



B-Living

BONITAS MEMBER MAGAZINE
ISSUE 3/2017

**Don't just get
up and go!**

**Learn the benefits
of stretching**

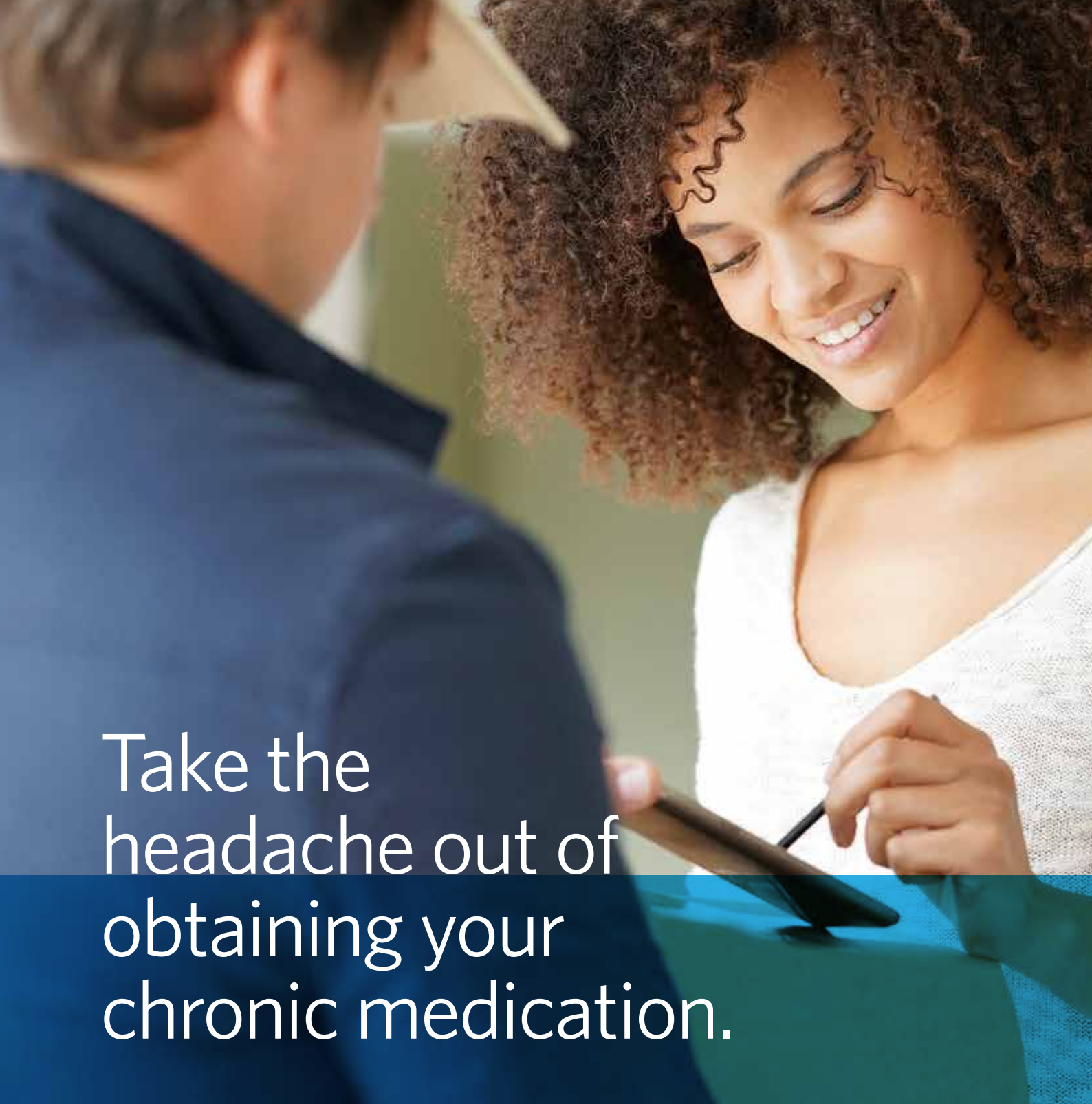
**Making sense
of migraines**

**Dr Shevel helps us
understand this ailment**

**Check out our
new initiatives**

**Get an inside look at
our new website and
advertising campaign**

Bonitas



Take the headache out of obtaining your chronic medication.

Pharmacy Direct offers Bonitas members convenient chronic medication delivery. No queuing, no traffic, no stress and no fuss – just all your medication delivered to your doorstep.

Registration is quick, easy and only required once for a lifetime of delivery.

Simply call **086 002 7800**, visit www.pharmacydirect.co.za or send a **please call me** to **083 690 8934** and register today



Pharmacy Direct is a Designated Service Provider to Bonitas.
Subject to Scheme authorisation and benefit validation.

A member of AfroCentric group
Pharmacy Direct
Caring, Reliable & Affordable

Some rewards are harder
to get than **others.**



Unlike some reward programmes, Sanlam Reality ensures that what you see is what you get. Which is why we offer a variety of savings on financial products, wellness, travel, entertainment, and day-to-day spend, that are simple to earn and easy to access.

Sanlam Reality. Because taking care of your money should be rewarding.
For more information visit sanlamreality.co.za.





Rest assured, you're in good hands

The healthcare industry has been plagued by escalating healthcare costs which has seen several smaller schemes unable to sustain the balancing act of providing affordable cover while maintaining financial sustainability – a trend that is expected to continue. As one of the largest and most stable medical schemes in South Africa, our mission is to make quality healthcare more affordable and more accessible. We are, therefore, proud that many of these smaller schemes see Bonitas as a solution to the future for their existing members. We assure you that we will always do this in a very responsible manner as to not negatively affect our current members.

It is against this backdrop that approximately 5 600 members of the Community Medical Aid Scheme joined Bonitas in August. We are pleased that the Council for Medical Schemes has endorsed this opportunity and we welcome these members into our fold and will ensure that their healthcare needs are taken care of.

From a fiscal perspective, we are definitely seeing positive changes. We released our financial results at the end of July and are pleased to reveal that we have recovered strongly from the large financial deficit in 2015. Our reserves have increased to R3.1 billion, which places us in a stronger, more robust financial position where we are confident of our ability to meet members' claims. We strive to help members derive real value for money and stretch their benefits as far as possible. Our strong financials are largely due to rigorous negotiation

strategies premised on strategic purchasing and the development of advanced managed care protocols. The past financial year saw the board and management team determined to improve the operational, financial and strategic position of the Fund to ensure sustainability. Our cost-containment initiatives continue to bear fruit, allowing our financial indicators to improve significantly in an industry plagued by escalating costs and high claims cycles. One of these initiatives is the back and neck programme, which is designed to help members manage back and neck pain in a clinically proven way. Read more about this on page 11.

To top things off, we were awarded the 2017/2018 Ask Afrika IconBrands Award for the medical aid category for the second year in a row. The awards are independently run by the Target Group Index and awarded based on a series of market research factors including surveying 15 284 consumers. We also unveiled our Just In Case safety campaign (see page 20) which is taking safety lessons to 43 000 learners across South Africa.

