The Medical and Injury Centre (546 8881) will be open for urgent care on those days. If you phone the surgery as usual, your call will be diverted there.

We will be open from 9am-4pm for urgent problems on December 27th, 28th, 30th, 31st and 3rd January. We will resume normal service on Monday January 6th.

Please remember to stock up on your regular medication so you don't run out over the holiday period.



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## Mirena now Funded:

In more news from Pharmac, Mirena, an expensive, highly effective intrauterine contraceptive device is funded from 1st of November.

We have doctors who can insert this device here. Mirena is effective for up to 5 years and can control heavy bleeding.

## CSC cards:

Reduced fees for patients with a community services card (CSC) have been here for about a year but there are still people who may be eligible for reduced fees CSCs, especially young people and people on variable incomes who haven't yet checked their eligibility yet.

Give yourself a Christmas present and get a CSC if you are entitled to it. The Work and Income website has easy-to-understand information on this.

## Alannah and Ed's changed days:

Dr Alannah Stockwell is now doing two full days Mondays and Wednesdays. This means the same number of sessions per week but she is no longer here Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Dr Ed Johnson is doing a lot of locum work for us so his regular sessions vary each week.

Ask reception or look online.