

Melbourne Cup Festivities in COVID Times

The Melbourne Cup is usually a time to shake off winter and enjoy being outside and having fun! Like everything else this year, we're going to have to do things a little differently to stay healthy!

Why is it Important to Think About Health?

- The Melbourne Cup is the start of the festive season usually it's closely followed by Christmas parties and of course, Christmas and New Year – if you get sick now, you'll miss a lot of the fun in the coming weeks!

What Do We Need To Consider Right Through This Period?

- COVID hasn't gone away. We need to keep taking all the precautions – hand sanitiser, face masks, social distancing, cough hygiene. Now is not the time to let up on any of that.
- Gatherings in other people's homes are the time when you're most likely to let your guard down. The face mask may come off but things like social distancing and hand hygiene are still essential. Handshakes and hugs are still not acceptable, difficult as it may be.
- Also – remember that many people are still doing it tough financially. They may not have the disposable income to join in the things they would normally do.

Melbourne Cup –Can We Still Celebrate?

- We certainly can – but it will be different. There won't be any big Cup lunches, trips to the race course or fashions on the field but we can still celebrate.

What Can We Do to Celebrate?

- We can't have a big Melbourne Cup lunch but we can certainly have one with the family. Have a picnic – at the park, in the back yard or even in the front room. Play some games. Laugh.
- Maybe you're having lunch with another family – no need to just sit around the barbecue table: style it like a professional! Table clothes, serviettes, flowers, candles – make it a gala, something to remember, even if you are eating a barbecue!
- Race days, especially the Melbourne Cup, are known for large quantities of alcohol and rich food but this year is obviously going to be different! Maybe it's time to start a new tradition – a barbecue or a seafood lunch can be fun and still festive!
- Add something special to turn your home lunch into a feast – some prawns, a couple of good cheeses, a nice dessert. If you can afford it, you may like to support one of the local restaurants that are offering gourmet hampers or picnic baskets.
- With many people still working from home, the office sweep won't be an option for many people – but you can still have one with the family, with the neighbours or with social media friends. The prize doesn't have to be money – how about a face mask or a tube of hand cream for those hands that are becoming dry from sanitiser?
- Fashions of the field are a big event for many people – and there's no reason not to dress up in your finery even if you aren't leaving home! Have fashion on the lawn: dress up and take a picture of yourself, have a competition with your friends to see who looks the best!
- You may also want to use the day to do something different – take a walk around the lake, taking a cycle on the Skipton Bike Trail, make a Christmas Cake (it's not too early!).

Why is it Important to Celebrate?

- This year we've had little to celebrate – so take the time to have a celebration. If the Cup isn't your thing, celebrate spring, or low COVID number so something that matters to you! If the Melbourne Cup was a big event in your social calendar, it's particularly important to celebrate so there is a sense of normality in your life.