Simplifying things for our members is one of our core focus areas. As a result, we launched our new, improved website and are currently making changes to our call centre to assist you speedily and efficiently (see page 18).

We're looking forward to building on these developments over the next few months to bring you enhanced services and offerings.

Gerhard

Gerhard van Emmenis
Principal Officer

Tell us how you feel

Share your stories about how Bonitas Medical Fund has made a difference to your life and it could be featured in the next issue of *B-Living*. Email your stories to magazine@afrocentricds.com.

Contents

- 5 Health bits
- 7 Ask the doctor
- 8 Don't just get up and go!
- 13 When to call an ambulance

New initiatives

Guiding you through our new updates

16

Just In Case campaign puts safety first

18

- 21 The new Bonitas Brand campaign
- 22 Helping you handle diabetes
- 25 Sharing the success of Comrades 2017
- 27 Making sense of migraines
- 30 Reader's recipe



Editor

Serisha Singh

Content co-ordinators

Lisa Dewberry

Lunga Duma

Graphic designer

Salamina Machitje

Editorial enquiries

magazine@afrocentricds.com

Contact details

AfroCentric Distribution Services
The Greens Office Park, Building L
26 Charles de Gaulle Crescent
Highveld Ext 12
Centurion

Telephone

012 001 2500

The articles in this publication are intended for information purposes only. They do not replace the advice of a doctor or medical practitioner. Bonitas Medical Fund takes no responsibility for the content of the advertisements in this magazine.

Please note: The Bonitas Scheme Rules supersede any information contained in this magazine. Product limits, terms and conditions apply.

HEALTH bits



Avos are a must for health and wellness

Avocados are naturally nutrient-dense fruits containing nearly 20 vitamins and minerals that are high in monounsaturated fat, naturally free from cholesterol and sodium, and are a good source of potassium. But did you know that they are also in diets aimed at lowering blood pressure? This is important as South Africa has one of the highest rates of hypertension in the world, a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Including avocados in your daily diet is easy. They're quick and easy to prepare, go with every meal or snack from breakfast to dessert and even double up as a convenient, on-the-go meal.

Exercise when you're tired

After a long, exhausting work day, exercising sounds like the last thing you'd want to do, but getting active will actually energise you. Fatigue, along with mood and depression, improves after a single 30-minute moderate intensity exercise session, according to a study in *Sports and Exercise Medicine* published in *Medicine and Science Journal*. The study found that "everything we do uses oxygen, so when you exercise it helps you work more efficiently, you don't tire as easily and you also function better mentally".



Disinfect wounds with honey

Golden, delicious raw honey has a range of health properties. It's antibacterial, antimicrobial, an antioxidant and humectant which means a wound treated with honey will heal faster and leave less of a scar. Honey is also a good remedy for acne and dry skin. A recent study published in the *Microbiology Journal*, found that this sweetener prevents a type of streptococcus pyogenes from inhibiting the healing of wounds. Researchers conducting the lab tests discovered that even the smallest amount of honey was enough to kill off the majority of bacterial cells on the skin which infect the wound site.



Ditch your handwash for soap

Scientists have issued a warning against the use of expensive antibacterial handwash saying they encourage superbugs. Research published in the *Clinical Infectious Diseases Journal* found that Triclosan, the main active ingredient in many antibacterial soaps, can cause some bacteria to become resistant to commonly used antibiotics such as amoxicillin. Bacteria such as E. coli and salmonella, which are major culprits in food poisoning, are common, highly adaptable threats which may develop some resistance. Dr Anthony Hilton, microbiologist at Aston University in the UK, says handwash soaps are often used inappropriately, for example either too briefly or with cold water. He says you should wash your hands thoroughly for several minutes in warm, clean water as the action of washing and the temperature remove bacteria more effectively than a fancy antibacterial product.



Wash your hands after withdrawing cash

Cleanliness tests have revealed that ATMs are as dirty and carry the same germs as public toilets. When scientists took swabs from urban ATMs, they found that they were heavily contaminated with bacteria including those known to cause sickness and diarrhoea. Dr Mark Fielder, a medical microbiologist at Kingston University London, says if people don't wash their hands properly, all sorts of organisms will be transferred to the buttons on an ATM. He says just as it's important to wash your hands after using the toilet, it would be sensible to clean them after taking money out of the ATM.



ASK THE DOCTOR

Have a question for the doctor? Email us at magazine@afrocentricds.com and your question could feature in the next issue of *B-Living*.

Good day

I am a 34-year old plagued with nightmares and therefore I do not rest well. I am also overweight and even though I watch what I eat, I cannot seem to lose weight. My GP kept on changing my pill because I do not menstruate regularly. I then consulted a herbalist who diagnosed that my cortisol levels are dangerously low. How can I get my cortisol levels back to normal as I am sure this is the cause of all my problems?

Hope to hear from you soon.
Chantal

Hi Chantal

Your body's endocrine system includes the adrenal gland which makes several important hormones. One of these is cortisol which helps the body respond to stress. Cortisol also regulates your heart rate and blood pressure, keeps your blood glucose high enough to provide energy and modifies your immune system to prevent inflammation and other immune responses. Low cortisol can be caused by a problem in the adrenals themselves or in another part of the body.

I suggest you first establish if low cortisol levels are the cause of your concerns. Your GP will be able to assist you with a blood test to determine what your cortisol levels are and if there is any reason for concern.

Because the endocrine system is so complex, your symptoms may be as a result of changing your pill or a number of other concerns. You may also benefit from regular exercise, a balanced diet and relaxing activities such as yoga or spending time with friends as this will assist with stress management and help improve your sleep.

Hi Doc

I am 25 years old and I am new to this medical aid. I joined BonFit and read that I have a free wellness check every year, but I don't understand what that is. Please help explain this to me.

Regards
Zandile

Dear Zandile

Welcome to the Bonitas family. You're definitely right! We offer a free wellness screening for each member once a year on all our plans.

The wellness screening is made up of carefully selected tests to help you get a clear picture of your health. These tests are the first step in detecting serious chronic conditions such as hypertension, heart disease and diabetes. It includes the following tests:

- A blood pressure test
- A blood glucose test
- A cholesterol test
- A BMI test, and
- A waist-to-hip ratio measurement

You can complete your wellness screening at a corporate wellness day or a Dis-Chem, Clicks or Pick n Pay pharmacy. All tests must be done at the same time.

The Wellness Extender can be used to pay for extra consultations with a GP, biokineticist, dietician or physiotherapist or a programme to stop smoking. These consultations will all be paid at the Bonitas Rate.

Disclaimer: The advice included above is for information purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor or medical practitioner. We strongly urge you to consult with your family practitioner before embarking on a health treatment or programme. All information has been checked by a Bonitas Clinical advisor.



Don't just get up and go!

Stretching is one of the most important things you can do to increase flexibility, strength and overall body wellness. Starting each day with a quick and easy stretching routine should help you ensure your body stays healthy and strong.

- Find out the benefits of stretching
- Seven easy stretches you can do at home
- The back and neck programme explained

Improving your muscle health

A simple, effective way to improve cardiovascular function, reduce back pain and prevent conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome, is to stretch. As you age you will most likely experience a decline in flexibility, stability and balance. By getting stiff muscles to stretch and move properly, you can prevent injury and strengthen them helping to slow down the rate of bone and muscle loss.

