

Trans health



transmed
MEDICAL FUND

THIRD EDITION OF 2023

Welcome to
the third
2023 edition
of TransHealth.

IN THIS EDITION:

- Principal Officer's note
- Diverticulitis
- Cholangiocarcinoma
- Cholecystitis
- The importance of a tobacco-free smile
- Important contact details
- Competition entry



Petrus
Wassermann
Principal Officer

Principal Officer's note

Welcome to the
third 2023
edition of
TransHealth.

In this edition we cover cholangiocarcinoma, which is a type of cancer that forms in the slender tubes (bile ducts) that carry the digestive fluid bile. Also included is an article on diverticulitis, which is an inflammation or infection of the pouches formed in the colon (diverticula).

Remember to let the Fund know when your contact details have changed. If the Fund does not have updated contact details for you, we are unable to send you communication. If you have an email address and you have not updated the information, please contact the customer service department on 0800 450 010 or send an email to membership@transmed.co.za. Please include your membership number on all correspondence to the Fund.

We hope that you will take the time to read this newsletter and that you find it informative and helpful.

In our regular competition, we include a brain teaser where we ask you to complete a puzzle to find a missing word through a process of elimination. All the answers are in this edition. There are great prizes up for grabs. With that said, I would like to congratulate the winners of the second edition of 2023 competition.

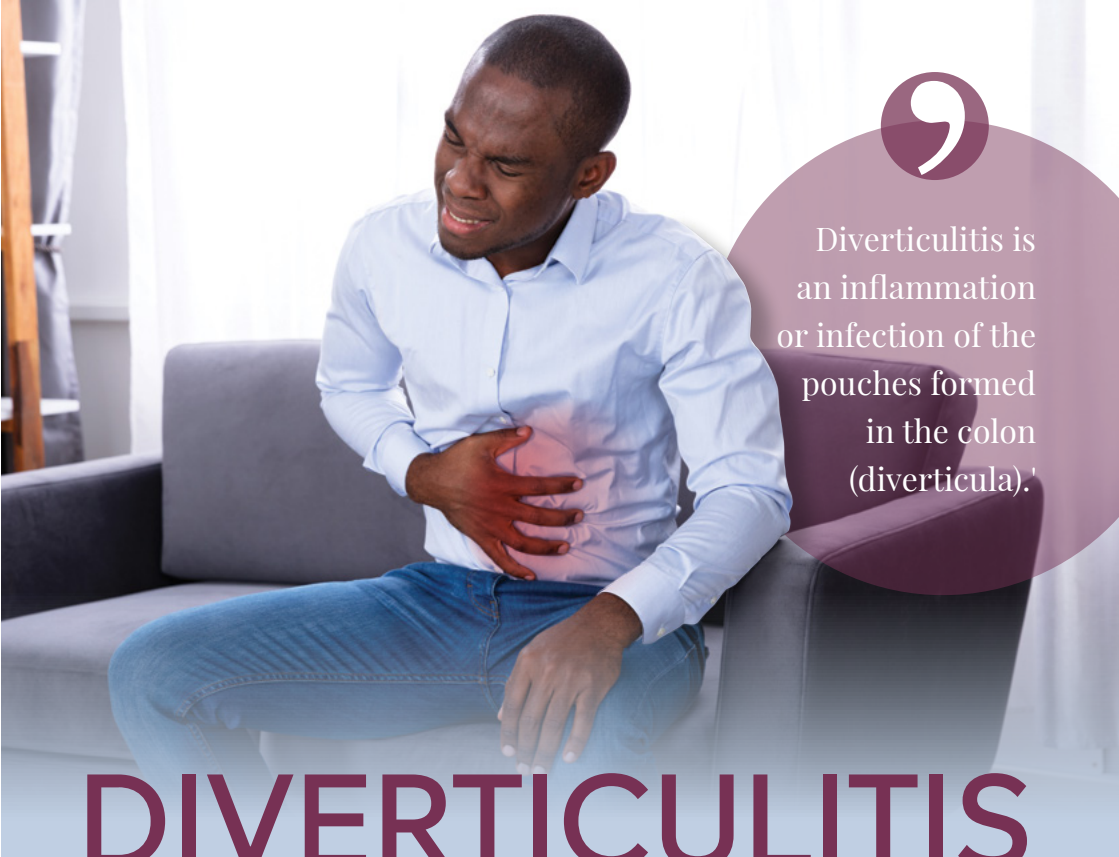
We welcome any suggestions that you may have on articles or member benefits you would like to see published in future newsletters. Please send your suggestions to suggestions@transmed.co.za.

Until the next edition, stay healthy and keep well.

Warm regards

Petrus Wassermann
Principal Officer

9



Diverticulitis is an inflammation or infection of the pouches formed in the colon (diverticula).'

