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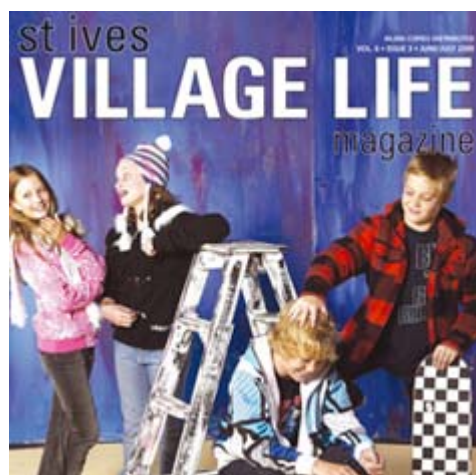
HOME

CENTRE INFO

DIRECTORY

VILLAGE LIFE

KIDS CLUB



## Health

Children's Health in the Village

Physiotherapy For Children And Youth

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### Children's Health in the Village

The Village has a range of health professionals dedicated improving your family's health. This issue they offer their on keeping kids healthy and active.

#### Pearly Whites

##### Primary Teeth

Children's first baby or primary teeth allow your child to speak and chew properly while maintaining the space required to allow the permanent teeth to erupt.

Daily care is needed so that teeth are not lost through decay (caries). Caries in primary teeth are often caused by prolonged contact with liquids and foods with the teeth. Bacteria feed on the sugar from sticky plaque. Plaque acids eat into the tooth enamel and cause decay.

Rampant caries can be devastating for the child and the parent. It can lead to missing teeth which in a young child can lead to oral problems of the permanent teeth affecting the bite and requiring extensive treatment.

##### The main risk factors for early childhood caries are:

- Putting your child to sleep with a bottle of sweet flavoured milk, cordial, soft drink or fruit juice.
- Frequent night time bottle feeding or excessive at will breast feeding after the age of 12 months.
- Frequent snacking or grazing on a high sugar diet.
- Lack of thorough brushing and flossing.

##### To reduce the risks of early childhood caries:

- Brush and floss daily. Supervise your child's brushing and flossing until the child can manage it alone. This may be about age eight.
- Eat good healthy food, limit sweets to mealtimes.
- Use a fluoride toothpaste (low fluoride toothpaste for children under 6 years).

Sale  
What's On  
What's New  
Community  
Kids  
Fashion  
Food  
Gift Guide  
Home  
Health  
Beauty  
Top Tips  
Competitions  
Magazine Mailing List

- Have regular dental visits.
- Do not dip the dummy in honey or other sweet products and sharing spoons or tasting your baby's food with the same spoon can transfer decay causing bacteria to the child. Wash a drop dummy under a running tap water.
- Phase out bottle feeding by about 12 months
- Encourage your child to drink water, limit juice intake to one cup/day at meal times only, as it contains a lot of sugar. Do not let your baby sip juice all day.
- Your child's first visit to the dentist should be at about one to two years of age.

Children who have regular checkups and are comfortable visiting a dentist have fewer dental problems and are less likely to have emergency dental visits. Regular dental checkups are important as they can prevent toothache, infection, dental abscess and premature loss of teeth.

### **Oral Hygiene for your baby**

Gently wipe your baby's gums with a warm moistened face wipe after every feed. Once the primary teeth start to erupt, brush them with plain water and a baby's toothbrush with a small head and rounded bristles. Brush twice a day, morning and evening with emphasis on brushing just before bed.

Children tend to imitate their parents' behaviours so if good nutrition and oral hygiene are important to you they will be important to your child. A child who understands that teeth are important for the function and smile is more likely to take care of them.

### **Wisdom Teeth**

Wisdom teeth erupt around the ages of 18-21 and are so called because they appear in the mouth during late adolescence, when a person is considered to be 'wise'.

If the jaw is not large enough to accommodate all the teeth in alignment, wisdom teeth don't have room to erupt, so they get impacted. Serious problems can be caused by impacted wisdom teeth such as gum infection around the tooth, decay, damage to the tooth and cyst formation. Such problems may occur suddenly at inconvenient times.