Stretch like a cat when you wake up

Making stretching a habit, especially in the mornings, will help to eliminate aches and pains in the muscles and joints. Morning stiffness and pain often occur because there is an increase of fluid in the joints and spinal discs overnight while your body lies horizontal. For the best 'get up and go' feeling, you actually need to pause and spend about 10 minutes to gently stretch and warm up the body to alleviate joint discomfort and increase blood flow.

Move your back, neck and shoulders

Musculoskeletal disorders, mainly lower back pain followed by pain in the neck and shoulders, are among the most prevalent long-term illnesses and account for more pain and absenteeism from work than any other medical condition. The *Journal of the American Association* and Harvard University believe an alternative effective treatment for chronic pain, besides painkillers, is movement including stretching the muscles and physiotherapy for the body.

Kiss computer posture goodbye

People who sit in front of a computer for extended periods develop poor posture as a result of overstretched back muscles and tight chest muscles. By introducing stretching either in the morning or during the day, these muscles can be effectively opened and loosened up.

Know Ying and Yan of muscles

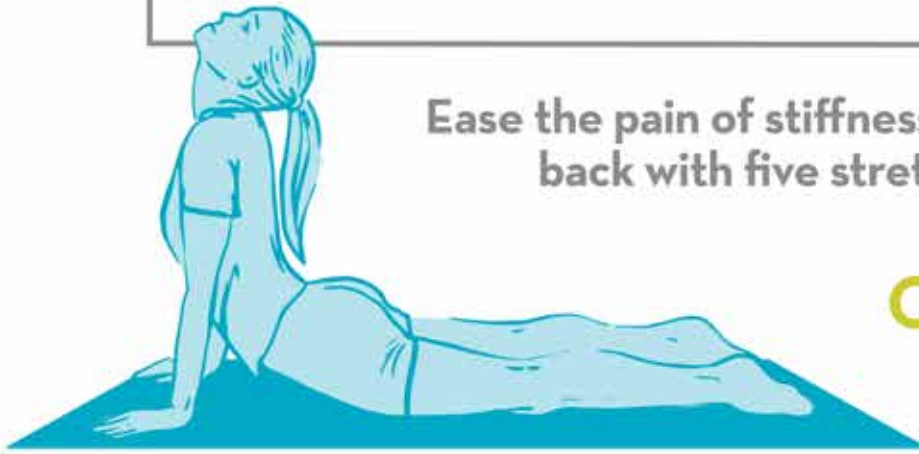
Muscles work in pairs, while the one flexes the other relaxes. When you lift something up, you use the biceps muscle, running from the inside of your elbow to the shoulder, which contracts to raise up your hand, whereas the triceps, which is the muscle at the back of your arm, relaxes and lengthens. Flexing the opposite muscle in a stretch gives you a better result, for example, when stretching your lower back, flex your abs.



STRETCHES

FOR THE LOWER BACK

Ease the pain of stiffness, aches or spasms in your back with five stretches for your lower back.



COBRA STRETCH

HAMSTRING FLOOR STRETCH



HIP FLEXORS STRETCH



KNEE TO CHEST STRETCH



SPINAL STRETCH



These five stretches, can ease your lower back pain. Always use caution when performing any stretches as not to injure yourself.

Sources:

— www.apmhealth.com

— www.simpleorganiclife.org

Join the back and neck programme

The Bonitas back and neck programme offers access to doctors, physiotherapists and biokineticists for up to six weeks, based on personalised care plan, to meet your needs. We cover the full cost of the programme.

The back and neck programme, run by Documentation Based Care (DBC), helps you treat chronic back and neck pain. The programme aims to find the root cause of the pain and improve your quality of life.

Joining the programme is easy

You can be referred by your doctor or identified by us. You can also contact us on **0860 105 104** to find your nearest DBC centre.

How does the programme work?

Step 1

You are assessed by a biokineticist and a doctor through a physical examination and tests to check range of movement and nerve health.

Step 2

The doctor takes your medical history to explain the possible cause of chronic pain. The DBC procedures are also explained to you.

Step 3

A treatment plan is put together for you and a patient contract signed where you commit to the prescribed treatment.

Step 4

After your first assessment, you receive treatment sessions of an hour long twice a week for up to six weeks with the full cost covered. At each session, you spend 30 minutes with the physiotherapist and 30 minutes with the biokineticist.

Step 5

After six weeks, the doctor re-examines you to determine your progress and improvement. If all is well, you are discharged with a home exercise programme to maintain your results long term. You can then attend maintenance sessions with a biokineticist on a regular basis to support you after your recovery at your own cost.

Who can access the programme?

The programme is available on all Bonitas plans except BonCap.



Ingrid Fischer, a member, shares her experience

After a bad fall where I bashed my head against a window sill, my entire back and neck went into spasm. I contacted your Customer Care Department and was afforded a treatment at the Pretoria North branch of the back and neck rehabilitation clinic.

What a change this treatment has made to my life. With every treatment, I felt pain in another area, but I became more mobile. I noticed I now have my balance back and the way I walk has greatly improved. (Due to a knee replacement in 2009, I previously had a 'shuffling' walking style.)

It was the first time I was shown what type of easy-to-follow exercises I could do after a knee replacement! Although I am an elderly, but very active person, the staff was very professional and friendly. I would like to thank Bonitas for giving me back my life. Now I am really active!



Documentation Based Care
Call: 0860 105 104

6 ways to boost your energy

Breathe deeply

Expand your stomach with every inhale and pull your belly button towards your spine with every exhale.

Go for a walk

Research shows that workouts as brief as 10 minutes can keep you energised for more than four hours.

Watch a funny video

In a study conducted in 2014, people who watched a funny video showed an increased level of energy.

Listen to upbeat music

Upbeat songs have been proven to increase your heart rate and can even make you pick up the pace when you are running.