DIVERTICULITIS

Diverticula are small, bulging pouches that can form in the lining of your digestive system.

They are found most often in the lower part of the large intestine (colon). Diverticula are common, especially after the age of 40, and seldom cause problems.

However, when one or more of the diverticula or pouches become inflamed, and in some cases infected, that condition is known as diverticulitis.

Diverticulitis can cause severe abdominal pain, fever, nausea and a marked change in your bowel habits.

Mild diverticulitis can be treated with rest, changes in your diet and antibiotics. Severe or recurring diverticulitis may require surgery.

DIVERTICULITIS

continues>>

Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of diverticulitis include:

- pain, which may be constant and persist for several days – the lower left side of the abdomen is the usual site of the pain; sometimes, however, the right side of the abdomen is more painful
- nausea and vomiting
- fever
- abdominal tenderness
- constipation or, less commonly, diarrhoea.

Causes

Diverticula usually develop when naturally weak places in your colon give way under pressure. This causes marble-sized pouches to protrude through the colon wall.

Diverticulitis occurs when diverticula tear, resulting in inflammation and, in some cases, infection.

Risk factors

Several factors may increase your risk of developing diverticulitis:

- **Ageing:** The incidence of diverticulitis increases with age.
- **Obesity:** Being seriously overweight increases your odds of developing diverticulitis.
- **Smoking:** People who smoke cigarettes are more likely than non-smokers to experience diverticulitis.
- **Lack of exercise:** Vigorous exercise appears to lower your risk of diverticulitis.
- **Diet high in animal fat and low in fibre:** A low-fibre diet in combination with a high intake of animal fat seems to increase risk, although the role of low fibre alone isn't clear.



Exercise regularly. Exercise promotes normal bowel function and reduces pressure inside your colon.'

Prevention

To help prevent diverticulitis:

- **Exercise regularly.** Exercise promotes normal bowel function and reduces pressure inside your colon. Try to exercise at least 30 minutes on most days.
- **Eat more fibre.** A high-fibre diet decreases the risk of diverticulitis. Fibre-rich foods, such as fresh fruit and vegetables and whole grains, soften waste material and help it pass more quickly through your colon. Eating seeds and nuts isn't associated with developing diverticulitis.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Fibre works by absorbing water and increasing the soft, bulky waste in your colon. But if you don't drink enough liquid to replace what's absorbed, fibre can be constipating.
- **Avoid smoking.** Smoking is associated with an increased risk of diverticulitis.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diverticulitis/symptoms-causes/syc-20371758#dialogld62187556>



CHOLANGIOCARCINOMA

Cholangiocarcinoma is a type of cancer that forms in the slender tubes (bile ducts) that carry the digestive fluid bile. Bile ducts connect your liver to your gallbladder and to your small intestine.

Cholangiocarcinoma, also known as bile duct cancer, occurs mostly in people over the age of 50, although it can occur at any age.

Doctors divide cholangiocarcinoma into different types based on where the cancer occurs in the bile ducts:

- *Intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma* occurs in the parts of the bile ducts within the liver and is sometimes classified as a type of liver cancer.
- *Hilar cholangiocarcinoma* occurs in the bile ducts just outside the liver. This type is also called perihilar cholangiocarcinoma.
- *Distal cholangiocarcinoma* occurs in the portion of the bile duct nearest the small intestine. This type is also called extrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma.

Causes

Cholangiocarcinoma happens when cells in the bile ducts develop changes in their DNA. A cell's DNA contains the instructions that tell a cell what to do. The changes tell the cells to multiply out of control and form a mass of cells (tumour) that can invade and destroy healthy body tissue. It's not clear what causes the changes that lead to cholangiocarcinoma.



Cholangiocarcinoma happens when cells in the bile ducts develop changes in their DNA.'

Risk factors

Factors that may increase your risk of cholangiocarcinoma include:

- **Primary sclerosing cholangitis:** This disease causes hardening and scarring of the bile ducts.
- **Chronic liver disease:** Scarring of the liver caused by a history of chronic liver disease increases the risk of cholangiocarcinoma.
- **Bile duct problems present at birth:** People born with a choledochal cyst, which causes dilated and irregular bile ducts, have an increased risk of cholangiocarcinoma.
- **Older age:** Cholangiocarcinoma occurs most often in adults over the age of 50.
- **Smoking:** Smoking is associated with an increased risk of cholangiocarcinoma.
- **Diabetes:** People who have type 1 or 2 diabetes may have an increased risk of cholangiocarcinoma.
- **Certain inherited conditions:** Some DNA changes passed from parents to children cause conditions that increase the risk of cholangiocarcinoma. Examples of these conditions include cystic fibrosis and Lynch syndrome.

