



## Netcare Olivedale Haematology units



**THE HAEMTEAM**  
*A place of love and healing*



**You're in safe hands**



Dear Patient and Family

A very warm welcome to the HAEMTEAM Haematology medical practice. We strive to provide excellent medical care and create a supportive and healing environment for you. We have compiled this information booklet to assist you in your health journey. We are grateful to all the patients who have contributed to the content in this book. Your feedback is invaluable in making the journey of future patients easier. This booklet contains important and useful information regarding the practical aspects of your treatment, as well as guidance in emergency situations. Should you require further clarity, please feel free to engage any of our experienced staff.

HAEMTEAM is a specialist Haematology practice and the clinical team members are all qualified and experienced in this medical discipline. Hematology is a branch of medicine concerned with study of blood and blood diseases. The word "haem" comes from the Greek word for blood. Haematology is practised by specialists who deal with the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of people with blood disorders. Some of the diseases treated by haematologists include anaemia, bleeding disorders, clotting disorders, bone marrow failure, leukemias, lymphomas, multiple myeloma and inherited blood disorders.

Please be assured of our best endeavours at all times to ensure that your journey with us is as stress-free as possible. In addition to HAEMTEAM's medical specialists, we constantly link and engage with other specialised medical disciplines in order to offer an expanded basket of care.

Thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey. We hope that you will experience the love and care of the HAEMTEAM during your time with us.

Kind regards

DR KAREN GUNTHER  
PRACTICE HEAD: HAEMTEAM

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## OPERATING HOURS AND EMERGENCIES

Our practice hours are from Monday to Friday between 8:30 and 16:00. During office hours, staff members are available to assist with queries and challenges. However, the practice often experiences high activity levels. For your convenience, a messaging facility is available and we strive to respond to all messages within 48 hours.

For emergencies during office hours or for bookings of appointments please speak directly to the receptionist, who will assist you based on the specific circumstances. This is to ensure that all patients' needs can be appropriately accommodated with limited time resources.

From time to time, patients experience medical emergencies requiring immediate intervention. These unscheduled visits may cause delays with scheduled appointments. Whilst we endeavour to maintain a tight appointment schedule, delays are often unavoidable. Please feel free to phone prior to a booked appointment to establish if delays are expected.

For after-hours or weekend medical emergencies kindly contact the doctor on call/cover (Dr Gunther, Dr Singh or Dr Ashmore) on **011 - 321 0111**. In addition, the nursing sister-in-charge at Section 8, Netcare Olivedale Hospital will be able to reach the doctor should there be a problem in reaching us. The number for Section 8 is **011 - 777 2242**. In an emergency situation, please do not delay and rather report to your nearest emergency medical department for review. The emergency room doctor can then assess you and contact a member of our medical team directly.



## THE HAEMTEAM AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Everyone at the HAEMTEAM is committed to bringing you the best of care.

The Team includes:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Nurse navigator
- Pharmacist
- Admin Staff (Reception, administrative support, filing etc.)
- The Finance department
- The Medical Aid Authorisations department and Practice Manager
- Haemteam CARE (psychosocial support services)

Our contact details are as follows:

Reception number	011 475 8451 / 010 200 9111
Fax number	011 475 8596
Emergency number	011 3210111
Section 8 (Olivedale)	011 777 2242
Practice manager	vhonani@haemteam.co.za
Reception	reception@haemteam.co.za
Finance	finance@haemteam.co.za
Authorisations	auths@haemteam.co.za
General queries	bernadettec@haemteam.co.za
Pharmacist	pharmacy@haemteam.co.za
Nurses	anjolienb@haemteam.co.za
	delicious@haemteam.co.za
	lyn@haemteam.co.za
	sihle@haemteam.co.za
Haemteam CARE	pieterlr@haemteam.co.za

Switchboard connection options are as follows:

01. Reception and appointments
02. Blood results
03. Authorisations
04. Finance
05. Pharmacy
06. Nursing Team

**Please note that the nursing staff are only able to take calls after 13:00 as they are busy with treatments in the infusion room prior to this.**

If the person that you require is not immediately available, please leave a detailed message on their extension including your name, query and contact details. For non-emergency/administrative queries, an email can also be sent to the relevant staff member.

We will revert within 48 hours. Please trust us to return your call. Leaving repeated messages at various extensions does slow down the process.

For your convenience, Lancet Laboratories are located on our premises for all your blood tests.

## FINANCES

During what is an already trying time, financial issues do cause additional strain. Whilst your primary focus should be on getting better, a number of points relating to medical aid funding should be noted.

