

What Is This Thing Called Life?

You watch the seconds turn into minutes
You see minutes turn into hours
The hours into days and the days into years
But did you ever pause to give vent to your fears?

As time goes on, so do your years
As time passes so do your experiences
So, do we learn from our happiness and sadness?
Expectations have always influenced our lives

In happiness and sadness
There are always questions that needs answers
In life it is a cycle of events
Looking up at the heavens we oft seek solace

Selfishness has always been the bane of our lives
Just pause awhile, reminisce and think of the instances
When ambition and greed did momentarily overcome our lives
Perhaps, the aftermath, causing you pain and regrets

Life is just one of those passing fancies
Dictated by wants and needs
But little does one want to remember or give any thoughts
That when you go - everything goes:
Earth-to-earth; dust-to-dust and ashes-to-ashes

Noor R. Rahim
September 2009



<https://www.elanka.com.au/>

BITES AND STINGS

Identifying bug bites: Signs and symptoms

Written by Zia Sherrell, MPH on January 17, 2022

Identifying bug bites can help a doctor treat the wound. Learn the signs and symptoms of common bug bites, as well as how to treat them, here.

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Thrombocytopenia treatment: What to know

Written by Zawn Villines on January 17, 2022

Thrombocytopenia treatment can involve ongoing monitoring, blood transfusions, medications, and, in some cases, surgery. Learn about these options.

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CERVICAL CANCER / HPV VACCINE

Is cervical cancer genetic?

Written by Jon Johnson on January 17, 2022

Some very rare types of cervical cancer can be hereditary, meaning they have a genetic component. Learn more about the causes, symptoms, and treatments here.

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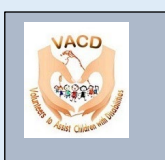
What to know about alcohol and hypoglycemia

Written by Zia Sherrell, MPH on January 17, 2022

Hypoglycemia may occur if the body attempts to detoxify and maintain blood sugar levels simultaneously. Read on for the effects of alcohol and preventions.

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VACD Children's Nutrition Program



In 2016 a government health inspector

visited our Sir Robert Clark Centre for Children with Disabilities in Bandarawela while the children were having their home-packed lunches. She shared her observations with our staff that the food the children brought was nutritionally poor. In fact, our staff had also observed that some children would only bring two slices of plain bread for their lunch. Consultant paediatricians who regularly examine our children too recommended that our children should be given nutritious food to support their growing bodies and minds.

In response to expert recommendations, we began our "VACD Nutrition Program" where the centre caretaker and rostered parents (in keeping with our policy of volunteerism and parental involvement) prepare and serve simple but nutritious meals (such as gram, manioc, sweet potato with accompaniments or basic rice and curry meal) daily to children attending our centres. The preparation of meals at times is taken as an opportunity to teach our children about good nutrition and how to prepare a basic meal, as a part of their life skills training. In addition, children also learn about sharing and social niceties while partaking of their meals.



The program that was first introduced at our Bandarawela Centre (above) was also implemented when we established our VACD Dora Jeanne Centre in Badulla (below).



The actual average monthly cost of implementing this program at our two existing centres has been around Rs. 30,000+. Ongoing costs are kept low as it only involves the purchase of main ingredients. Meal preparation is completed by our staff, parents, and children, thus eliminating labor costs and profit margins typically associated with commercially available meals

We project future daily attendance at our centres to be approximately 30 to 40 children per centre once COVID19 concerns subside and, together with the opening of the Welimada centre, the total number benefiting from this program to be approximately 100+ children.

The anticipated increase in daily attendance at our three VACD Centres and the projected trends in local food inflation enables us to estimate the aggregate cost of this project to be approximately Rs.75,000 (A\$ 500) per month.

We appeal to altruistic and benevolent sponsors to support our monthly financial commitments relating to this project by donating A\$ 25 or equivalent per month which is tax deductible for Australian based taxpayers

Please support our mission by donating via

Donations in Australian Dollars (tax deductible for Australian taxpayers) can be made via: <https://www.vacd.org.au/donate/> by credit card, PayPal & direct deposits while cash, cheque or direct transfers can be made to:

The VACD Australia Bank account:

Account Name: Volunteers to Assist Children with Disabilities Limited

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Branch: Cnr of Liverpool & Castlereagh Streets, Sydney NSW 2000

Account No: 1130 2156

Branch No: 062-016

BIC/SWIFT Code: CTBAAU25

Donations in Sri Lanka rupees can be made via the VACD Sri Lanka bank account as follows:

Name of account: Volunteers to Assist Children with Disabilities Private Limited

Bank: Seylan Bank

Branch: 240 Badulla Road, Bandarawela, Sri Lanka

Account No: 046035439722001

SWIFT Code: SEYBLKLX Bank Code: 7287 Branch Code: 46

We welcome you to be partners with us on this benevolent journey!