Prevention

To reduce your risk of cholangiocarcinoma, you can:

- **Stop smoking.** Smoking is linked to an increased risk of cholangiocarcinoma. If you smoke, stop. If you have tried quitting in the past and haven't been successful, talk to your doctor about strategies to help you quit.
- **Reduce your risk of liver disease.** Chronic liver disease is associated with an increased risk of cholangiocarcinoma. Some causes of liver disease can't be prevented, but others can. Do what you can to take care of your liver.

For instance, to reduce your risk of liver inflammation (cirrhosis), drink alcohol in moderation if you choose to drink. For healthy adults, that means up to one drink a day for women and up to two drinks a day for men. Maintain a healthy weight. When working with chemicals, follow the safety instructions.



CHOLECYSTITIS

Cholecystitis is
caused by
inflammation of
the gallbladder.

The gallbladder is a small, pear-shaped organ on the right side of the belly (abdomen) beneath the liver. The gallbladder holds a digestive fluid (bile) that's released into the small intestine.

In most cases, gallstones blocking the tube leading out of the gallbladder cause cholecystitis. This results in a bile build-up that can cause inflammation. Other causes of cholecystitis include bile duct problems, tumours, serious illness and certain infections.

If left untreated, cholecystitis can lead to severe, sometimes life-threatening complications, such as a gallbladder rupture. Treatment for cholecystitis often involves surgery to remove the gallbladder.



To lower your risk,
choose a diet high in
fruit, vegetables and
whole grain.'

Symptoms

Symptoms of cholecystitis may include:

- severe pain in your upper right or central abdomen
- pain that spreads to your right shoulder or back
- tenderness over your abdomen when it's touched
- nausea
- vomiting
- fever.

Cholecystitis symptoms often occur after a meal, particularly a large or fatty one.

Causes

Cholecystitis is when your gallbladder is inflamed. Gallbladder inflammation can be caused by:

- **Gallstones:** Most often, cholecystitis is the result of hard particles that develop in your gallbladder (gallstones). Gallstones can block the tube (cystic duct) through which bile flows when it leaves the gallbladder. Bile builds up in the gallbladder, causing inflammation.
- **Tumours:** A tumour may prevent bile from draining out of your gallbladder properly. This causes bile build-up that can lead to cholecystitis.
- **Bile duct blockage:** Stones or thickened bile and tiny particles (sludge) can block the bile duct and lead to cholecystitis. Kinking or scarring of the bile ducts can also cause blockage.

- **Infection:** AIDS and certain viral infections can trigger gallbladder inflammation.
- **Severe illness:** Very severe illness can damage blood vessels and decrease blood flow to the gallbladder, leading to cholecystitis.

Risk factor

Having gallstones is the main risk factor for developing cholecystitis.

Prevention

You can reduce your risk of cholecystitis by taking the following steps to prevent gallstones:

- **Lose weight slowly.** Rapid weight loss can increase the risk of gallstones.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight makes you more likely to develop gallstones. To achieve a healthy weight, reduce calories and increase your physical activity. Maintain a healthy weight by continuing to eat well and exercise.
- **Choose a healthy diet.** Diets high in fat and low in fibre may increase the risk of gallstones. To lower your risk, choose a diet high in fruit, vegetables and whole grain.


Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cholecystitis/symptoms-causes/syc-20364867>

THE
IMPORTANCE
OF A
**TOBACCO-
FREE**

Smile



It is important for people who smoke or vape to visit their dental practitioner regularly to detect and treat any oral health problems and to check for signs of mouth cancer.'



Your lungs and gums agree on something that you should

have heard before: smoking is a very harmful habit. Tobacco use in any form, be it cigarettes, pipes, vaping or chewing tobacco, can have seriously negative effects on your oral health and particularly on your gums.

It is important for people who smoke or vape to visit their dental practitioner regularly to detect and treat any oral health problems and to check for signs of mouth cancer.

Smoking affects your teeth, gums and oral health

People who smoke have a higher risk of gum disease, tooth loss, complications after tooth removal, surgery in the mouth and developing mouth cancer. They are also more likely to get infections and do not heal as well as non-smokers.

The following are common oral problems that affect smokers:

- bad taste in the mouth and bad breath or halitosis
- decreased sense of taste
- gum disease
- oral cancer
- poor healing after mouth and gum surgery
- slow healing after tooth removal, which is also known as dry socket
- tooth loss
- whitening of the soft tissue in the mouth, which is called smoker's keratosis.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF A TOBACCO- FREE

Smile



The risks of vaping

If you vape, make sure to tell your dentist.