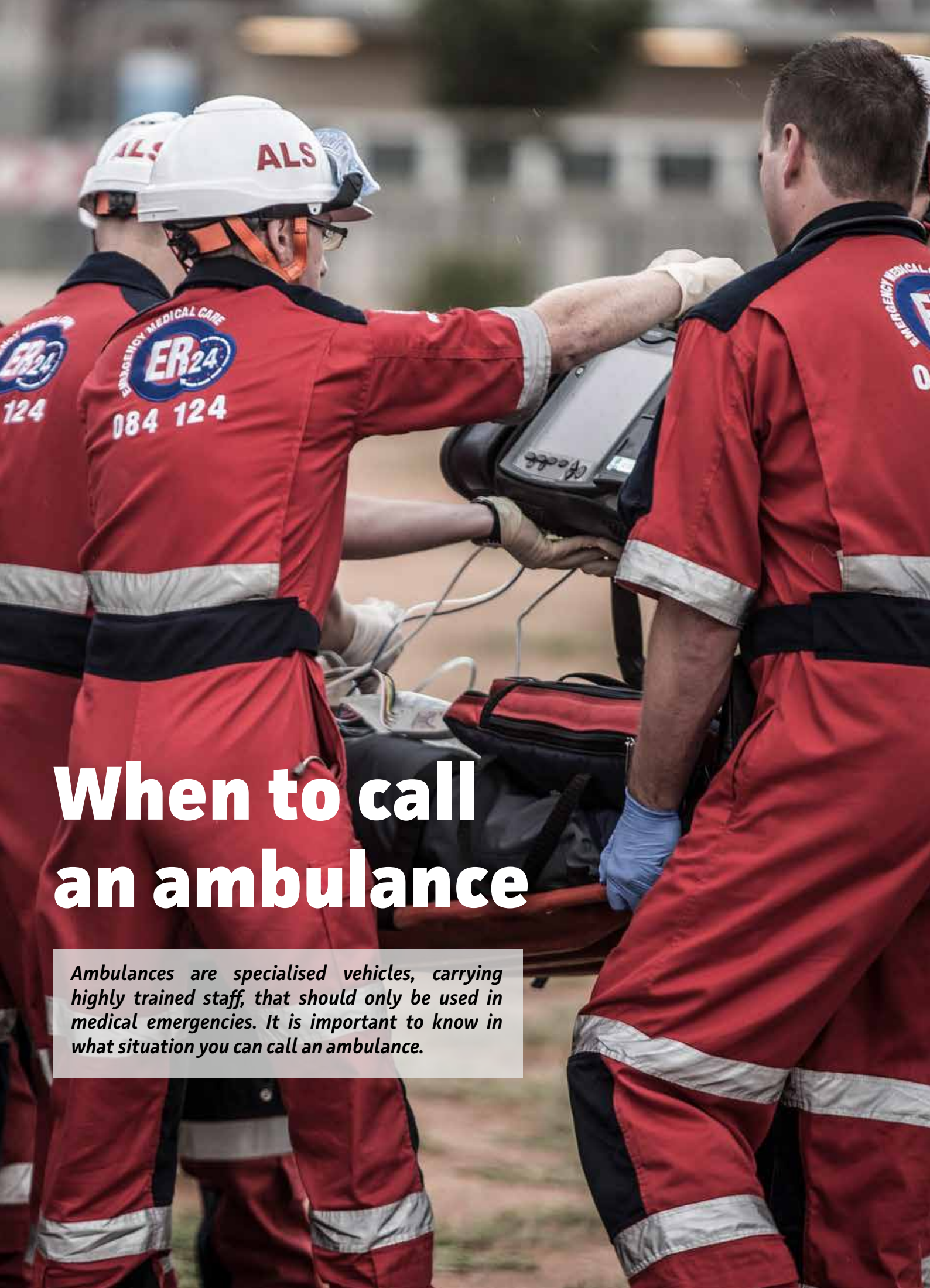
Catch some rays (safely)

Research shows that people are more alert after having been exposed to bright light.

Get snacking

Eating a mix of carbs, protein and fat – think Greek yoghurt with berries and walnuts, is the best combo for lasting energy.





When to call an ambulance

Ambulances are specialised vehicles, carrying highly trained staff, that should only be used in medical emergencies. It is important to know in what situation you can call an ambulance.

ER24, our Designated Service Provider, aims to ensure every ambulance transfer is medically justified and quality pre-hospital care is provided to you in a medical emergency. These vehicles should not be used as transport to hospital for a minor condition since they will be unavailable to a critically ill or dying person and the ambulance transfer fee for a non-emergency situation, where the person could have travelled in a private vehicle, won't be considered for payment.

As a member of Bonitas you can call ER24 on **084 124** and ask to be put through to the 24-hour 'Ask the Nurse' health line if you require medical assistance in deciding whether an ambulance is necessary.

You will then be advised to do one of the following:

- Go to a hospital immediately (ER24 will dispatch an ambulance if medically necessary)
- Go to the doctor
- Go to the pharmacy to obtain over-the-counter medication

Display your ER24 stickers proudly

When you join Bonitas, you will receive specially designed ER24 car stickers.

Please ensure that these are attached to your vehicle as described in the letter sent with the stickers.



Call an ambulance:

- ✓ For serious injuries such as broken bones or those sustained in motor vehicle accidents which need stabilisation and medical monitoring while you are transported to the appropriate healthcare facility
- ✓ When someone is having a seizure
- ✓ If a person has acute chest pain
- ✓ If someone is unable to breathe
- ✓ For a woman in premature labour
- ✓ When a child has ingested a poisonous substance
- ✓ In a near drowning
- ✓ For third-degree burns

Don't call an ambulance:

- ✗ Where a person is well enough to travel in a car, bus or taxi to see a doctor or go to a hospital as an outpatient for conditions such as minor cuts and sprains, abdominal pain, gastro-enteritis, period pain, constipation and headaches excluding migraine
- ✗ When the condition is not life-threatening and urgent medical attention is not needed
- ✗ For transport home from the hospital
- ✗ For pregnancy without complications
- ✗ When you or a dependant need to be admitted for a booked procedure



Check out our new initiatives

We've revamped our website, launched a new corporate social responsibility programme called Just In Case and improved our tech systems to enhance your experience as a member and make it easier for you to use our services.



Guiding you through our new updates

We're always looking for ways to make things easier for our members. As a result, we've revamped our website, social media platforms and the call centre to allow us to assist you more efficiently.

Introducing the all new www.bonitas.co.za

Our new website went live in July, with a polished design and enhanced functionality. The website is designed to offer easy navigation, so that you can find what you're looking for quickly. It includes more information about your plan, the care programmes we offer, wellness and maternity benefits and much more.

There are a range of online tools available

- Use the Find a Plan Tool to see if your plan meets your healthcare needs
- Try the Comparison Tool to compare the benefits of each plan – especially if you're considering changing your plan
- Find a doctor on our network and help your benefits last longer with the Locate a Provider Tool

Remember, you can take control of your membership by logging into the online self-service member zone to download your tax certificate, view your available benefits and see your claims history.

Get info on using your benefits and health tips too

The website features a range of helpful information, such as how to get your claims paid quickly, more information on your free annual wellness check and using your Wellness Extender. You can also learn more about preventative care as well as maternity and childcare benefits to keep your little ones in good health.

Pay special attention to the Live Your Best Life section which is regularly updated with health articles and tips to use your medical aid more effectively.

An improved call centre

Over the past few months, we've been optimising our call centre to ensure our staff have all the knowledge, skills and tools to provide you with the assistance you need, quickly and efficiently. We've also updated the call centre recording so that you can reach the department you need, without long waiting times. Remember, our staff are able to assist you in all 11 official languages – so you can get the support you need.

Join us on social media

Our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts are always being updated with the latest health news. Our support staff are also on hand to assist you with any queries you may have. These platforms have recently experienced a facelift aligning to our current advertising campaign.



Follow **@BonitasMedical**



Like our Facebook page
BonitasMedicalFund



See what we're up to on YouTube:
Bonitas Medical Fund

We aim to give you content that empowers you to make the best health choices so connect to us on these platforms to find out the latest health news, developments, tips and videos.

Know your numbers with the Personal Health Record

Introducing the Personal Health Record, the simple, easy-to-use app that lets members take control of their health and wellness.

