



TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 31st May 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **ABC Online** reports that leaked health data indicates diphtheria cases surged in the Northern Territory a month before a public health alert was issued. The Federal Government has announced a 7.2 million dollar funding package to mitigate the spread of the disease, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler noting that the NT requested assistance from the Commonwealth in late April.
- **The Sunday Age** (page 5) reports the Federal Government and Victorian health authorities are strengthening disease defences following the state's first suspected Ebola case, which tested negative at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory after executing a response plan aligned with WHO outbreak observations.
- **The Sunday Telegraph** (page 29) reports the proposed NDIS amendment bill introduces sweeping new powers for the NDIA, allowing specialised officers to independently issue immediate fines, enter premises with search warrants, demand device passwords, and compel individuals to attend questioning to secure evidence for criminal prosecutions. Minister for the NDIS Jenny McAllister stated that the Federal Government intends to provide the agency with the necessary authority to protect participants from fraud.
- **The Sunday Times** (page 12) reports the an international trial conducted by Australian research group Breast Cancer Trials has demonstrated that a gene test can accurately identify

patients over forty with hormone receptor-positive breast cancer who can be treated safely without chemotherapy.

- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane](#)** (page 21) reports that leaked paramedic accounts indicate mental health patients deemed an immediate risk of serious harm are being turned away from hospital emergency departments, with Emergency Examination Authorities regularly revoked at triage doors without comprehensive assessments.
- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 4) reports the Brotherhood of St Laurence is proposing to cut up to 45 NDIS-funded early childhood coordinator roles in Victoria to pivot towards adult services, following a mismatch between funded activity and staffing levels under its contract with the NDIA. The Australian Services Union has criticised the workforce reductions, noting that these highly skilled professionals are being caught in an uncoordinated funding crossfire prior to the Federal Government and state-funded transition of approximately 300,000 people off the NDIS and onto the Thriving Kids program.
- **[The Sunday Tasmanian](#)** (page 19) reports clinical insights from the RACGP indicate that prescription weight-loss medications are long-term treatments for a chronic relapsing condition, with patients highly susceptible to weight relapse and substantial muscle loss upon discontinuation.

MINISTER BUTLER

Long-running after-hours GP services on brink of collapse amid staffing crisis

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/05/2026, Madeleine Bower

After hours doctor clinics are facing closure across the country as they struggle to compete with new urgent care clinics for staff. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the government was investing in more junior doctors and more doctors from overseas were registering to practice in Australia to bridge the workforce gap.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#)

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Diphtheria cases surged a month before NT Health issued public alert, leaked data shows

ABC Online, Other, 30/05/2026, Joseph Hathaway-Wilson

Leaked NT Health data reveals diphtheria numbers surged in the Northern Territory a month before a public health alert was issued. [...] On Thursday last week, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the Northern Territory government requested assistance from the Commonwealth in late-April.

Also reported by: [MSN Australia \(Online\)](#), [9News \(Online\)](#), [WEB First Nations News \(Online\)](#)

[Read More](#)

Breakthrough drug offers new hope for rare hereditary condition Von Hippel Lindau patients in Australia

7News.com.au, Other, 30/05/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

A rare condition affecting hundreds of Australians is gaining new attention, with patients calling a breakthrough drug life-changing. [...] "It's just a demonstration of the magic of the PBS bringing the world's best medicines to Australia at affordable prices," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

[Read More](#)

New funding backs fight against Australia's biggest killer

Starts at 60, Other, 30/05/2026

Dementia remains Australia's leading cause of death, and the Federal Government has announced a fresh \$22.9 million investment in research aimed at helping people stay healthier for longer as they

age. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said research remained one of the most powerful tools in the fight against dementia.

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Channel 7, Seven News (Weekend), 30/05/2026, Michael Usher & Angie Asimus

Von Hippel-Lindau disease is receiving renewed attention, with patients describing Belzutifan as life-changing. Before its listing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, the treatment cost up to \$12,000, now about \$25. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the PBS provides access to new medicines at affordable prices, while advocates are calling for more funding for targeted therapies for neuroendocrine cancers due to limited treatment options.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

Fraud hunters get new powers

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 31/05/2026, Madeleine Bower, Page 29

Special National Disability Insurance Agency officers will be granted sweeping new powers to haul shonky providers draining the taxpayer-funded disability support plans of vulnerable Australians in for questioning, search their properties and force them to hand over passwords. [...] NDIS minister Jenny McAllister said those fleecing people with a disability would feel the full force of the NDIA's beefed up powers.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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DEPARTMENT

Tamworth residents invited to help shape local health priorities

The New England Times, Other, 30/05/2026

Residents across the Tamworth region are being encouraged to have their say as the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network (HNECC PHN) begins a Community Deep Dive across the Tamworth Local Government Area. [...] Findings from the Deep Dive will inform the PHN's annual Needs Assessment, which is submitted to the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing each November to support future planning and commissioning decisions.

