



TODAY'S NEWS

Saturday, 24th January 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 3) reports the Queensland Coroner found that repeated mistakes by staff at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital led directly to the death of a 26-year-old woman from a pulmonary embolism after surgery in 2023.
- The **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 6) reports that Australians are buying an untested synthetic peptide promoted by fitness influencers as a miracle weight-loss drug from online bootleggers.
- The **[Weekend Australian](#)** (page 9) reports clinicians are warning that broad-scale use of Avantect, an ovarian cancer early detection blood test launched privately in Sydney this week, may promote unnecessary surgical interventions.
- The **[Weekend Australian](#)** (page 9) reports that researchers in Australia, Canada and the US are trialling a surgical treatment for Parkinson's disease involving the implantation of donor dopamine cells deep into the brain.
- The **[Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 26) reports that a provider of in-home nurses for people with a disability says three of his clients have died in the last 18 months after having NDIS funding for round-the-clock intensive care withdrawn or denied. *Also reported by:* [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Geelong Advertiser](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin](#)

MINISTER BUTLER

New endometriosis and pelvic pain clinic to open in Wagga

Lake News, General News, 23/01/2026, Noel Fisher, Page 7

[...] Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as part of its national expansion of Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinics, it will be operated by Nova Health Co. [...] Minister for Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, said that for too long, women and girls living with pain have had to struggle in silence, but the Albanese Government is changing that with these Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinics giving them access to the expertise, care and specialist support they need.

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ABC Western Plains NSW, 06:30 News, 23/01/2026

Experts say 90s-style anti-smoking campaigns are needed as nicotine consumption is being re-normalised. Data from the Australian National University shows 24,000 people die from smoking-related causes annually. Minister for Health Mark Butler says since 2023, the Government has committed more than \$100 million to anti-smoking initiatives.

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ABC Radio Melbourne, Mornings , 23/01/2026, Raf Epstein

Interview with Independent Member for Kooyong Monique Ryan. She says there is now \$24.5 billion in the Medical Research Future Fund but the Government has never spent more than \$650 million a year. She says she set up the Medical Research Matters campaign and is asking people to write to Mark Butler, Jim Chalmers and Katy Gallagher on the matter.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

GO!, WIN News, 23/01/2026, Bruce Roberts

Advocates are calling on the Federal Government to provide certainty for aged care residents following the repurposing of a facility in Tasmania South. Rosary Gardens is set to become a mental health and

wellbeing precinct. Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Rebecca White says the Government has been working closely with Southern Cross Care to ensure no-one loses continuity of care.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 23/01/2026, Kylie Baxter

Interview with Bridget Wilkinson of COTA Tasmania on the future of aged care in Tasmania. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and Council on the Ageing are warning that the loss of 94 residential aged care beds at Rosary Gardens in New Town is going to push older Tasmanians into hospitals. Wilkinson says she raised urgent concerns with Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Rebecca White.

Continues: [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#).

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

Five million reasons for \$900m project

Newcastle Herald, General News, 24/01/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 5

John Hunter Hospital's overwhelmed public specialist clinics provided a third of the state's outpatient appointments last financial year. But the clinics won't be expanded without a massive injection of government funding, health officials say. [...] A federal health department spokesperson said the Commonwealth had "increased its funding to the NSW hospital system by 11 per cent this financial year".

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Lake News, General News, 23/01/2026, Noel Fisher, Page 7

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Health's \$900m tech outsourcing deal goes to market

InnovationAus, Other, 23/01/2026, Joseph Brookes

The federal Health department is putting its \$897 million enterprise computing deal to market, offering suppliers a chance to dislodge incumbent Datacom from its 12-year outsourcing arrangement. A new enterprise computing supplier would be just the third in almost 30 years, with IBM holding the contracts for 16 years before Datacom won it in 2015.

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TGA releases new compliance principles for 2026-27

Aesthetic Medical Practitioner, Other, 23/01/2026, Aimée Rodrigues

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has released its Compliance Principles for 2026 and 2027, reinforcing a more proactive, risk-based enforcement approach across therapeutic goods

regulation. [...] Our 2026 and 2027 compliance principles and focus areas detail the how and why we act: to safeguard Australians from unsafe products, empower the community with clearer information, and take firm, proportionate action when the rules are broken or ignored,' said Professor Anthony Lawler, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and head of the TGA.