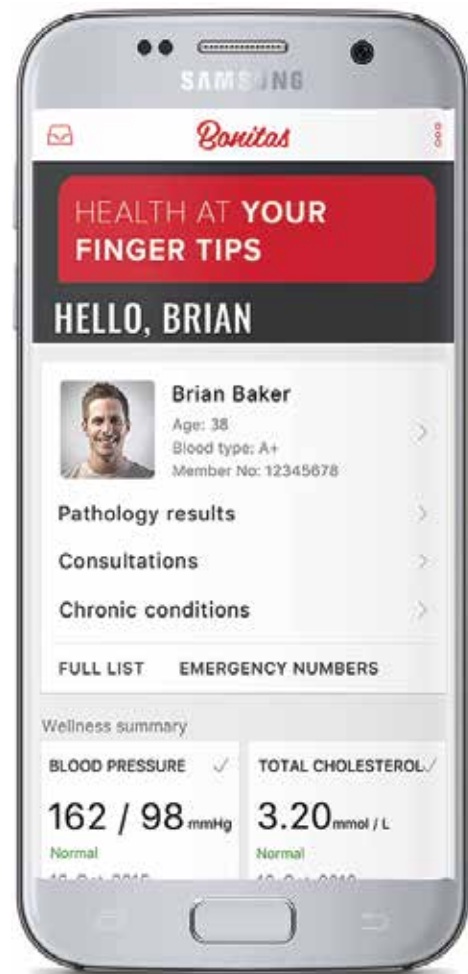
Medical details will be updated each time a member claims, for a comprehensive picture of medical history. This record enables members to manage their own health by being informed, empowered and motivated.

The Personal Health Record can be used to:

- Test health and wellness
- View medical history (including allergies and wellness screening results)
- Share information with a healthcare provider doctor
- View claims

The app integrates with a range of wellness devices and fitness trackers to help put members on the path to good health. This provides additional support to our current wellness benefits and managed care programmes, which aim to help our members lead happier, healthier lives.

It is available on desktop and mobile. The PHR will be rolled out to members on the Diabetes Management Programme first.



Please note: You need to ensure that you have consented to Bonitas sharing your medical and clinical details with healthcare providers to access the Personal Health Record. Please call **0860 002 108** to provide consent.

Keep an eye out for further developments

Get the latest news and updates on everything happening at Bonitas by updating your contact details with us.

Simply call 0860 002 108, log in to www.bonitas.co.za and update your contact information. You can also email us at queries@bonitas.co.za or visit one of our walk-in centres located countrywide for face-to-face assistance.

Just In Case campaign puts safety first

Bonitas has launched Just In Case, a safety education project, which aims to teach 43 000 learners at 67 schools across the country preventative measures and actions to take in the event of an emergency.

This initiative has been developed to teach learners to recognise dangerous situations and strangers, as well as actions to take to protect themselves and others in an emergency. Just In Case, running through September and October, primarily targets Grade R to 7 learners but also empowers communities as part of an ongoing commitment to create a safer environment for South Africans.

It is just one initiative enabling Bonitas to make a sustainable positive difference in an effort to celebrate every day as a Mandela Day and give back to our community no matter what day of the year. The project is currently being rolled out in phases and will enlist the help of educators and emergency service training teams to share safety advice with learners.

Just In Case representatives plan to equip children with knowledge, preventative measures and basic safety actions to take in the event of an emergency. They also aim to enhance the current curriculum offered to children in schools around basic first aid and assist children in combatting their biggest fears such as losing a loved one or being involved in a car accident.

The key prevention strategy of this initiative is getting the 'what do you do first' message across to children.



Just In Case representatives aim to help learners make safety a priority and feel confident and prepared to respond in a crisis situation.

The schools selected for the initiative have been nominated by members and brokers. Children will learn Basic First Aid, Road Safety, Fire Safety, Water Safety and Stranger Danger Tips through informative talks, interactive theatrical presentations and relevant educational materials.

This project has a wealth of valuable information and skills available to learners and is about keeping communities safe, as well as preventing and reducing the number of accidental injuries and deaths in South Africa. At each event participating schools will receive a fully equipped first aid kit and a fire extinguisher.

We invite you to get involved in the Just In Case initiative, put safety first and do your part to reduce the number of children at risk of accidental death. More information about this project available at www.bonitas.co.za.

For help in an emergency, you can contact **ER24** at **084 124**.



What Bonitas means to me

We received an overwhelming response to our Comrades Marathon competition published in the previous edition where we asked members to tell us what Bonitas means to you. We are happy to share the winning letter from Sean Blom, who won a pair of New Balance running shoes, as well as other meaningful letters received.

Bonitas gives peace of mind

I am one of those members that didn't really have a choice in joining Bonitas as I was a member of Liberty Medical Scheme for many years before they amalgamated with Bonitas in January 2017. As we were already pregnant at the time of all this going down, we couldn't really move to any other scheme, since they would not cover the birth of my child.

At first we were afraid that there might be some issues on the payment if we move over to Bonitas, as we only became members in January and our son was to be born on 17 January. Well, let me just say that we worried for no reason at all, Bonitas has already paid all the hospital and doctor's accounts and we are so happy with the friendly service we received up to now. We even received a baby bag with a bunch of goodies for our little one.

Since joining in the beginning of January, we haven't had any issues with any accounts and Bonitas has really blown us away with their great support and service. Bonitas seems to be about the member and giving you what you pay for. They aren't out to make money off you, but rather to deliver a service to the best of their ability and to ensure the member is happy and covered when needed.

I am happy to be part of Bonitas as I have peace of mind that my medical issues will be looked after and that my family gets the best possible cover from a medical aid that looks out for its members, even the ones that have just joined the scheme, without asking any questions, and without hesitation. Quick and friendly service on the mobile app is also something that assists us well. When we have a query it is handled very fast and effectively. Thank you Bonitas for making the stress of medical aid so much lighter.

Sean Blom

Being on Bonitas has been life changing

I have seen a medical practitioner I wouldn't normally have been able to see if I wasn't on medical aid. Bonitas has helped me sort out my medical problems and allowed me to lead a more fulfilling, healthier life. I am more active and doing things that I was not able to do before now. Bonitas has changed my life for the better.

Kerisha Chanderdeo

Excellent service from Bonitas

I have been a member of Bonitas for a couple of years and the service I received so far has been excellent. The staff is always friendly and knows exactly how to handle any query. Claims have never been an issue whether at a doctor or for an operation. I have the over-the-counter benefit to collect medicine which is a benefit I enjoy. At some stage, my previous employer told me I had to join another medical aid, but I soon discovered it was not the company for me. After a few months and many motivations to the HR department, I was granted permission to move back to Bonitas. I have now added my children onto this medical aid and have managed to convince other colleagues to join Bonitas as well.

Ian Martins

More than a medical aid

Bonitas is more than a medical aid. It's an assurance that if my health is affected, I have a source of comfort and information to assist.

Alistair Kannemeyer

Bonitas scoops Icon and Kasi Star Brand Awards

Bonitas has taken top honours, winning the medical aid category in the IconBrands Survey in August and the Kasi Star Brand Awards in March. Both awards are independently awarded after extensive research by independent agency, Ask Afrika.