Many of the treatment plans and interventions require authorisation from your medical aid. The Finance team works closely with the authorisations department and this enables us to resolve most issues relating to medical aid claims before they arise.

We submit all treatment plans and costs in “real time” to your medical aid. This ensures immediate awareness of co-payment requirements or rejections. Patients are then informed accordingly. Please know that we strive to assist in any way possible regarding account payment resolution. However, we request that you familiarise yourself with the requirements and limits of your individual medical aid scheme. Whilst most blood diseases fall within the sphere of PMBs (Prescribed Minimum Benefits) or Oncology benefits, most medical aids have tiers of care. Depending on your particular plan, restrictions can be placed on what type of medication we are allowed to use or even the hospitals you are allowed to be admitted to. Should there be a need to upgrade your plan (and should you have the means), please enquire timeously with your medical aid.

Please note the following:

- The final account remains the responsibility of the patient and should costs arise that are not covered by your medical aid, you will be duly informed. We will only send you an account after we have explored all possible avenues with your medical aid.
- The first consultation charge for detailed assessment for 2019 amounts to R1 950 and is payable up-front. A refund can be claimed by you from your medical aid. The follow-up consultation rate is R820. **Only Discovery patients' consultation charges are submitted electronically.** All other patients are requested to kindly settle accounts on the day of consultation and then claim back from your medical aid.
- If your medical aid details have changed, please inform us immediately.
- We encourage you to also follow up regularly with your medical aid regarding treatment plan submissions, authorisations and payments.

Any account related enquiries can be directed to [finance@haemteam.co.za](mailto:finance@haemteam.co.za)

**Please note that Lancet Laboratories and Netcare Olivedale Hospital are separate entities and are not part of the practice or our billing system. If you receive any bills from them please discuss this directly with the Lancet and Olivedale Hospital staff.**

Please know that we are always available and willing to assist if possible.

## MEDICAL AID AUTHORISATIONS

Many of the illnesses treated by HAEMTEAM require diagnostic tests as well as properly formulated treatment plans. These treatment plans require pre-authorisation by the medical aid schemes. During your treatment there will be frequent interaction with the authorisations team. They compile reports and submit treatment plans on your behalf to your medical aid for approval and funding.

Once a diagnosis is made, the doctors prescribe a treatment plan, which we submit (together with the required letters of motivation and supporting documents) to your medical aid. Authorisation timelines vary. **From the time of submission, treatment can usually start within two weeks. This process can be delayed further if funding restrictions apply and additional motivations need to be submitted.** Please note that we have minimal control over the authorisation timeline, medical aid processes or delivery of medication. If you have not received feedback from us to start treatment after 10 days, please contact the authorisation's department.

We would like to assure you of our best efforts to make this a smooth and easy process for you. We appeal to you to be an active participant in this process and also follow up with your medical aid. **At times if may be necessary to upgrade your medical aid plan (should you have the means to) to access certain types of medication which are not available on all plans. Please contact your medical aid directly for details on how to do this. We will provide any additional medical documentation that you may need to facilitate this.**

We will contact you to arrange a date to start treatment once your medical aid has approved your treatment plan and your medication has been delivered.





# HAEMTEAM CARE

To be diagnosed with chronic illness or a potentially life-threatening illness is one of the most devastating moments in a person's life. It affects every part of life as well as the lives of the people around us.

The Haemteam has always been a place of love and healing. "Haemteam CARE" is an extension of our therapeutic vision and provides specialised support with the aim of delivering a holistic service to our patients. Through Haemteam CARE and our affiliates, we are able to offer emotional, psychological and spiritual support.

Our practice therapist is generally available on weekday mornings to ward patients but can also be contacted to arrange individual, group and family counselling sessions. In addition, information can be provided on other services that you may need including palliative care, home nursing services, support groups and organisations (eg. CANSA), psychiatrists, dieticians, physiotherapist, etc.

Please do not hesitate to ask any member of our team to arrange for Haemteam CARE to contact you or a loved one.



# TREATMENTS

Some treatments will be administered in hospital (Section 8 or 5 Netcare Olivedale Clinic), whilst other treatments will take place in the treatment room at the HAEMTEAM practice. Please note that the treatment room operates from 08:30 until 16:00, excluding public holidays and weekends. Should you arrive before 08:30, please wait in the reception area for the cleaning, nursing and pharmacy staff to prepare the treatment room.

If you cannot keep your treatment appointment please call the nurses (well before the day of the scheduled appointment if possible) to cancel the scheduled appointment and reschedule.