Please reach out to us at: fstephen@bigpond.net.au or visit us at: <https://www.vacd.org.au/> and please do share this newsletter with your family, friends, loved ones and colleagues so that together we can make a difference in the lives of children with disabilities, one by one!!!

Many thanks, best wishes, and warmest regards.... Felix Stephen

Chairman of the Board of Directors - VACD Ltd. Sydney – Australia – <https://www.vacd.org.au/>

Member of the Advisory Board – VACD Sri Lanka

Member of the Advisory Board – Two leaves Foundation Sri Lanka

Senior Associate – Cognoscenti Group – Sydney – Australia- <http://www.cognoscenti.global/>

Member of Investment Committee - Arrive Wealth Management - Brisbane – Australia –

<https://www.arrivewealthmanagement.com.au/>

50 YEARS IN AUSTRALIA



“Life will have its thorns of grief & sorrow, deeply into the heart they press. But, on the same tree grows the roses, roses of hope & happiness”

Congratulations to Charles & Claudette Schokman and their daughter Fiona Grech who on the 25th February 2022 celebrates 50 years living in Australia.

During this time, they have experienced many happy and joyous occasions, as well as some sad and difficult times. There have been seasons of highs and seasons of lows, of loss and success, but through all these changing scenes of life, the grace of God has carried them.

They count it a blessing and an achievement to have helped their father found an auxiliary of the Dematagoda Christian Guild in Australia (ASWG) and subsequently Operation Hope Inc.

They are overjoyed to have given their daughter Fiona in marriage to Chris Grech and celebrate in their achievements.

They are thankful to have been privileged to celebrate their parent's 60th wedding anniversary, their own 50th wedding anniversary and their mother's 100th birthday.

Charles and Claudette are grateful that they have been able to celebrate many key birthdays, especially this year as Charles celebrates 93 years, a wonderful milestone on the 24th February 2022.

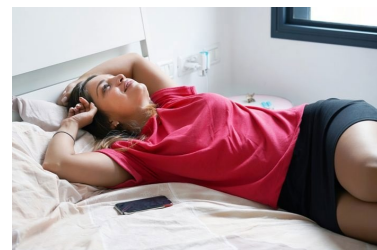
They hold happy memories of their journeys abroad, to their homeland Sri Lanka, to many other overseas countries, especially the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as well as travelling around Australia. They have particularly enjoyed organising outings and social lunches and dinners for the seniors along with the Evergreens, a group that promotes the social inclusion and connectedness of seniors to create a sense of belonging and help break social isolation.

Most importantly they are grateful to their family and friends for their support and encouragement throughout their life and to God for His countless blessings.

50 Interesting Sex Facts You Probably Didn't Know

We cover everything from why wearing socks is sexier than lingerie to how sleeping with your wife can get you ahead with your boss.

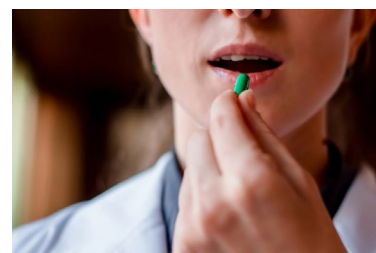
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This Is the Only CBD That Helps With My Anxiety and Insomnia

My days and nights have improved, thanks to a little dose of calm from Neurogan's line of CBD gummies.

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Signs of Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy

If you notice uncomfortable changes in your feet and legs, diabetes-related nerve damage could be to blame. Here's what you can do to prevent it.

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Why Diabetes and Heart Disease Are Linked

Treatments for Type 2 Diabetes

Your doctor will help fine-tune your meds, along with your diet and exercise routine, to meet your blood sugar goals.

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Best Veggies to Eat When You're Watching Carbs

Even the ones with a higher carb count per serving pack a big nutritional punch, so they're worth including in your diet.