Wisdom teeth can be removed using local anaesthetic injected under general anaesthetic. General anaesthetic is administered by a specialist anaesthetist in a day surgery facility. The choice between general anaesthetic or local anaesthetic depends on personal preference, tolerance of surgery and the difficulty of a particular procedure. If four difficult wisdom teeth require removal and the patient is nervous about treatment, surgery under general anaesthetic is suited. Surgery is best performed before 25 years of age. A minor operation at 20 can become difficult in older patients. As you get older the risk of complications increases, the roots of the teeth lengthen and healing is slower.

Removal of wisdom teeth can be discussed with the dentist or oral surgeon after they assess the individual case and situation. An X-ray of the teeth is also required. All the pros and cons of removal can be talked through before any decision is made.

**For help with any of these problems, call in to the St Ives Centre, shop 139, St Ives Village or phone 9983 1166 for an appointment.**

## [Back to Top](#)

### Physiotherapy For Children And Youth

In the age of technology, where children spend so much time the computer and television screen, parents should encourage to be physically active and participate in sport, achieving a number of significant benefits:

- Reduced risk of obesity
- Increased cardiovascular fitness
- Healthy growth of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons
- Improved coordination and balance
- Greater ability to physically relax and, therefore, avoid the complications of chronic muscular tension (such as headache backache)
- Improved sleep
- Mental health benefits, such as greater confidence
- Improved social skills
- Improved personal skills, including cooperation and leadership

Physiotherapists are particularly skilled at identifying the signs of overtraining and can advise how to ensure that children are not at risk.

Here are some of the more common conditions seen by Physiotherapists.

#### **Back Pain**

Back pain is a condition we usually associate with growing old. However, these days more and more children and young people are also reporting discomfort.

In many cases, the cause of back pain in younger age groups is carrying excessive loads to and from school in an ill-fitting backpack.

#### **Tips for back packs:**

- Limit your load; plan ahead so you don't carry too much
- Never carry more than 10% of your body weight
- Pack heavy items closest to the spine
- Take regular short rests when carrying a heavy pack
- Always wear your backpack over both shoulders

#### **Scoliosis**

Scoliosis is a sideways curving of the spine that can often result in an 'S' shape or 'C' shape curve in the spine. The curve is usually in the Thoracic or Lumbar regions of the spine. One in 10 people will have scoliosis, but only two to three in 1,000 will need treatment.

**Symptoms include:**

- One shoulder raised higher than the other
- A more prominent shoulder blade on one side (thoracic scoliosis)
- Leaning to one side - head not centered directly over the pelvis
- Clothes not hanging properly
- Back pain (not always present)

Strengthening and stretching exercises, as well as deep tissue massage can help scoliosis.

**Osgood-Schlatter's Syndrome**

This condition was named after two physicians in 1903, Dr. R. Osgood and Dr. Carl Schlatter who defined the disease. It is a condition that affects teenagers. This often seems to occur during a sudden growth spurt. The tendon attaching the quadriceps muscle to the knee joint fails to keep up with the lengthening femur (thigh bone) and pulls tight.

The tibial tuberosity, or bony bump of the shinbone just below the knee, swells and feels tender and painful when the joint is used. Osgood-Schlatter syndrome usually resolves by itself with time. Your Physiotherapist will advise you on correct management.

**Sever's Disease**

Sever's disease is the second most common injury seen in young people after Osgood-Schlatter's of the knee. It occurs mainly in active children aged 8 to 15 years old and is associated with a rapid growth spurt.

The Achilles tendon attaches the calf muscle to the back of the heel (calcaneum). During puberty, the heel may grow faster than the surrounding soft tissue, which means the Achilles tendon is pulled uncomfortably tight. The pressure on the back of the heel bone can injure the growing part of the heel. The pain is made worse by activity, especially running or jumping.

Your physiotherapist will explain the correct management including treating the muscles and tendons, as well as showing you the stretches and strengthening exercises. Orthotics are sometimes prescribed to correct poor foot biomechanics.

**St Ives Physiotherapy and Sports Therapy Centre is located in the Loft, above the Market Room. Call 9144 1118 to make a booking.**

[Back to Top](#)

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