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ChatGPT ain't Dr Google: things are about to get messy

The Medical Republic, Other, 23/01/2026, Jeremy Knibbs

Forget ambient scribing, AI receptionists and decision support, the real seismic change in how AI is going to affect GPs is the new health AI platforms in the hands of your patients. [...] In the meantime, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has been doing some important groundwork by getting our government to start changing laws around how providers who have access to their own siloed information on the patient have to start sharing it much more openly with the government (the My Health Record) other providers and patients.

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Circular economy report recognises Indigenous knowledges but misses opportunities for healthcare

Croakey, Other, 23/01/2026, Fiona Martin

Aboriginal leadership on the circular economy is a highlight of the Productivity Commission's new report on how Australia can cut waste, aiding the environment and our health – but surprisingly the health sector isn't listed as a key area for action. [...] Unfortunately the Commission has not identified healthcare as a priority opportunity for change – even though several of the 184 initial inquiry submissions prominently mentioned this field, including from the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, NSW Health, Melbourne University, Lumicare, Baxter Healthcare and Monash University.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Sector prepares for inquiry into new aged care rules

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 23/01/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Inspector-General of Aged Care Natalie Siegel-Brown has made a submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee's inquiry into the Aged Care Rules 2025. Ms Siegel-Brown's submission is focused on the limitations of the Aged Care Code of Conduct, namely that it does not require providers, responsible people or workers to follow the whole Statement of Rights.

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SaH 'not fit-for-purpose', say advocates

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 23/01/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

The Australian Self-Managed Support at Home Consumer core group has called for an immediate review of the Support at Home program. In a report released this week, the advocacy group has referred to SaH as "not fit-for-purpose" – flagging co-contributions, extra fees and service exclusions as catalysts for older people pulling away from care entirely.

[Read More](#)

Radio National, AM, 23/01/2026, Isabella Higgins

Aged care experts are calling for more teenagers to work in the sector. A Uniting aged care home on the Central Coast is employing a trio of teenagers to lead leisure activities. There are almost half a million people working in aged care right now, but new care requirements coming out of the Royal Commission and introduced last year mean more staff are needed.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

NDIS cuts are a death sentence

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/01/2026, Julie Cross, Page 26

A nurse claims NDIS clients are being handed a "death sentence" after having the right to 24/7 intensive care in the home denied or taken away. Patrik Hutzal, who runs a business employing 150 registered nurses working in people's homes, said three of his clients who had intensive care nursing cut from their plans have died in the last 18 months.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Weekend Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#).

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They failed Noah

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/01/2026, Julie Cross, Page 34

For 22 years, four months and one week, Kylie Johnston had kept her precious son alive. But in the early hours of December 8, Noah's tube came off his ventilator. If it wasn't reattached within three minutes, he would die – but there was no registered nurse available because Ms Johnston was not able to use his NDIS plan to pay for one.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#).

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PRIMARY CARE

Emergency clinic opens at Erina

Coast Community News, Other, 23/01/2026

The Erina Medicare Urgent Care Clinic has officially opened at Erina Fair. The new centre is open for extended hours, seven days a week, with no appointment needed and patients bulk billed.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Rethinking how we portion out advice

Canberra Times, General News, 24/01/2026, Violette McLauchlan, Page 5

Parents of overweight children are often told to reduce their child's food intake to improve their health. But a new study shows that advice might be misplaced. Research from the University of Canberra and University of Tasmania suggests it could be time for a rethink away from emphasising eating less, while teaching children to live a healthy lifestyle.

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Balancing act

Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend Magazine, 24/01/2026, Amanda Hooton, Page 1

You're in your 40s and 50s, and suddenly people you know are dying. What's going on? Welcome to your midlife (health) crisis. [...] And yet, according to the AIHW, almost 70 per cent of Australian adults 14 million people consumed alcohol in 2022-23, and more than a quarter exceeded the alcohol guidelines.

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Crackdown on common product sees fines of up to \$854,000 introduced

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 23/01/2026, Kamilia Palu

Businesses in one Aussie state are being warned to take action now or risk steep fines of up to \$854,000. Victoria is one of the last Aussie states to require any sort of licence to sell tobacco, but that is all about to change from February 1.

[Read More](#)

2CC, Breakfast, 23/01/2026, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview with La Trobe University Associate Professor Jason Jiang on a study finding that reducing annual alcohol consumption by one litre per person could significantly lower deaths from several major cancers. Jiang says they used alcohol consumption per capita and more than 70 years of national data and found that long-term alcohol consumption is a causal contributor to a single population of cancer deaths in Australia.