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Best Food for Healthy Breasts

Try broccoli and its friends for antioxidants, flax seeds for omega-3s, and these other foods that help tame inflammation to keep your risk of breast cancer as low as possible.

[Read More](#)



Making the Most of Early-Stage Breast Cancer Treatment

See a few things you can do to manage the physical and emotional effects of early-stage breast cancer treatment.

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Study finds 'no adverse association between COVID-19 vaccination and fertility'

Written by Tim Newman on February 02, 2022

A study has added to the evidence that COVID-19 vaccination does not affect fertility. However, the results suggest that SARS-CoV-2 infection does briefly reduce fertility.

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Hypertension: Hospitalizations more than doubled between 2002 and 2014

Written by Tim Newman on February 02, 2022

New research finds that between 2002 and 2014 in the United States, the number of people hospitalized due to a hypertensive crisis more than doubled.

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Deciding on Your Cancer Treatment

Take these questions with you to your next appointment to help you understand your diagnosis and evaluate if this doctor is the right one for you.

[Read More](#)

Do supplements really benefit the immune system?

Written by Lindsey DeSoto, RDN, LD on February 02, 2022

Many people take supplements to strengthen their immune systems. But what is the evidence for this, and what are the limits?

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Pills vs. Insulin to Treat Type 2 Diabetes

Here's what to keep in mind when you talk about treatment options with your doctor.

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Pears: A Diabetes-Friendly Fruit

Although they have natural sugars, pears are loaded with healthy fiber and other nutrients your body needs.

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How Diabetes Harms Your Health

Poorly controlled high blood sugar can damage your eyes, kidneys, and nerves. Do you know the early signs of trouble?

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10 Exercise Tips for Type 2 Diabetes

Strokes and Kidney Failure

My 80 year old mom had brain bleeding. She had surgery and then multiple small strokes. She is also not doing well on... [Read more...](#)

Does losing weight lower cholesterol?

Written by Christine Richardson on January 17, 2022

People who are overweight have high cholesterol levels. These levels raise the risk of cardiovascular issues. Read on how losing weight can lower cholesterol and these risks.



What to eat on a low cholesterol lunch

Written by Christine Richardson on January 17, 2022

Cholesterol naturally occurs in the body. However, high levels raise the risk of cardiovascular issues. Read more for ways to low cholesterol, food, and meal ideas.

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Do I have food poisoning or COVID-19?

Written by Zawn Villines on January 17, 2022

COVID-19 and a stomach bug can both cause GI symptoms such as stomachache, vomiting, and diarrhea. Learn how to tell the two illnesses apart.

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[ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION / PREMATURE EJACULATION](#)

Viagra prices and the best way to save

Written by Kristina Galea on January 17, 2022

Viagra price may vary depending on dosage, brands, and retailers. Learn more here.

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[GASTROINTESTINAL / GASTROENTEROLOGY](#)

What is dysentery?

Written by Adam Felman and Sarah Charmley on January 17, 2022

Dysentery is an inflammation of the intestines, especially the colon. Find out about the symptoms, causes, and treatments.

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[SUPPLEMENTS](#)

What are some of the top zinc supplements?

Written by Anna Smith on January 17, 2022

What are some of the best zinc supplements? Read on to learn about zinc, including its benefits and side effects, and products a person may consider trying.

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[You Don't Have to Be a Smoker to Get Lung Cancer](#)

[CDC Advises N95s as Best Masks Against Coronavirus](#)

[Don't Snow Shovel Your Way to a Heart Attack](#)

[COVID-19 Treatments: What You Need to Know](#)

[How to Prevent Osteoporosis](#)

[Safety of Fresh Produce](#)

[Is Crohn's Disease Caused By Gluten?](#)

[How to Control Your Cholesterol](#)

Coronavirus Updates

[First 'Flurona' Cases Reported in the U.S.](#)

[CDC Defends New COVID Guidance as Doctors Raise Concerns](#)

[Pediatric COVID Cases, Hospital Admissions Higher Than Ever](#)



FEATURED SLIDESHOW

Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy

Nerve damage, what doctors call neuropathy, is a common complication of diabetes.