Kasi Star Brand Awards

Earlier this year Bonitas was named the winner of the Medical Aid category in the Kasi Star Brand Awards – run by Ask Africa through The Target Group Index (TGI) – which looks at SA's number one Township Brands.

The Ask Africa Kasi Award Survey polled a sample size of nearly 5 000 people countrywide. A total of 144 categories and 2 996 brands were benchmarked for loyal usage and brand awareness and the outcome saw 36 South African brands named Kasi Star Brands and an additional 59 products named Potential Kasi Star Brands.

'We're extremely pleased to have been presented with this Award. Over the years Bonitas has reinvented its benefits, plans and identity so that they appeal to a broader market segment. but it is definitely satisfying to note we continue to emerge as the leading medical aid in our traditional market,' says Gerhard Van Emmenis, Principal Officer of Bonitas.

'Receiving this award will spur us on to work harder in delivering on our promise of making quality healthcare more affordable and accessible.'

IconBrands Award

For the second year in succession, Bonitas was announced as the winner of the Medical Aid category in the IconBrands Survey, run by The Target Group Index (TGI).

The survey is the largest of its kind in South Africa with 19 consumer sectors, hundreds of product categories, thousands of brands and psychographics included in the measurement. A total of 15 284 consumers, across all age, income, race and language groups were surveyed, representing over 25 million adult South African consumers.

According to TGI, the Ask Africa IconBrands Survey, which began back in 2009, identifies brands that are well loved and used by South Africans. Brands that are durable and have a timeless relationship with consumers.

'Brand loyalty is something we all strive for but to be awarded the ICON Award, for a second year, reinforces the fact we are living up to our commitment of delivering affordable, quality healthcare,' says Gerhard Van Emmenis.



The new Bonitas Brand campaign

Bonitas has launched a new campaign called Epiphanies with advertising across television, radio and digital platforms, running from July to December. The medical aid market is a competitive one, so to ensure the sustainability and growth of Bonitas, we need to market ourselves to ensure that consumers are aware of us.

One of the ways we do this is to actively market the brand on television and radio. Our 2017 campaign provides individuals with the reason they should choose Bonitas as their medical aid which is because our staff never stops thinking of how to improve medical aid for you.

In the 2016 Eureka Campaign we introduced the idea of offering individuals medical aid the way it should be which is members pay for medical aid and we give you the cover you pay for. The 2017 Epiphanies Campaign adds to this message, showing that Bonitas strives to put the interests of members first at all times with products that are simple to understand, easy to use and offer members more value for money.

See our advert at the airport and on television

The 30-second Epiphanies television advert is currently being shown on SABC, eTV and DSTV as well as at airports across the country. It showcases four Bonitas employee characters, Mamelo, Nadira, Lauren and Jeff having breakthrough ideas about medical aid after hours, demonstrating that Bonitas staff members are always thinking of ways to make medical aid better for members.



Listen out for our radio adverts

Bonitas has taken to the airwaves with three radio adverts about the International travel benefit, chronic medicine delivery and Bonitas having the largest GP network.

The ads will run on Highveld Stereo 94.7 FM, Radio 702 and Kaya FM 95.9. In these ads, three characters, Razia, Sipho and Taryn have breakthrough ideas about medical aid after hours while at the grocery store, on the couch and while looking for a clothing receipt at home, respectively.



Check out our online videos, banners and adverts

We are currently running five 30-second YouTube videos and various website banners as well as online adverts as part of a digital and social media campaign on Google, Facebook, Twitter and other websites. The YouTube videos, banners and adverts showcase Bonitas benefits and care programmes, showing what a medical aid should be and making audiences question whether their own medical aid measures up.

We hope you will enjoy seeing and listening to all elements of the 2017 Epiphanies Campaign which aims to entertain you with its distinctive look, interesting characters and humorous plotlines. We encourage you to find out more about the campaign by viewing and listening to the adverts on our TV, airport, radio and online platforms.

TV Channels: SABC, ETV and DSTV

Radio Stations: Highveld Stereo 94.7 FM, Radio 702 and Kaya FM 95.9

Website: www.bonitas.co.za



Helping you handle diabetes

Managing diabetes, which develops when your body doesn't produce enough insulin, can be daunting. You can empower yourself by learning basic knowledge about the condition and about interventions from specialists available to you.

The ABCs of diabetes

When embarking on a treatment plan for diabetes, it can be overwhelming to understand the condition and test results, juggle daily tasks, make consultation appointments and remember when to take your medication. This can lead to stress where your body works overtime to help you cope and causes changes in your blood sugar levels.



A is for A1C test (or HbA1C)

This is a blood test that measures your average blood sugar levels over a three month period giving a more accurate indication of whether your blood sugar levels are well controlled.

What is my goal?

For most diabetics, the aim is to achieve a result of lower than 7% for the HbA1C test. However, discuss this with your Family Practitioner as you may have a different target.



B is for blood pressure

Blood pressure is the force of blood pressing against your arteries. If this pressure is too high, over time it may damage your kidneys and eyes and may lead to a heart attack or stroke.

What is my goal?

An ideal blood pressure reading is 120/80 mmHg, but consult your Family Practitioner on a goal that is appropriate for you.



C is for cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance which is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, if present in the body in excess. People with diabetes are more prone to having unhealthy high cholesterol levels which contribute to heart disease.

What is my goal?

A total cholesterol reading below 5 mmol/L is recommended for most people. Your Family Practitioner will be able to advise on a goal that is suitable for you and how best to achieve this.

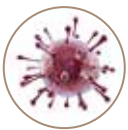
Remember to take your medication

Write down when to take your medication or set reminders on your phone to help you remember. It is also important to share any concerns you have about taking your prescribed medication with your Family Practitioner.

Role players in your care

Your primary Family Practitioner is central to your diabetes care and will be able to refer you to relevant specialists. Nominating one Family Practitioner to coordinate your care will assist in ensuring you receive appropriate care, your medicine is managed effectively and you don't follow conflicting treatment plans that may cause harm.

Your nominated Family Practitioner will work with the following healthcare providers to help manage your diabetes:



Endocrinologist

Diagnosis of diseases related to glands and hormones



Ophthalmologist

Treatment of disorders and diseases of the eyes



Pharmacist

Preparation and dispensing of medicinal drugs



Cardiologist

Treatment of heart diseases and related abnormalities



Biokineticist

Exercise therapy in alliance with health and medicine



Podiatrist

Diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the feet, ankles and related structures of the legs



Nephrologist

Diagnosis and management of kidneys and related diseases



Dietician

Diet prescription and nutrition

Simple yet effective lifestyle changes

Making healthy lifestyle choices does not have to be complicated. Regular exercise is important because it helps to improve blood glucose control (not to mention improves fitness and lowers the risk of heart disease). It's important to discuss an exercise plan with your Family Practitioner. A five to 10 minute brisk walk in the morning and another walking session in the afternoon is a good start.

Work your way to a goal of 30 minutes of exercise each day on most days of the week. Monitoring your glucose levels before, during and after exercise may become very important and your Family Practitioner can guide you on this. Healthy eating is essential in diabetes self-management. You don't need special foods, but you should focus on choosing more of the healthier food options. Choose non-starchy vegetables (spinach, broccoli), fruit, lean proteins (fish, lean meat and legumes) and wholegrains. Limit your intake of high-carbohydrate snacks such as cakes and cookies and try to watch your portion size.



