

Baldies – TEDC Health Tips

2010

- Health Tip: 50 and over – get your bowel checked. If a family history of bowel cancer or a smoker – from 40!
- Health Tip: I pleasingly have had quite a few of you boys through for your YEARLY health checks. I hope all the rest are seeing their GP's. Yearly (and your birthday is a good anniversary) over 40 you need to know at a minimum your blood pressure, your cholesterol and PSA level. Throw in getting your weight measured and reducing it if overweight or not letting it go up if normal weight. In the words of John Kennedy – Do, don't think... DO!!!!
- Health Tip: It is imperative that you have a fitness goal to aim for. I train for the 4.5km Pier to Perrignon swim which is my Grand Final of Ocean Swims. I was pleased this year to have my fastest time but the conditions were excellent. I was more pleased that I have progressed through the placings and got quicker as I have got older...
 - Year Position Total Swimmers Time
 - 2005 523 575 61.23
 - 2006 500 577 55.07
 - 2007 567 709 54.44
 - 2008 335 677 50.51
 - 2009 331 688 51.12
 - 2010 269 703 47.04

Be Focused on something and maintain it!!!

- Health Tip: It has been an interesting exercise doing the FebFast (no grog in February). Firstly, it's not that hard. Secondly, it has been weight neutral for me as I have probably overly replaced the grog with cordial etc which still has the calories in it. I haven't felt greatly different so my previous grog intake wasn't particularly affecting me. It has been more the social aspect of it that I have missed the most but I would say now that I will probably avoid it through the week and save it for the week-ends. Yes... it has been a very interesting exercise.
- Health Tip: Set up a regular check up and as I keep saying ,..... have respect for your family history!!!!. I was once again recently reminded of this when a close ex-classmate who has had multiple medical problems including By-Pass Heart surgery told me how his cousin who was a couple of years younger than he (early 50's) had spoken to him and couldn't believe the medical problems that my mate had been through. His reply was to tell him to go get a check up but the cousin said that he was fine. His funeral unfortunately was a couple of weeks ago after 2 massive heart attacks!!!! I've seen a few of you blokes lately for check ups which is good. Some problems have been found but at least we know where we stand.