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ABC, ABC News (Saturday), 30/05/2026, Sabra Lane

Two primary health care services in southern Tasmania had funding reinstated for another year after it was cut in last week's state budget. [...] A state government spokesperson says funding will continue until June next year to allow time for the federal government to take over responsibility, while a Federal Health Department spokesperson says the Commonwealth provides most primary care funding, but states also have a role.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

What 'clinical care' and HELF mean when navigating aged care fees

The Senior, Other, 30/05/2026, Phoebe Loomes

Navigating the decision to move yourself or a loved one into residential aged care can be a difficult decision, especially with lots of jargon making it hard to understand what services you're actually paying for. Terms like HELF, "hotelling" and what's classed as "clinical care" may cause added stress, but experts warn rushing through the highly complex process may cost you thousands more in fees.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disability job losses fuel anxiety over services

Sunday Age, General News, 31/05/2026, Grant McArthur, Page 4

Children's disability workers are set to lose their jobs a year before the new Thriving Kids disability program even starts, as providers struggle to get clarity around changes to the NDIS. The Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) is set to axe up to 45 of its early childhood co-ordinator roles, which are funded under a contract with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as it moves to a greater focus on adult disability services.

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

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Grab those golden geese

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 31/05/2026, Julie Cross & Anthony Dowsley, Page 28

John is a 45-year-old man with the mental age of a six-year-old. [...] A central tenet of the NDIS is "choice and control", so John can choose to move to a new provider at any time, despite not having decision-making capabilities.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

Who is caring for those who vanished?

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 31/05/2026, Julie Cross, Page 61

With some people's NDIS plans worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, boarding houses and housing commissions have become hunting grounds for fresh meat. This is where many people with drug addictions, complex psychosocial disabilities or intellectual disabilities end up.

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Stop the rorts to save NDIS

Sunday Herald Sun, Editorials, 31/05/2026, Page 64

Australians strongly back the need for comprehensive support for people with disabilities. In fact, putting aside the real and rising concerns over the budget blowout costs for the \$50bn National Disability Insurance Scheme, most Australians would see the initiative as another example of this country's proud legacy of egalitarianism and opportunity.

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PRIMARY CARE

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POPULATION HEALTH

Sell our illicit tobacco, and this dodgy vodka

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 31/05/2026, Fergus Ellis, Page 26

Crime gangs peddling illicit tobacco are now forcing shop owners to stock black market alcohol. Business owners have told the Sunday Herald Sun if they agree under duress to stock smuggled tobacco products, they are also being ordered to sell dodgy bottles of alcohol, and vice versa.

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Taxpayers, not Big Tobacco, are paying for our illegal smoke habit

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 30/05/2026, Colin Kruger

When health campaigners first dreamt of ending Big Tobacco's grip on Australia, they probably did not imagine the killer role that organised crime would play. A Senate inquiry into the tobacco crisis this month heard yet more evidence, as if it was needed, on how a combination of rising government cigarette duties and lax law enforcement delivered Australia's multibillion-dollar nicotine market into the hands of criminals.

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Major new health program launched to target preventable dementia risk factors

The Courier Mail, Other, 30/05/2026, Lillian Saleh

Australia is about to embark on one of its most ambitious health prevention programs yet, with researchers hoping a groundbreaking digital program will change the way the nation thinks about brain health and ageing. [...] Figures compiled by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and released by Dementia Australia show 446,500 Aussies are impacted by the brain health condition – up 13,500 cases on the previous year.

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2GB, Weekends, 30/05/2026, Jason Morrison

Morrison says doctors warn that weight loss drugs are not a short-term fix and that some people regain weight after stopping treatment. Dr Mark Mellor from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners says these drugs should be considered long-term obesity management medication rather than weight loss drugs. Morrison says high costs are a major barrier, with some treatments costing almost \$7500 a year.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Safely avoiding chemo

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 31/05/2026, Page 7

Thousands of women with breast cancer could avoid chemotherapy without risking their survival chances thanks to a new gene test. The Prosigna check uses a biopsy or tumour sample after surgery to work out how aggressive the genes driving a cancer's growth are.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Lung damage mapped

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 31/05/2026, Page 27

Melbourne researchers have mapped how lung damage begins early in life for children with cystic fibrosis, providing new insights that will help reshape future care. The research team, led by Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, has created the largest-ever lung atlas of the lower airways in young cystic fibrosis patients, offering new clues into preventing longterm disease.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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Eyelid cancer threat lurking in plain sight

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 31/05/2026, Ruby Stewart, Page 22

Diane Meaney was shocked when she found out the lump on her lower left eyelid that she believed was a sty was actually eyelid cancer. [...] Despite eyelid cancers accounting for up to 10 per cent of all skin cancers, Dr LaHood said his patients were regularly perplexed when they receive the diagnosis.