[VIEW SLIDESHOW](#)

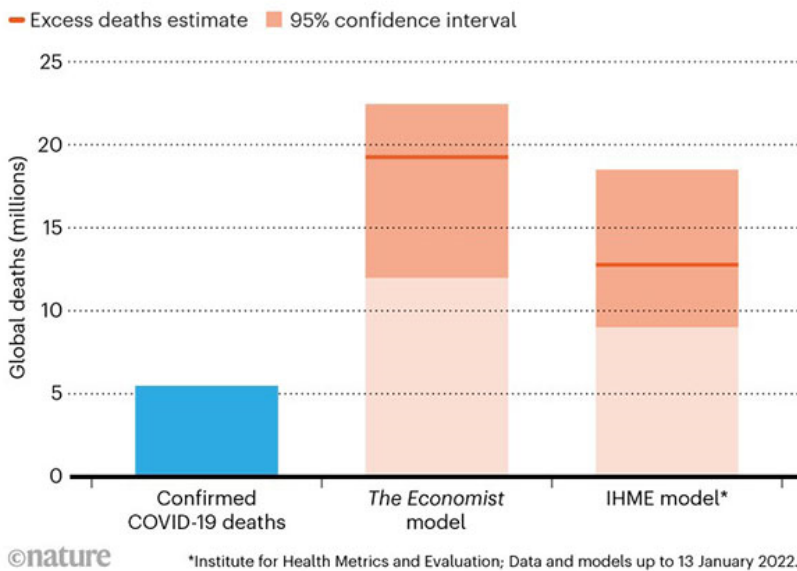
The pandemic's true death toll

On 1 November, the global death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic passed five million, official data suggested. It has now reached 5.5 million. But that figure is a significant underestimate. Records of excess mortality — a metric that compares all deaths recorded with those expected to occur — show that many more people have died in the pandemic. [Working out how many more is a complex research challenge](#). Some official data are flawed, and more than 100 countries do not collect reliable statistics on deaths at all. Efforts to correct the record use methods including satellite images of cemeteries, door-to-door surveys and machine-learning computer models that extrapolate estimates from available data.

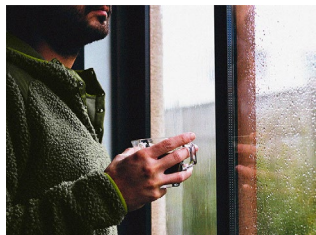
[Nature | 15 min read](#)

GLOBAL TOLL

By January 2022, there had been 5.5 million official COVID-19 deaths worldwide in the pandemic. But models estimate that there have been between two and four times that number of excess deaths — that is, mortality above what was expected — since the start of 2020.



Common cold may protect against SARS-CoV-2 infection and lead the way to new vaccines



New research suggests that T cells from prior infection by other coronaviruses, such as the common cold, may protect against SARS-CoV-2 infection.

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What You Can Do About Bunions

A bunion is a bony bump that forms on the joint where your big toe meets your foot. It might hurt and be swollen or red. Here's what you can do to treat it.

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Bad Habits for Your Brain

You do a few things you know you shouldn't, just like everyone else. But some of those bad habits can take a toll on your brain.

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15 Ways to Keep Your Joints Flexible

Try these fun activities to help you stay active and move with more ease.

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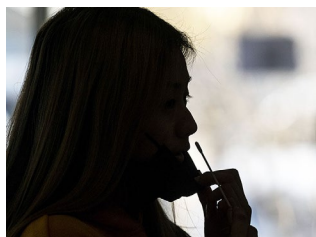
In this picture taken in November 2019, [anthropologist Lars Krutak listens to Chen-o Khuzuthrupa, a centenarian nobleman of the Chen tribe of northeastern India, describe his tattoo](#). “He received the tattoo — a tiger stripe motif with circles that represent the spirit — during an elaborate ceremony in the 1930s, when he was a young headhunter and warrior,” writes Krutak. “Anyone could get a tiger spirit tattoo in the style of Khuzuthrupa’s, but much of its significance would be lost without the culture and context around it. The original artist is long dead, and nobody remembers the prayers, songs and other aspects of the tattooing ceremony. The two other men in the village with this particular tattoo are in their nineties. They are the last generation to carry the tiger spirit.” ([Nature | 3 min read](#)) (Michael Zomer)

Today I’m basking in the sight of hundreds of fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*) filmed cavorting off the South Orkney islands [by zoologist Conor Ryan](#). Despite 20 years’ experience at sea, Ryan [says he was left speechless](#) by the sight. Sounds like it was a perfect occasion for [my favourite GIF](#).