If you are receiving Polygam, Mabthera or Cosmofer, you have to be in the treatment room by 10:00 as these particular infusions can take many hours to complete.

The nurses deal with queries or concerns regarding treatments, eg. side-effects, dosing schedules, etc. They are not available before 12:00 as treatment room patients will take priority before this time. Please call in the afternoon or leave a detailed message for them. They will follow up after 12:00 and we will respond to all queries within 48 hours. For emergencies, please do not leave a message for the nurses, rather phone through to reception and inform the receptionist of the emergency. The receptionist will then request a nurse to call you back promptly. If you are very ill, do not hesitate to present yourself to your nearest emergency department and the emergency room doctor can contact the relevant doctor.

When you start treatment the nurses will discuss your specific treatment plan, potential side effects, management of minor side-effects etc. Not everyone experiences side-effects (side-effects' severity and duration are dependent on the specific treatment and are not the same for everyone) but it is important to know what constitutes an emergency and what is a minor or manageable side-effect.

**The following is a general outline of some of the haematological emergencies to closely monitor if you are on chemotherapy. These particular problems need immediate medical attention:**

1. A temperature of 38 degrees and higher: take two Panado/ Paracetamol tablets and wait one hour before repeating the temperature reading. If the temperature is the same or higher, seek assistance immediately.
2. Severe/ongoing diarrhoea.
3. Severe/ongoing vomiting, particularly if you have an inability to keep fluids down.
4. Severe mouth sores/ulcers limiting ability to eat/swallow.
5. Excessive nose bleeding, wound bleeding, bleeding under the skin, or fresh blood in urine or stool.
6. Any type of difficulty in breathing, chest pain, or heart palpitations.
7. Inability to pass urine.
8. Confusion, seizures, excessive drowsiness.

**General side effects and risks of chemotherapy can include:**

1. Nausea and vomiting.
2. Possible damage to the skin, tissues and veins at the site of administration.
3. Decrease of white blood cells which can predispose you to infections.
4. Decrease in blood platelets, which may cause bleeding or bruising.
5. Decrease in red blood cells, which may cause anemia and fatigue.
6. Increased blood sugar /glucose levels.
7. Ulceration of the mucous membranes (mouth and throat ulcers).
8. Diarrhea or constipation.
9. Hair loss.
10. Tingling sensation in fingers and toes.
11. Heart beat abnormalities and/or heart failure.
12. Kidney and/or urine abnormalities.
13. Menstrual irregularities.

Some long-term complications from chemotherapy include:

1. Sterility.
2. Secondary malignancies.
3. Cardiac/heart problems.
4. Bone marrow dysfunction.

***\*Long-term side effects can happen many years after chemotherapy (however not in all patients). They need to be monitored, especially if you already have fertility or cardiac problems prior to starting chemotherapy. Please discuss concerns related to long-term side-effects with treating doctors.***

Over the counter medication you may take while you are on treatment:

1. Diarrhoea – Immodium
2. Constipation – Movicol, Lacson
3. Nausea/ vomiting – Clopamon
4. Mouth sores/ ulcers – Andolex C mouthwash, Daktarin gel
5. Pain and fever - Panado

- DO NOT USE ANY OTHER OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION, HERBAL, NATURAL MEDICATION OR VACCINES UNLESS DISCUSSED WITH YOUR MEDICAL TEAM. WE REQUEST THAT YOU DO NOT TAKE ANY PRODUCTS CONTAINING ST. JOHN’S WORT, ECHINACEA OR GRAPEFRUIT EXTRACTS WHILST ON CHEMOTHERAPY.

- MEDICATION: LIST ALL YOUR MEDICATIONS IN A SMALL NOTE BOOK OR ON YOUR MOBILE PHONE. KEEP THESE DETAILS WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES, PARTICULARLY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. WE MAY ADD OR CHANGE MEDICATIONS AND IT IS CRITICAL FOR ALL DOCTORS TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT MEDICATION YOU ARE TAKING.

PLEASE REMAIN IN THE TREATMENT ROOM AREA FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR TREATMENT. IT IS A MEDICAL AND LEGAL RISK FOR YOU TO LEAVE THE TREATMENT ROOM WITH AN INFUSION BAG CONNECTED TO YOU.



## INFORMATION FOR NEUTROPENIC PATIENTS

Your white blood cells fight infections and form an important part of your immune system. As results of certain chemotherapy drugs, your white cell count may drop. We call this drop “neutropenia” and it renders you highly susceptible to infections. Given the high risk of potentially life threatening infections, specific precautions are required both in terms of lifestyle and diet to decrease the chance of infections.