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Million men at risk of prostate cancer

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 31/05/2026, Page 27

Australians are being urged to take part in a nationwide survey on early detection of the country's most commonly diagnosed cancer for men. The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia is concerned about a million Australian men may have increased risk of prostate cancer due to their family history.

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New trial aims to tackle our biggest killer in the bush

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 31/05/2026, Lillian Saleh, Page 4

Australia is about to embark on one of its most ambitious health prevention programs yet, with researchers hoping a groundbreaking digital program will change the way the nation thinks about brain health and ageing. The Maintain Your Brain Plus (MYB+) program will target Australians aged between 45 and 79 living in regional and rural communities to help reduce their risk of dementia before symptoms ever appear.

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Research helps free patients from chemo

Sunday Times, General News, 31/05/2026, Sophie Gannon, Page 12

Thousands of people facing a breast cancer diagnosis may no longer need to undertake harsh chemotherapy after a major Australian-led international trial has identified those who can be treated safely without it. The Optimal Personalised Treatment of early breast cancer using multi-parameter analysis, also known as the OPTIMA trial, was run by research group Breast Cancer Trials in Australia and involved more than 4400 patients worldwide, including 263 patients from Australia and New Zealand.

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

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How to live longer: Diet, lifestyle and your risk of diabetes type 2

The Australian, Other, 30/05/2026, Penny Timms

Chris Harrison needed to get serious about his health. [...] An estimated 830 million people have it globally and Diabetes Australia estimates one person is diagnosed with it every five minutes here.

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Women from remote regions are travelling long distances to Townsville for specialist surgery

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/05/2026, Emma Cam

Women from some of Queensland's most remote communities are travelling hundreds of kilometres to Townsville for specialist breast cancer surgery once only available in metropolitan centres. [...] Formal oncoplastic breast surgery training began in Australasia in 2015, with Dr Bartlett being among the first surgeons trained to bring the specialist service to regional Australia.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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Neale Daniher's spirit lives on through Bryan Cousins' MND fight

West Australian, Other, 30/05/2026, Glen Quartermain

Neale Daniher's spirit will endure in those fighting motor neurone disease. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates 2800 Australians are living with MND at any given time.

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Tasmania chosen to supply blood samples for global Parkinson's disease study

ABC Online, Other, 30/05/2026, Mackenzie Archer

Parkinson's disease has often been referred to as an 'old man's disease', but for one northern Tasmanian mum, this could not be further from the truth. [...] The disease, which impacts up to 150,000 Australians, reshaped the future Ms Milne thought she would have.

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Groundbreaking genomic test could spare millions of breast cancer patients chemotherapy

The Guardian, Other, 30/05/2026, Andrew Gregory

Millions of women with breast cancer could be spared chemotherapy with a groundbreaking genomic test, according to the results of a trial that could transform healthcare guidelines worldwide. Treatment for breast cancer, the world's most prevalent form of the disease, involves surgery to remove tumours.

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Fight to slay MND 'beast' goes on after Daniher's death

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 30/05/2026, Callum Goode

Motor neurone disease remains a death sentence but researchers are making progress on deciphering the cause and developing better therapies. The terminal condition has been thrust back to the forefront of Australia's collective consciousness in recent weeks by high-profile cases.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [7News.com.au \(Online\)](#).

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 30/05/2026, Fauziah Ibrahim & Johanna Nicholson

Interview with writer Hannah McElhinney. Ibrahim says women are more likely to seek out alternative medicine and asks about McElhinney's cousin Lauren and her Lyme disease diagnosis. They also discuss McElhinney's book 'Wormhole,' which examines medical misogyny and conspiracy theories. McElhinney says limited recognition of Lyme disease in Australia and the lack of clear treatment protocols contributed to Lauren seeking alternative therapy in Malaysia. She adds that the dismissal of chronic and poorly understood conditions can reduce trust in the medical system and lead patients to pursue unregulated treatments.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Tackling a silent killer

Sunday Age, General News, 31/05/2026, Hannah Kennelly, Page 1

Every Thursday night without fail, Hawthorn Amateur Football Club's men's and women's sides gather for dinner after training. [...] In collaboration this year with Graham Psychology, the program features a mental healthcare fund that players, coaches and supporters can use anonymously to access psychology, psychiatric or counselling services at a significantly reduced cost.