Don’t keep quiet about your thoughts on this newsletter. Send me your favourite whale joke or cetacean sighting — plus any feedback — to briefing@nature.com.

[Flora Graham, senior editor, Nature Briefing](#)

COVID-19: Does Omicron cause less damage to the lungs?



Here, we discuss recent research suggesting that Omicron may have a reduced ability to infect the lungs compared with the Delta variant.

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Masks Cut Distance Coronavirus Travels in Half

A Simple, Natural Way to Ease Your Stuffy Nose

Stuffed up from allergies or a cold? Nasal irrigation may help. Learn how to do it using a squeeze bottle, neti pot, or syringe.

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Insulin Isn't the Only Blood Sugar Regulator

USDA Labeling for Genetically Modified Food Updated



Everyday Items With the Most Bacteria

Explore the germiest places you encounter daily. Money — and the ATM buttons we press — are covered in germs. [Read more...](#)

Diabetes and Constipation: What You Need to Know

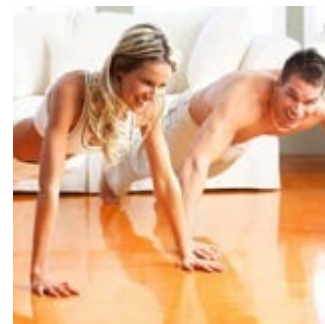
Diabetes or Arthritis: What's Causing Your Joint Pain?

Do You Need a Nutritionist or Dietitian?

What Can Ginger Really Do for You?

Ginger can help ward off germs and ease a queasy stomach. But can it really help lower blood sugar, reduce swelling, and slow the growth of some cancers? Here's what the science says.

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SLIDESHOW

Exercises for Better Sex

Getting physical can ramp up the pleasure for you and your partner. Add these exercises to your workout routine.

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FEATURED

Why Are My Hands and Feet Tingling?

Do your hands and feet sometimes feel numb or prickly? See the top 13 common causes and reasons.

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MEDHELP DISCUSSION

Restless Sleep, Hard to Wake Up, Daytime Fatigue

I normally fall asleep easily, but my sleep is quite fragmented. I've been struggling with what I call 'early morning... [Read more...](#)



SLIDESHOW

14 Most Common Causes of Fatigue

Always feeling tired? Learn more about the causes of fatigue and get tips to relieve its symptoms. Start living awake. [Read more...](#)

How to Prevent and Treat Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy

This nerve damage is a common complication of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. Find out how to prevent it, slow its progression, and deal with symptoms.

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SLIDESHOW

Simple Ways to Lower Cholesterol

When you are found to have a high blood level of cholesterol, it can be very helpful to change your diet and lifestyle to lower cholesterol. [Read more...](#)

Best Stretches for Arthritis Morning Stiffness

Although it may seem like the hardest time of day to get moving, doing a few stretches in the morning can give you a more limber start to your day.

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7 Signs You May Have Lupus

Symptoms may be limited to the skin at first, but lupus also causes internal problems such as joint pain and damage to vital organs, such as your heart.

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Managing Back Pain of Ankylosing Spondylitis

There are ways to ease back pain caused by ankylosing spondylitis. From medication to therapy, learn what might help you.

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Unproven, Unapproved Stem Cell Therapies Are Booming

The sale of unproven and unapproved stem cell treatments, which claim to do everything from relieving pain to slowing the aging process, has skyrocketed in the U.S., a new study says.

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9 Remedies for Snoring

Find out which home remedies and medical treatments may help stop your snoring and improve the quality of your sleep.

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11 Treatments for Osteoarthritis

There's no cure for OA, but there are a lot of treatment options you can try.

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Are You Getting Enough Magnesium? Too Much?

An Early Sign You're Low on Iodine

Why It's Important to Control High Potassium Levels

LIFE'S LITTLE MYSTERIES

Why does slicing onions make you cry?



(angelsimon via Getty Images)

Whether sautéed, grilled, caramelized or raw, onions are a staple in many U.S. households; the average American consumes 20 pounds (9 kilograms) of onions per year. But their coveted flavor comes at a price: Whoever chops them may soon feel tears running from their burning eyes. But why does slicing onions make you cry?

Full Story: [Live Science](#) (1/17)

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