

MEN'S HEALTH

— IGNORING IT WON'T MAKE IT BETTER



Guys - are you more likely to get a warrant of fitness for your car than visit your GP?

Many men ignore their health issues in the hope they will go away, or they are too busy to do much about their health.

Others fear what they might learn or may have to go through if they see a doctor, and they don't get treatment unless things are really bad.

In many cases getting treatment or advice early will not only deal with the issue easily and painlessly, it will also stop all the worry and prevent simple health issues becoming bigger problems.

THE FACTS ABOUT MEN'S HEALTH

- While women get used to seeing health professionals at many stages in their life cycle, men get less active encouragement to use health services.
- As men are less likely to see a doctor or nurse they can miss out on chances to improve their health and prevent illness.
- Men can find it hard to talk about physical discomfort or emotional distress.
- Research shows that men don't live as long as women and are more at risk of accidents, injuries, suicide and some illnesses.
- Statistically, men of lower socio-economic status and men who live alone have more health problems. Maori and Pacific men have poorer health overall.

BUT THERE'S SOME GOOD NEWS TOO

- Many of the medical conditions that men get are preventable if you take action early.
- Playing sport is good for the body and the mind - it's good exercise and good for friendships.
- Having satisfying work and loving relationships is good for health.
- Men are often very successful at changing their habits to healthier, less risky behaviour.
- Anxiety disorders are less common in men than women.
- There are now more 'men friendly' services and more ways for men to find out about their health.

Get a health warrant of fitness now

What you do now can keep you healthy as you grow older



WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP FIT AND HEALTHY?

- ♂ Put your mind at rest - consider having a Health Warrant of Fitness.
- ♂ Prevention is better than cure. The keys for good health are physical activity, a good diet, not smoking, keeping the brain active and spending time with mates.
- ♂ Your mental wellbeing is important too. If you are feeling 'blue' take action early. Do something you enjoy. Talk with someone you trust. Check out the depression awareness website www.outoftheblue.org.nz.
- ♂ If you are worried about any aspect of your health, including bladder, prostate or sexual health concerns get advice from a doctor. Often a visit to the doctor tells you the problem is not as bad as you thought.
- ♂ Find a doctor who helps you feel at ease and is supportive of your cultural background.
- ♂ Seeing the same doctor each time you visit will help you feel more relaxed and able to discuss things that are worrying you.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

In some places there are medical clinics especially for men, and some health centres run sessions for men.

Some organisations run men's health information sessions from time to time e.g. the RSA, your marae, local service clubs, cultural community groups or your local Age Concern.

Pharmacists can give you health information on a range of topics for free.

Look for a support group that focuses on your particular health concern e.g. after a heart attack. Search on the Internet or in the telephone book.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

Asking for help is a sign of being in control

* This pamphlet is intended to draw the reader's attention to health issues and the importance of seeking appropriate medical advice. It is not intended to provide medical advice and is not a substitute. The reader must not place any reliance on any statement and Age Concern and its staff shall not have any liability arising out of this publication.

ORGANISATIONS AND WEB SITES

Local Age Concern - look under "Age Concern" in the telephone book

Age Concern New Zealand www.ageconcern.org.nz

Agewell - includes information for older men www.agewell.org.nz

Mensline- **0800 63 67 54**

For men's health information and for help finding a family doctor see www.everybody.co.nz or www.familydoctor.co.nz

Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand www.mentalhealth.org.nz

National Heart Foundation of New Zealand www.nhf.org.nz

Pacific Islands Heartbeat Programme www.pacificheart.org.nz

Cancer Society of New Zealand www.cancernz.org.nz

Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand www.prostate.org.nz

Stroke Foundation of New Zealand Inc. www.stroke.org.nz

Diabetes New Zealand www.diabetes.org.nz

Maori Health Services - contact your local **District Health Board** for services in your area

Pacific Health Services - contact your local **District Health Board** for services in your area

Sport and Recreation New Zealand www.sparc.org.nz

Regional Sports Trusts - **look in the telephone book**

Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand www.alac.org.nz

Quit Group Services - for help to stop smoking www.quit.org.nz

Age Concern New Zealand

PO Box 10-688, Wellington 6143, New Zealand

T: +64 04 801 9338 F: +64 04 801 9336

E: national.office@ageconcern.org.nz

Produced with funding from the Ministry of Health