Although vaping may seem less harmful than smoking regular cigarettes, this may not be the case for the health of your mouth. When you vape, you inhale vaping juices that include nicotine, heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and cancer-causing chemicals. The risk of vaping devices causing problems in your mouth is much higher if they contain nicotine.

Vaping may be seen as a way to quit smoking. Yet vaping may make it harder to quit smoking completely, which increases the risk of diseases associated with tobacco use, such as mouth cancer.



How to prevent teeth and gum problems

To avoid gum disease, a good oral hygiene routine must be a priority. If you are a smoker, there are some things you can do to prevent tooth and gum problems, including the following:

- **If you smoke, try to quit.** If you are finding it difficult to quit smoking, reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke to start off with. Quitting smoking reduces the risk of developing gum disease and mouth cancer and improves the person's response to gum treatment.
- **When you use tobacco products, it may cause a dry mouth.** This makes it easier for the bacteria in your mouth to stick to your teeth and gums. Drink plenty of water and opt for sugar-free gum to stimulate saliva flow.
- **Use fluoride toothpaste** and brush your teeth for two minutes every morning and every night.
- **Floss every day** to clean between your teeth.
- **Visit your dentist every six to 12 months for a dental check-up and preventative care.** Regular visits to your dental healthcare professional will help prevent the development of tooth decay (caries) or gum disease, as they are able to detect and treat early oral disease before it becomes more serious.

Source: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/smoking-and-oral-health>



IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

DISCLAIMER: The information and articles in this newsletter do not constitute medical advice or a medical claim for any product of any nature whatsoever on behalf of the publisher, Fund, Administrator or the distributor. Consult a qualified healthcare practitioner for diagnosis or treatment of any diseases or medical conditions.

Who to call to get in touch with the Fund

Service	Link plan	Select and Prime plans
Customer service department	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 transmed@universal.co.za	0800 450 010 enquiries@transmed.co.za
Membership and contributions	0800 450 010	0800 450 010
Hospital and major medical pre-authorisation	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0800 225 151
Disease programmes	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0800 225 151
Ambulance authorisation	0800 115 750	0800 115 750
HIV/AIDS	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0860 109 793
Dental services	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	Select plan 0860 104 941 Prime plan 0800 450 010
Optical services	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	Select plan PPN 0861 103 529 Prime plan 0800 450 010
Fraud hotline	0800 000 436	0800 000 436
WhatsApp	0860 005 037	0860 005 037

Important email addresses

Services	Email address
Enquiries	enquiries@transmed.co.za
Banking details and membership	membership@transmed.co.za
Compliments	compliments@transmed.co.za
Complaints	complaints@transmed.co.za
Appeals	appeals@transmed.co.za
Claims	claims@transmed.co.za
Ex gratia	exgratia@transmed.co.za
Suggestions	suggestions@transmed.co.za
External service provider for the Link plan Universal Healthcare	transmed@universal.co.za

It is with great pleasure that we announce the winners of the brainteaser competition from the **second edition of TransHealth for 2023.**

WINNERS:

First prize
Mr MN Inggs

Second prize
Mr HA Pienaar

Third prize
Ms MM Sowden

Win with Transmed

Brainteaser competition

We are giving away prizes to the winners of our brainteaser competition. All you need to do is to complete the puzzle by circling the relevant words and finding the one that does not appear. The words may appear diagonally, vertically or horizontally. You will find the answers in this edition of the newsletter. The first correct entry will win R2 000. The second and third correct entries will each win R1 000.

Please note that terms and conditions apply.

You may use the following channels to forward your answers:

- Post: Brainteaser competition, PO Box 2269, Bellville 7535
- Email: enquiries@transmed.co.za
- Fax: 011 381 2041/42

Please write down the correct answer in the entry form along with your contact details. Your entry form must reach Transmed Medical Fund by no later than 30 September 2023.

S	R	L	V	Z	M	V	N	V	K	V	D	N	J	Q	A	J	G
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N	Q	X	R	Y	Q	W	E	U	E	E	S	C	U	I	C	K	R

FIND THE FOLLOWING WORDS IN THE PUZZLE:

- Cholera
- Chemical
- Associated
- Inflammation
- Waste
- Pouches
- Scarring
- Diabetes
- Fibre
- Absorbed
- Vegetables

ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE

.	S	.	C	P	K
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FULL NAME: _____

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: _____

CELL PHONE NUMBER: _____

TEL (H): _____

TEL (W): _____

ANSWER: _____

Terms and conditions

• The competition is only open to Transmed Medical Fund members and their registered dependants. • Late entries will not be considered for the draw. • Please note that entries may be posted, emailed or faxed to Transmed. • Winners will be notified telephonically and their names will be published in the TransHealth magazine. Transmed may require the publication of the photographs of the winners. • The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. • Entry into the competition signifies acceptance of all rules.