Sharing the success of Comrades 2017

Over 17 000 runners from across the world lined up at Durban City Hall on 4 June to participate in the Comrades Marathon 2017. South African Bongmusa Mthembu won the men's race in 5 hours, 35 minutes and 34 seconds and American Camille Herron won the women's race in 6 hours, 27 minutes and 35 seconds.

The Comrades Marathon, officially measuring 86.73km and celebrating its 92nd anniversary this year, is known as one of the world's greatest ultra-marathons. Bonitas is proud to be associated with the event in which more than 13 000 runners completed the race in Pietermaritzburg and five of the top 10 male athletes as well as six of the top 10 female athletes were South Africans.

2017 Race facts



- **17 031** individuals ran the race with **13 852** runners crossed the finish line
- **400** runners received treatment at the Comrades Medical Tent
- **80** runners received in-hospital treatment, of which 40 were admitted mainly for dehydration



Images supplied by Jetline

Bonitas and Comrades give back to the community

The Comrades Marathon is well known for raising money for worthy causes to give back to those in need and this tradition continued in 2017 with Bonitas working alongside the Pietermaritzburg and District Community Chest in a job creation programme. Bonitas commissioned the Pietermaritzburg Mental Health Society, a partner of the Community Chest, to produce 20 000 warm-up vests and 2 000 shoe bags provided to runners at training seminars leading up to the race and on race day.

Liza Dickson, Operations Manager of the Pietermaritzburg and District Community Chest, says they were glad to partner with Bonitas in the programme which had a positive impact for the mental health society. She says the job creation project not only provided the Pietermaritzburg Mental Health Society with employment opportunities and an income, but also gave individuals the opportunity to broaden their skills.



We always love hearing from our readers and call on all Bonitas members and anyone who plans to run the Comrades Marathon next year to let us know by emailing us at magazine@afrocentricds.com.





Making sense of migraines

Migraines are one of the most common reasons individuals visit the doctor, affecting approximately 18% of women and 6% of men. We enlisted Dr Elliot Shevel, founder and medical director of the Headache Clinic South Africa, to share his insights on headaches and migraines as well as triggers and treatments available.

A migraine may be a one-sided, throbbing headache accompanied by nausea, vomiting as well as light and sound sensitivity, but doesn't always conform to this description since it can affect both sides of the head without a throbbing sensation, nausea, vomiting or light and sound sensitivity. Each symptom can have different causes so it is essential to diagnose which anatomical structure of the body is in pain to treat this ailment effectively.

Where does the pain come from?

Contrary to what most specialists believe, migraine pain almost never comes from the brain, but originates from muscles of the jaws and neck, small blood vessels and arteries as well as nerves under the skin of the head, face and neck. This makes it easier to treat a migraine because the structures in pain are mostly just under the skin.

Accurately diagnosing this ailment in different people is complex and requires highly specialised medical training, unfortunately not part of the usual curriculum of a medical degree. A doctor's knowledge about headaches may only develop after university from pharmaceutical companies promoting their medications.

Diagnosing headaches accurately

To accurately diagnose a headache, a doctor needs to have a highly specialised knowledge of the anatomy of the head, neck, muscles of the jaws, neck, arteries in the scalp and muscles behind the top jaw. Many doctors and even headache specialists are not always trained on diagnosing migraines and may only prescribe medication to relieve symptoms of pain and nausea.

Treatment should be based on where the pain is coming from, whether the pain is muscular, which muscles are involved, whether the migraine is caused by arteries, which arteries are involved and whether the migraine is both muscular and vascular. The medical team at the Headache Clinic in Johannesburg have developed a unique system of examination where they mapped out main muscle areas causing headache pain and have found pain-producing arteries that enable their team to diagnose headache pain with greater accuracy.

What are the triggers?

The most common mistake doctors and migraine sufferers make is confusing triggers and symptoms with the cause of migraines. The trigger merely activates an abnormal occurrence in a physical structure so that it experiences pain and is not the underlying physical structure which causes pain by sending pain signals to the brain. If the painful structure is treated, the trigger no longer activates this pain and while some triggers can be controlled, some cannot.

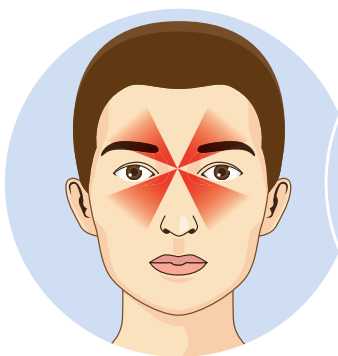
Triggers of migraines that can be controlled are:

- **Food or drinks** – About 20% of migraine sufferers have an identifiable food trigger but the trigger doesn't always set off a migraine and avoiding the trigger doesn't always prevent an attack. Keep a migraine diary to record what you eat so you can easily identify the culprit causing the migraine.
- **Stress** – Sometimes it is possible to avoid stress, but in this day and age it is almost impossible to live a completely stress-free life.
- **Exercising** – Exercise is beneficial to some migraine sufferers, but to others it makes migraines worse so the only way to tell is to see how you respond to exercise.

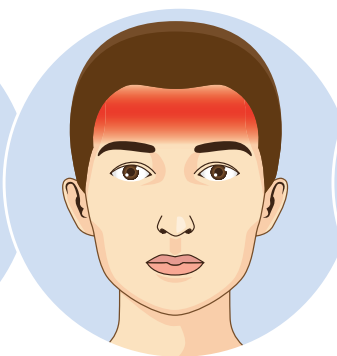
Triggers that cannot be controlled include:

- **Hormonal changes** – When a girl's menstrual cycle starts, they experience three times more migraines than boys and get more migraines during this time, or some women experience attacks only at that time. This is caused by the hormone fluctuations during the menstrual cycle which are normal and shouldn't be tampered with.
- **During pregnancy** – Migraines often get worse during the first three months of pregnancy, but during the last six months as oestrogen levels rise, many women find their migraines disappear until after the baby is born and they stop breastfeeding.
- **Weather change** – A change in climate can sometimes bring on a migraine attack which is unfortunately a trigger that cannot be avoided.

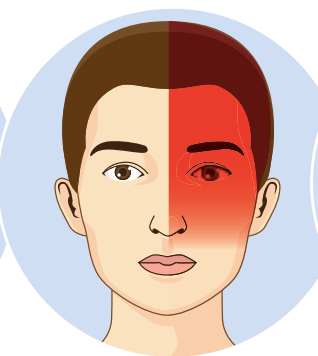
Types of headaches



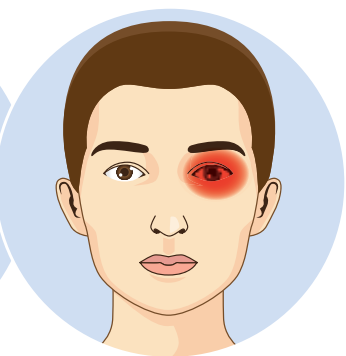
Sinus



Tension



Migraine



Cluster

Preventing and treating your migraines

The most advanced permanent relief for all types of headaches and migraines is available from doctors to reduce and eliminate the need for and dependence on pain medications. These include the Posture Modifying Appliance (PMA), an oral plate assisting with the prevention of migraines, as well as treatment for the muscles such as physiotherapy, trigger point treatment and injections of Botox into painful muscles to relax them.