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MP to help cut suicide

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 31/05/2026, Page 25

Premier Peter Malinauskas has announced a new advocate for suicide prevention in a bid to help reduce the rates of suicide across the state. Davenport MP Erin Thompson has been appointed in the role, taking over from Nadia Clancy, who has been appointed Minister for Small and Family Business and Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

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Burnie hospital milestone as funds under fire

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 31/05/2026, Bridget Clarke, Page 7

The opening of tenders for a new mental health facility in Burnie has been hailed as a milestone for the North West Hospitals Masterplan, as the government faces continued scrutiny over pulling funding for the project. The government has opened the tender process for the new \$40m mental health facility at the North West Regional Hospital in Burnie, following approval of the project's development application by the Burnie City Council last week.

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What an 81-year-old is teaching young Australians about managing stress

SBS, Other, 30/05/2026, Sandra Fulloon

On the balcony of a suburban Sydney home, an 81-year-old karate master moves through a series of strikes and blocks with the precision of muscle memory honed over decades. [...] According to the Second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, an estimated one in seven — or about 560,000 — Australian youth and children are experiencing mental health disorders.

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IMMUNISATION

'Long tail': Flu season concerns prompt vax push

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 30/05/2026, Kate Cowling

Pharmacists are being placed at the centre of campaigns to encourage flu vaccination ahead the season's peak. Insights from the Northern Hemisphere indicate this year's flu season could be longer, highlighting the urgency of broader vaccination, the NSW health minister says.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

The human cost of insurance changes

Sunday Examiner, General News, 31/05/2026, Craig Thomson, Page 33

For hundreds of thousands of older Australians already struggling with rising living costs, the Albanese government's rollback of age-based private health insurance rebates is a painful budget savings measure. To those over 65 and those approaching retirement, it looks less like reform and more like a direct hit to their health security.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Support needed for Groote Eylandt families suffering from Machado-Joseph disease

National Indigenous Times, Other, 30/05/2026, Joseph Guenzler

Warnindilyakwa families on Groote Eylandt have experienced the impact of Machado-Joseph disease across generations, with many caring for relatives long before the inherited neurological condition had a name. [...] Machado-Joseph disease is an inherited neurological condition that affects movement, speech and swallowing, and can pass through families across generations.

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

EDs 'are booting' high-risk patients

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 31/05/2026, Taylah Fellows, Page 21

Mental health patients deemed an immediate risk of serious harm are being turned away from hospitals, with paramedics battling emergency department staff for them to be detained and admitted. Whistleblower paramedics have told this masthead that Emergency Examination Authorities (EEAs) a legislative tool to detain mental health patients at serious risk of harm in hospital are regularly revoked at hospital emergency department doors.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Hospital systems pass first test after suspected Ebola case in Melbourne

Sunday Age, General News, 31/05/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 5

Victoria is strengthening its defences against two infectious disease threats, launching a diphtheria booster vaccination program while health officials debrief after their first Ebola scare. [...] The scare came just hours after the Health Department convened a meeting with the Royal Melbourne and Royal Children's hospitals to discuss their preparedness for Ebola in response to a major outbreak in the DRC and Uganda.

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

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Systems hold up in Ebola response

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 31/05/2026, Brendan Kearns, Page 7

Victoria has faced down its first Ebola scare after a patient from an outbreak-stricken area of Africa presented at the Monash Medical Centre's emergency department with symptoms of the disease. The patient, who had returned from an at-risk region and met the suspected case definition for the virus, was transferred to the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) before ultimately being cleared of the disease.

Also reported by: [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

Man in Victoria cleared of Ebola as health system passes first test

The Australian, Other, 30/05/2026, Steve Zemek

A man in Victoria has tested negative to the Ebola virus after he was admitted to hospital during the week with symptoms similar to the disease. The man presented to Monash Medical Centre's emergency department on Tuesday with symptoms similar to Ebola before he was transported to Royal Melbourne Hospital.

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

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Relief as Australia survives its first potential Ebola scare

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 30/05/2026, Matt Jones

Australia has survived an Ebola scare after a man was rushed to hospital with symptoms of the deadly virus. The man was sent to Monash Medical Centre on Tuesday before he was transported to Royal Melbourne Hospital after he had recently returned from Africa.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Experts warn of the major downside to medications such as Ozempic

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 31/05/2026, Ashleigh Gleeson, Page 19

People who stop their weightloss drugs are regaining the kilos they shed, with doctors warning it is not a short-term fix. While cost and side effects are the main reasons why people are forced to stop, others believe they can take prescription medicines like Mounjaro, Wegovy or Ozempic temporarily to reach their goal weight.

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'It's the start of a revolution': Top endocrinologist on the first new therapy for type 1 diabetes since insulin

Australian Doctor, Other, 30/05/2026

Last week, the TGA approved teplizumab (Tzield) for use in Australia. It is being hailed as the first new therapy for type 1 diabetes since insulin was discovered by Banting and Best a hundred years ago. Professor John Wentworth is one of the few Australian clinicians to have treated patients with the drug that aims to delay the onset of type 1 diabetes.

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