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL NEUTROPENIC PATIENTS

- Keep away from crowds when your white cell count is very low.
- Avoid visitors as far as possible. Visitors should not see you if they have a current infection or illness, especially children who may be harbouring contagious viral infections eg. chicken pox.
- Wear your medical mask when not at home or around visitors.
- Avoid pets.
- Avoid building and construction sites (do not plan renovations or building projects at home).
- If you feel unwell, take your temperature. A high temperature (38° and over) that is not contained immediately with standard home treatment (as discussed under medical emergencies) should be treated as an emergency.
- Mouth care: Gargle with Andolex and use an antifungal preparation such as Mycostatin drops/ Daktarin gel. This can prevent many infections. You should use the mouthwash after every meal and before bedtime and the antifungal preparation at least twice daily.

### Should you have any doubts, please contact us.

A list of food to avoid is available later in this booklet. The list is not comprehensive and is a guide only, with the general underpinning principle being the avoidance of germs, bacteria and infectious situations.

Neutropenic patients must follow a low microbial eating plan.

Further resources at [www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/patient-education/low-microbial-diet](http://www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/patient-education/low-microbial-diet).

As tempting as this may be, please do not consult Dr Google. Should you wish to find information online on your medical problem or treatments we suggest the following websites:

- [www.cancer.gov/resources-for/patients](http://www.cancer.gov/resources-for/patients)





## DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR NEUTROPENIC PATIENTS (BASIC GUIDE)

ALLOWABLE FOODS	
Category	Type preferred
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sterile water</li> <li>• Boiled tap water</li> </ul>
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cartons – fruit juice</li> <li>• Cans – soft drinks</li> <li>• Ice lollies or cubes made with sterile water</li> <li>• High energy drinks</li> <li>• Tea, coffee, cocoa</li> </ul>
Dairy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UHT milk (pasteurised)</li> <li>• Pasteurised condensed milk</li> <li>• Processed cheese</li> <li>• Pasteurised yoghurt</li> <li>• Ice cream made with pasteurised milk</li> </ul>
Cereals/Starches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual packets – cereal</li> <li>• Bread from loaf &lt;2 days</li> <li>• Cooked rice &lt;2 days</li> <li>• Pasta &lt;2 days</li> </ul>
Meat/Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pork, lamb, chicken, beef, veal – fresh or frozen – well cooked</li> <li>• Tinned meats (chicken, sausages, ham, corned beef)</li> </ul>
Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh or frozen fish – well cooked</li> <li>• Tinned fish</li> <li>• Fish fingers well cooked</li> </ul>
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetables (Fresh or frozen well cooked) or tinned</li> <li>• If fresh wash well and preferably cooked</li> </ul>
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only fruit that can be peeled (wash well)</li> <li>• Tinned fruit</li> </ul>
Snacks/Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisps, sweets – individually packed</li> <li>• Tinned soups, packet soups (made with boiled water)</li> </ul>
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puddings, pies, custards – freshly made</li> <li>• Jelly made with sterile or boiled water</li> <li>• Salad creams and sauces individually-wrapped portions</li> </ul>



## FOODS NOT TO BE EATEN – NEUTROPENIC PATIENTS

- Mineral water and any other fresh water sources
- Raw eggs or parboiled eggs (eggs must be cooked completely)
- Raw or undercooked meat, poultry or fish (including sushi and shellfish)
- Nuts
- Dried fruit
- Take away foods /street foods
- Live and bio yoghurts
- Pâté
- Soft and blue vein cheeses
- Mushrooms
- Biltong and Droëwors
- Polony and deli meat - unless reheated and cooked at high temperatures (at least 100 degrees Celsius)
- Fruit that cannot be peeled
- Unwashed vegetables and fruit
- Uncooked sprouts
- Food kept in the refrigerator for more than 2 days

### REMEMBER THE FOUR C'S OF SAFE FOOD:

COOKED WELL (i.e not "rare")

CLEAN/AVOID CROSS-CONTAMINATION

COVERED

CHILLED (REFRIGERATED)





# HAEMTEAM TRUST

Dear Patients and Family Members

We are delighted to inform you that we have established the HAEMTEAM Trust. Often, even when good treatment options are available, patients are unable to access the therapy they require due to financial reasons or medical aid constraints. These problems often mean unaffordable co-payments or outright exclusions regarding the use of certain classes of drugs by medical aids. Sometimes, even funding for basic supportive drugs such as pain killers is limited.

