

## Newsletter 6 December 2021

### Festive Season Closing Hours

2021 has almost come and gone! It did not bring the end of the pandemic but certainly brought optimism that the Covid-19 pandemic can be curtailed by a vaccination programme, and more especially, that vaccinating can reduce the numbers of people that get severely ill, as well as the death rate.

Travel opened up once again and there was a feeling that one could start to plan a getaway without wondering if it will be cancelled or cut short. This was short-lived. Sadly, with the discovery of Omicron, the new variant, by our astute scientists in SA, travel to and from SA has once again been curtailed. It does not mean that you can't travel locally within South Africa. You can enjoy a holiday if you try to keep your family together in a "bubble", wearing well-fitting masks if "outside of your bubble", eating at outdoor restaurants and enjoying the warm sunshine and beaches our country offers.

As pandemic fatigue set in across both the medical profession and across all sectors of our society we were rudely awakened to yet another infection wave on the horizon! We do not yet know whether this strain will result in more severe illness or not. We do know that it is much more transmissible than previous variants, so we need to continue to be conscious of socially distancing, hand washing and wearing facemasks. We all need to learn to live with COVID. It is not going away. Sars-CoV-2 will keep changing its attack and we need to manage our defence. The only way is to vaccinate, have booster vaccination shots when available and continue the protocols we all know so well.

Old Mutual has announced that all employees need to be vaccinated before entering the building from next year. This enables the company to protect their staff as best they can, whilst in the workplace as well as their customers. Cyril Ramaphosa will this week be discussing mandatory vaccinations for those using public transport as well as certain other industries. It is just a matter of time before vaccine passports will become part of our everyday lives – for work, leisure and medical care.

On a general health note please remember the importance of doing your annual wellness visits. Without doing your checkup, you will not know if you have underlying medical conditions like hypertension or diabetes. You will not know if your existing chronic conditions are being properly managed on your present medication, and you will not know whether you have hidden diseases which do not have readily noticeable symptoms, for example, in your prostate, breast or cervix, without testing.

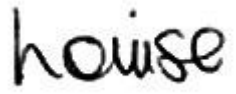
I would like to reassure you that it is safe to come to my rooms at Mutual Park. We follow all the necessary protocols, and allow patients to wait in their car, if they would prefer. Appointments have been spaced to avoid crossing over in the waiting room. As telephonic consultations are not satisfactory in diagnosis, these are being phased out. Once Old Mutual staff return to the building in March 2022 we hope to be able to see everyone requiring appointments and will extend our working hours if there is demand.

For now, I will be closing the rooms from 16 December – 2 January inclusive. Please ensure all script requests are received before 13 December if you wish for them to be issued before the first week in January.

Hoping that you and your families have a safe, relaxing festive season, and that you return energized to tackle 2022, and all that it may bring.

A reminder that in keeping with POPIA, if you no longer wish to receive these emails please UNSUBSCRIBE below.

Yours in health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louise". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Dr Louise Wigen