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3AW, Breakfast, 23/01/2026, Ross Stevenson and Russel Howcroft

Interview with RACGP Victoria chair Dr Anita Munoz on a perplexing rise in shingles among younger Australians. Munoz says one contributing factor is better diagnosis and recording. She says Shingrix is only licensed for use in people aged 50 and over but there are preventative measures younger people can take.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Detection test raises hope for women

Weekend Australian, General News, 24/01/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 9

Hope is rising for ovarian cancer survival rates in Australia, as a new test enables early detection for the first time – but surgeons are questioning whether the blood-test technology may lead to unnecessary interventions. A world-first early detection blood test, which has application in ovarian and pancreatic cancer, was launched in Sydney this week, with developing ovarian cancer now able to be detected in women through the presence of abnormal DNA in their bloodstream.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Rift may help bring up issues

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 24/01/2026, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 25

One of Australia's leading psychology experts says Brooklyn Beckham's highly-publicised rift with his parents could, oddly enough, spark helpful conversation about intergenerational tensions. Australian Psychological Society chief executive Zena Burgess says when celebrities' private affairs play out in public it can "normalise" household conversations, happening behind closed doors.

Similar coverage: [Guardian Australia \(Online\)](#).

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IMMUNISATION

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

The baby business boom

AFR Weekend, General News, 24/01/2026, Michael Smith, Page 1

The IVF industry has become increasingly commercialised as private equity owners move in and pioneering doctors cash out.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Aussies part of bold Parkinson's cell trial

Weekend Australian, General News, 24/01/2026, Penny Timms, Page 9

Surgeons are implanting cells in the brains of Australian patients as part of an ambitious stage-three clinical trial to test whether cell therapy can help restore the motor skills of people with Parkinson's disease. Patients in the trial will have either donor dopamine cells or a placebo surgically implanted deep into their brains to see if those cells can remain and grow to help to reduce symptoms or even reverse the disease.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Finding right note to battle 'invisible disease'

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 24/01/2026, Angela Pownall, Page 31

Scientists say they have new proof that a particular cellular dysfunction could be the key to helping up to 250,000 Australians who suffer from chronic fatigue. New research, partly carried out in Perth, showed that people diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome had a genetic fault that influenced how calcium was absorbed into their immune cells.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Hospital's fatal mistake

Courier Mail, General News, 24/01/2026, Nicola McNamara, Page 3

A woman who died after collapsing in front of her parents following leg surgery could still be alive if a blood clot condition was not overlooked by Queensland Health staff, a coroner has found. Daniella Duchatel, 26, collapse and died from a pulmonary embolism on May 22, 2023, three weeks after having leg surgery at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Age disrespect plated up

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/01/2026, James O'Doherty, Page 15

Vulnerable aged care residents have been forced to eat meals off paper plates for months because NSW Health has failed to fix a broken dishwasher in a regional facility. And nurses at the Warren Multipurpose Service (MPS) are being forced to carry full bedpans through the emergency department because of a broken sluice.

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Hospital surgery boost

Weekend Post, General News, 24/01/2026, Arun Singh Mann, Page 1

Cairns Hospital's surgical theatres will operate more frequently and for longer periods following a new investment, as the latest ambulance ramping figures show increasing wait times. But Health Minister Tim Nicholls said the latest ramping figures were the result of numbers "going up and down" seasonally, while refusing to state Cairns' local target.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Telehealth tied to lower antibiotic prescribing

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 23/01/2026, Kate Cowling

Do doctors feel more pressure to prescribe antibiotics in face-to-face settings? Australian researchers investigated GPs who frequently used telehealth wrote fewer antibiotic scripts than their professional peers, an Australian study found.

[Read More](#)

Funding cut 'reversed' on ECG services delivered by GPs

Medical Forum, Other, 23/01/2026

General practitioners will have a greater chance to catch heart health issues thanks to what the RACGP has described as a reversal of a funding cut. Changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) in 2020 significantly reduced funding for electrocardiograms (ECGs) performed by GPs.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Nurse loses registration after snoozing on the job

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/01/2026, Sarah Keoghan, Page 20

A Sydney nurse, who was caught taking naps during night shifts, has had her registration cancelled after she was found to have "endangered the lives of patients". Chimzuruoke Okembunachi, 25, faced the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal this week after she was caught taking naps in the nurse's station while working at Hardi Aged Care in Guildford during six shifts in March 2024.

