



Our Country Practice



Swift Street Medical Centre
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(9am to 5pm - Monday to Friday)

It's the festive season once again .. a time for
celebrating with family, friends and loved ones.

... all at

**Swift Street Medical
Centre**

*would like to wish you and yours,
a very safe
and
Happy Christmas*

**Merry
Christmas**



It's not always a "Merry" Christmas ...

Christmas is marketed as the season of goodwill and festiveness, but for many people it can be a really tough time and a source of 'festive stress' rather than 'festive cheer'. Relationships can be one factor in the formula of festive stress. You might find it hard because you miss family and friends you can't be with, or, if your family is nearby, because it's a strain spending a lot of time with them. We all hope to spend time with people that make us feel happy and positive during the festive season, however this isn't always possible. Feeling this kind of stress can actually be helpful. It reminds us of one of the most important things in life - relationships. Many people put off taking care of their relationships throughout the year, however Christmas, more than any other time of year, forces people to look at their relationships. If the relationships are unpleasant or if its loneliness that is experienced during this time, then the examining process can be difficult.

The feelings of stress, anxiety and depression are common during the festive season. If nothing else, reassure yourself that these feelings are normal. Things you can try to reduce the amount of unpleasant feelings experienced on Christmas Day and throughout the season are:

- * Have realistic expectations of yourself and others. Don't expect miracles, if you and certain family members bicker all year long, you can be sure there will be tension at Christmas lunch too. Christmas isn't a time to address long-term conflict. Try to let go of hard feelings at least for that one day, it will help you get through the holidays and even enjoy yourself.
- * Pick who you spend time with and talk to. Do things with people you feel most comfortable with. Going for a long walk with a favourite relative or friend, will help you get away and spend time with the person you would most like to.



**If you find that you are having a hard time managing feelings of stress, anxiety or depression, it can be a good idea to talk to someone you trust or phone one of the following: Lifeline - 13 11 14
beyondblue infoline - 1300 22 4636**

Keeping your pets cool this Christmas

Most everyone knows that hot weather can be dangerous. Heat stroke and hyperthermia claim human victims every summer. And the hotter the temperatures, of course, the greater the risks. So take care to keep your cool this summer. But also remember to take care of your pets, because the heat can be fatal for them as well. According to Dr. Steven Ferguson of the Australian Veterinary Association, "Pets are just as susceptible to heat-related illness as humans." So while *you're* surviving this sizzling summer, make sure that your *pets* are surviving as well.

TIPS FOR HELPING KEEP YOU PET COOL

Here are 10 tips from the AVA for keeping your pet safe and comfy through this scorching summertime season:

Keep plenty of water available for your pet at all times. Make sure the water is cool and fresh, and keep it in the shade. Put out multiple bowls of water on really hot days. Use bowls that can't be tipped, and place them in a shady and (relatively!) cool spot. Older pets are even more susceptible to the heat, so keep a special eye on them. Watch for indications that they are having trouble breathing.

Dogs tend to enjoy sitting in the sun. But lots of time spent in the sun can cause heat stroke and increase the risk of skin cancers. So be sure to provide a shady area for your dog at all times. Help your dog cool off with a kid's paddling pool. Put just a couple of inches of water in it, and place it in a shady location.

Add a few cubes of ice to your pets' water bowls. They'll enjoy it, *and* it will help to keep their body temperature down; If your pets can't be in an air-conditioned area, consider placing a fan where it will blow on them.

Exercise your pets only in the early morning or late evening. Avoid the hottest part of the day. Freeze some treats and give them to your pets. It will keep them busy for a while and help cool them down.

Some longhaired dogs will benefit from a trim.

Check with your vet.



Summer is the time for lots of fun activities, but it's also a time of potential danger, for both you and your pets. So take care of yourself, take care of your pets, stay cool – and have fun!

Boiled Fruit Cake



(375g) Raisins
375g Mixed Fruit
500g Glace Cherries
1 cup Dates, chopped
250g butter, chopped
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup Sugar
1/2 cup (125ml) sherry
1/2 cup (125ml) water
5 eggs, beaten lightly
2 tablespoons apricot jam
1 cup orange juice
1 cup Walnuts
1 tsp Mixed Spice
400g plain flour
80g self-raising flour
Pinch of Salt
1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
1/4 cup sherry, extra

(This cake can be made up to three months ahead. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place or refrigerate if the weather is humid. Suitable to freeze. Not suitable to microwave.)

Combine fruit, butter, sugar, brandy and water in a large saucepan. Stir constantly over heat, without boiling, until the sugar is dissolved. Bring to the boil; reduce heat, simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Transfer mixture to a large bowl; cool to room temperature. Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease and line a deep 19cm square cake pan or a deep 22cm round cake pan; or 2 large loaf pans.

Add the eggs, jam, juice and walnuts to fruit mixture; stir until combined. Stir in sifted dry ingredients. Spread mixture evenly into prepared pan/pans. Bake in a slow oven for about 2½ to 3 hours / 1 to 1½ hours for loaf pans or until cooked when testing with a skewer. (Cover the cake loosely with foil during cooking if it is over-browning).

Brush the extra sherry over the top of the hot cake; cover tightly with foil, cool cake in pan.