The aim of the HAEMTEAM Trust is to help those who cannot afford ancillary payments and allow us to treat more patients and assist in ways that would have otherwise been impossible. The HAEMTEAM Trust is a discretionary trust funded by donations from patients and their families and is independently run by suitable administrators and trustees. It was started with generous contributions by families and friends of a very special patient and we hope that anyone who is able to, will consider contributing to the trust. Any donation, no matter how small, will be used to make a difference to those who cannot afford ancillary payments. This will facilitate the use of treatment regimens in some patients that can improve their quality of life and in certain instances even improve their chance of survival.

For more information on the trust please chat to your treating doctor or contact our finance team (Elané le Roux tel : 011 475 8451, email : [finance@HAEMTEAM.co.za](mailto:finance@HAEMTEAM.co.za)).

Kindest regards,

Dr Karen Gunther

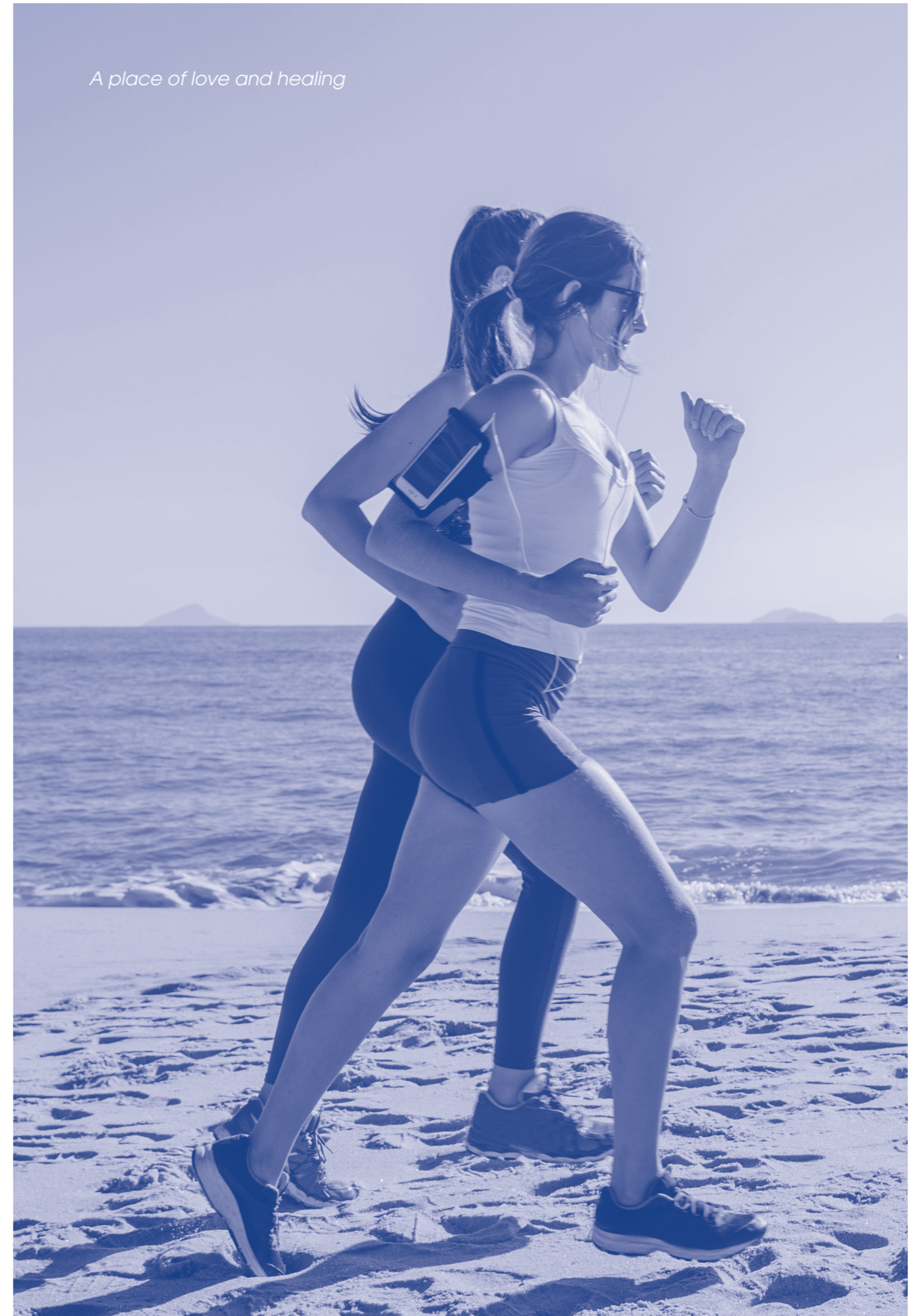


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