Also reported by: [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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Leading WA cancer researcher pleads not guilty to family violence charges

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 23/01/2026, Hannah Murphy

A leading West Australian cancer researcher has pleaded not guilty to accusations he assaulted a family member in front of two children. Oncologist Dr Indunil Weerasena, who has previously specialised in breast cancer, was charged in December in City Beach with unlawfully assault and thereby did bodily harm with circumstances of aggravation. [...] There are currently no restrictions on his practice according to the Australian Health Practitioners Agency.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Melioidosis cases offer grim reminder

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 24/01/2026, Page 11

Health authorities have issued a high alert warning for the Mackay Whitsunday region after four people were rushed to hospital with melioidosis, a potentially fatal soil-borne bacteria. The cluster, involving patients aged between 67 and 89, follows the heavy rainfall and flooding left behind by Cyclone Koji, sparking fears of further infections as residents begin the grim task of cleaning up.

Similar coverage: [ABC Online \(Online\)](#).

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Public warned of measles exposure at Brisbane Airport and Toowoomba clinic

The Courier Mail, Other, 23/01/2026

An alert has been issued after a confirmed measles case was detected in Toowoomba, as the Darling Downs Public Health unit urged the community to keep eye on developing symptoms. Darling Downs Health said two exposure locations have been identified, with anyone having been in the area to monitor for symptoms for the next three weeks.

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Super-K flu: New strain spreads

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 24/01/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 3

The "super-K" flu strain spreading fast across Queensland over the summer months could beat the current vaccine, scientists fear. Already the "super-K" or H3N2 strain of flu has become dominant in the state, making up 54 per cent of cases as of the latest data in November.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#).

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Interview with CSIRO disease prevention and detection expert Dr Daniel Layton on the Super-K flu strain. He says the new strain has many mutations in a protein that antibodies bind to. He says there is a mismatch between last year's flu vaccine and this strain but early evidence coming out of the UK shows the vaccine is reducing emergency department visits and serious illness.

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4BC, Afternoons, 23/01/2026, Carla Bignasca

Interview with AMA Queensland president Dr Nick Yim on the Super-K flu strain. Queensland Health recorded 690 confirmed cases just last week, with nearly 50 people ending up in hospital. Dr Yim says the flu vaccination people have had will offer some protection.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Warning over potential dangers of taking bootlegged weight-loss drug

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 24/01/2026, Kate Aubusson, Page 6

Australians are buying an unapproved weight-loss drug from suppliers whose websites list the product as "for research use only" or "not for human consumption" and who sell by the milligram and ship it to residential addresses. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration said it had requested the removal of more than 13,700 unlawful advertisements from digital platforms in the 2024-25 financial year.

Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

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Dark side of peptides: Hailed as an anti-ageing 'miracle' and better than Ozempic for weight loss, doctors now see alarming side effects - especially for women on the 'Barbie drug'

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 22/01/2026, Bek Day

They're all over your social media feed. They're promoted by tanned and impossibly toned influencers. [...] These short-term side effects and long-term risks are why the TGA has specifically warned against using it.

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These 'remedies' are all about vibes

AFR Weekend, Companies and Markets, 24/01/2026, Isabella Freeland, Page 19

Snake oil sales pitches are bigger than ever on social media. No more dad bod. Weight loss without Ozempic. Chin and jawline more defined. Love handles melting away. A flat stomach with a few scoops of powder. All natural, of course.

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Med cannabis, vapes on TGA priority list

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 23/01/2026

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has released its compliance principles for 2026-27, outlining its strategic approach to monitoring and enforcing regulatory compliance for the import, export, manufacture, supply and advertising of therapeutic goods in Australia. The regulator also announced its 12 priority focus areas for compliance and enforcement activities the first three months of 2026.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Baby formula recalled over illness-causing toxin

9News, Other, 23/01/2026, Adam Vidler

Batches of baby formula have been pulled from supermarket shelves around the country after they were found to contain an illness-causing toxin. [...] Acting Food Standards Australia New Zealand chief executive Christel Leemhuis said the action followed an international recall by Lactalis, which prompted Sanulac to recall their affected batches.

Similar coverage: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Australian Journal of Pharmacy \(Online\)](#).

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