When scalp arteries are involved in the pain of the migraine, which is roughly 20% of headache patients treated by The Headache Clinic, the arteries are located using advanced sonic equipment that identifies pain by listening for the exact artery that is throbbing. The artery is then closed off by means of a 'minimally invasive' procedure through a very small incision.

Posture Modifying Appliance helps prevent migraines

The Posture Modifying Appliance (PMA), an oral plate unique to the Headache Clinic designed by Dr Shevel, is an alternative to migraine medication assisting with migraine prevention by relaxing muscles of the jaw and neck into the correct natural rest position. When the plate fits correctly, it is comfortable, does not interfere with an individual's speech, and that they will not be aware they are wearing it. When migraines are caused by painful muscles, the PMA can be a permanent solution to a patient's pain.

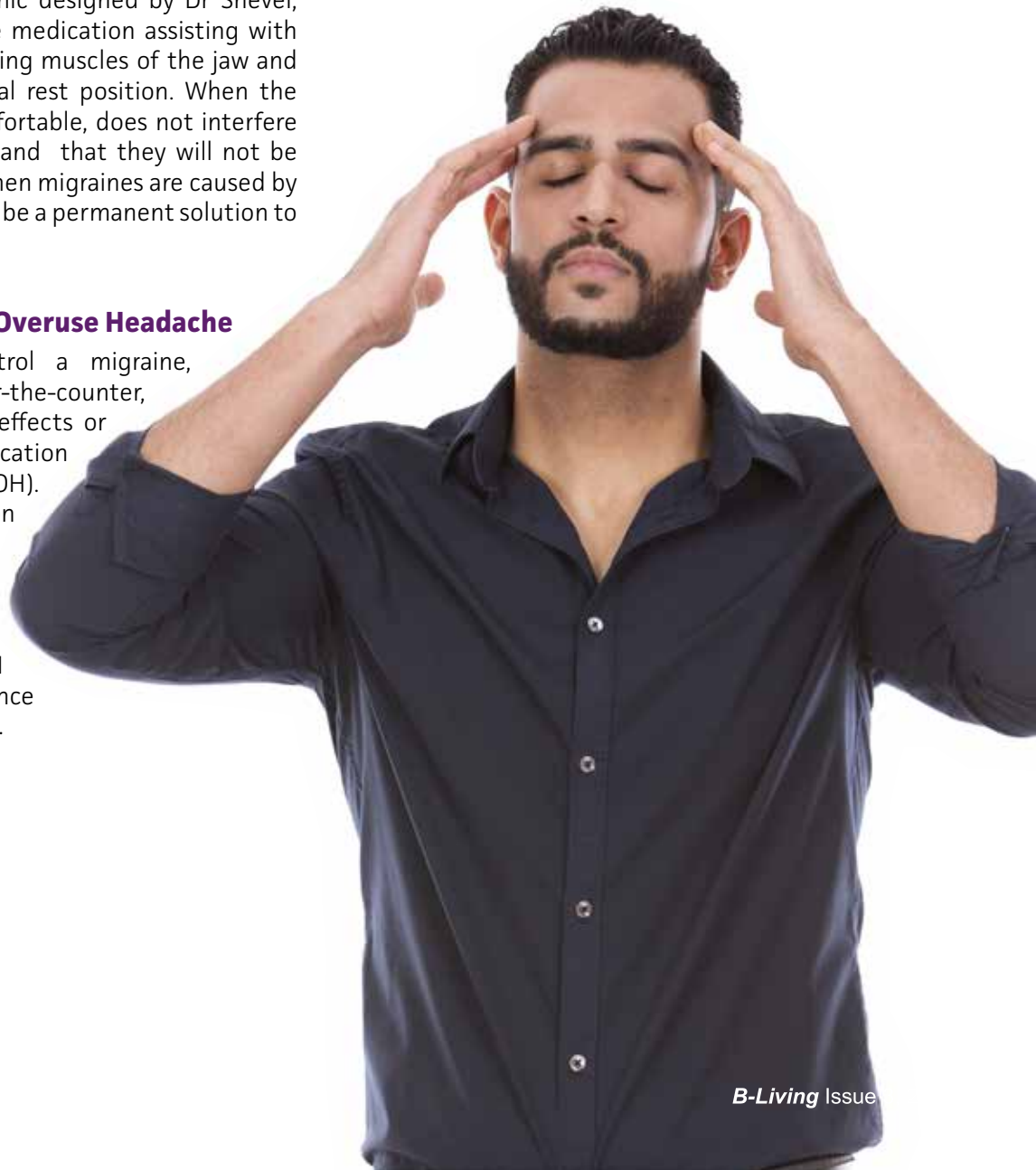
Be aware of Medication Overuse Headache

Using medication to control a migraine, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may cause unpleasant side effects or a condition known as Medication Overuse Headache (MOH). Taking migraine medication just two or three times a week is enough to cause MOH and should a patient try to remove themselves from medication once MOH has set in, they can experience severe withdrawal symptoms.

However, the cause of the original headache can be diagnosed and treated so MOH subsides without the patient experiencing withdrawal symptoms. It is important to remember while pain medication may help a headache in the short term, it can cause migraine pain to become more severe and attacks to become more frequent over the long term, and may start a cycle where the individual takes more medication and experiences worse migraines.

Stop your cluster headaches

A cluster headache, also known as a suicide headache, is a type of headache closely related to a migraine. Although the pain in a cluster headache is caused by arteries, Dr Shevel has discovered an additional artery called the maxillary artery, which can cause the worst pain known to mankind so severe people actually commit suicide to escape it. Dr Shevel has developed a procedure to treat cluster headaches by permanently closing the maxillary artery giving permanent relief to cluster headache sufferers. You can find out more about this procedure from the Headache Clinic.



Beef Avo Sliders

These mouthwatering beef avo sliders from the South African Avocado Growers' Association are a tasty meal option packed with nutrition.

What you'll need

500 g ground beef, extra lean
2 tablespoons pesto
1 egg
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
8 ripe avocados
1 large plum tomato, cut into 8 slices
8 slices cheddar cheese

Method

1. Gently combine ground beef, pesto, egg, a 1/4 teaspoon salt, and a 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper in a bowl.
2. Divide the beef mixture into 8 equal portions, shaping each into a 1/2-cm-thick patty.
3. Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat.
4. Coat the pan with cooking spray.
5. Add patties to the pan and cook for 3 minutes on each side or until the desired degree of doneness has been reached.
6. Cut the avocados in half and remove the pip and peel. Top one half with 1 tomato slice, 1 cheese slice and 1 patty. Place the other avocado half on top of this and season with salt as well as freshly ground pepper.

CHOOSE THE
MEDICAL AID

**THAT NEVER
STOPS THINKING
ABOUT YOU**

> [BONITAS.CO.ZA](https://www.bonitas.co.za)