2009

- HEALTH TIP: Bowel Cancer is one of my big four that prematurely kill men – remember 35% Cardiovascular; 15% lung disease = Smoking, 5% Prostate cancer and 5% Bowel cancer. Yes, bowel cancer has about the same mortality rate as prostate cancer – there is less of it but it is more likely to kill you. I recommend that men over 50 get some sort of a bowel check –either a FOBT (Faecal Occult Blood Test) or a colonoscopy. The main reason is to see if you have polyps which are like little stalks of tissue that protrude off the bowel wall lining. They are the pre-cancerous tissues that bowel cancers grow from. If there is family history of bowel cancer then a colonoscopy should be done earlier than 50. I thought I better practice what I preach so last week I went off and had a colonoscopy done Bingo – they found 3 polyps (see attached my photos). The bottom Rt photo is what a polyp looks like. The top Rt is the opening to my appendix and the top Lt is the opening to a diverticulum or pocket in my bowel. The polyps were removed at the time and now I will need a surveillance colonoscopy about every 3 years. At least I know where I stand now. I have heart disease but I will have a stress Thallium test next year. I don't smoke and I have had my prostate checked. That covers about 60% of things. Sure I may get cleaned up in a Baldies game but what a way to go!!! Lying on that beautiful Marcellin grass in my #51 Baldies jumper. Heaven!! Stay healthy boys!!
- HEALTH TIP: There is a bit of a controversy going on at the moment as it has been recommended by certain groups that PSA (Blood test for prostate cancer) be started at 40 for all males. I tend to agree.... But..... The College of GP's and the Government have said that this shouldn't happen! Confused??? You have to understand that a lot of the decisions made by Governments and its Agencies are made with money in mind \$\$\$\$\$!!!!. It is true that prostate cancer is pretty uncommon between 40 and 50 (tell Robbie Flower that!!) and it is costly exercise to pick up those few. The Government are prepared to lose a few in order to save some health dollars which they will say can be best spent elsewhere. But what if you were in those few!!! And yes, you may have some false positives which will be stressful for those affected and they may be put through unnecessary procedures such as biopsies. But!!!!.... it at least gets males coming to the doctors for a check up which will include things other than prostate cancer such as Blood pressure , cholesterol etc because I would not pass up the opportunity to assess these areas as well. Let's all get checked YEARLY from 40 onwards – leave it up to the GP to decide what needs to be done... not medical bureaucrats! By the way, I am off to my GP this week for a check up – even doctors need to be checked!!!
- HEALTH TIP: **Losing Weight:** Once again the American College of Sports Physicians (ACSP) have brought out a great set of guidelines which once again reflects my thinking and experience on this important issue. We pussy foot around with diets and exercise recommendations too much. By hook or by crook, you have to have less calories coming in than what you expend. Good Calories, Bad calories, Carbohydrate Calories, fat calories Protein Calories – they all have to be added up and must be LESS than the energy that you are expending. EVERY weight loss diet or supplement is a gimmick trying to obtain that elusive energy imbalance. The problem being if it is all dietary centred then it will bounce back as your metabolism is not improved one iota. You need to have calorie restriction and energy expenditure – BOTH. I see so many people who want to lose weight and don't want to get hungry and don't want to get a huff and puff up. Sorry it can't be done!! Short term perhaps yes but not for long term success.
 - The ACSP state.... To prevent weight gain, to lose weight, and to prevent weight regain after weight loss, Physical Activity (PA) is recommended as a component of weight management. The updated guidelines suggest that moderate-intensity PA between 150 and 250 minutes per week is effective to prevent weight gain but will provide only modest weight loss. Clinically significant weight loss has been reported with greater amounts of PA (> 250

minutes per week).IE: OVER 4 HOURS OF MODERATE EXERCISE PER WEEK TO LOSE WEIGHT. Walking slowly is not moderate exercise – it needs to be very brisk = Power walking. Sorry girls! Start walking but then jog!! It's the joggers/runners/hard bike riders and hard swimmers who I see lose weight.

- Specific clinical recommendations, and their accompanying level of evidence rating, are as follows:
 - For prevention of weight gain in most adults, PA of 150 to 250 minutes per week, with an energy equivalent of 1200 to 2000 kcal/week, will prevent weight gain of more than 3% (level of evidence, A). ...that is why a lot of you are gaining weight as you get older!!!
 - There is a dose-response effect of PA on weight loss. The more you do the more you lose and the higher intensity you go the better it is – **forget about fat burning zones!!!!**
 - To maintain weight after weight loss, some studies suggest that PA of approximately 200 to 300 minutes per week will help minimize weight regain, although "**more is better.**"
 - If diet restriction is modest but not if diet restriction is severe, PA will increase weight loss (level of evidence, A). ...**In other words, you need some fuel to be able to exercise and if you starve yourself too much you won't be able to exercise. I reckon you need to be under 2000 Cal per day (cf; 1 Big Mac = 560 Cal + Fries = about 1200 Cals)**
 - Resistance training (Weight Training) is ineffective for weight loss with or without diet restriction, according to limited research evidence. However, some limited data suggest that resistance training enhances gain or maintenance of lean mass and loss of body fat during energy restriction. Furthermore, resistance training may also ameliorate risk factors for chronic disease, such as low high-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, high low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, insulin sensitivity, and blood pressure (level of evidence, B).
 - "On the basis of the available scientific literature, the ACSM recommends that adults participate in at least 150 min/wk of moderate-intensity PA to prevent significant weight gain and reduce associated chronic disease risk factors," the guidelines authors write. "It is recommended that overweight and obese individuals participate in this level of PA to elicit modest reductions in body weight. However, there is likely a dose effect of PA, with greater weight loss and enhanced prevention of weight regained with doses of PA that approximate 250 to 300 min/wk (approximately 2000 kcal/wk) of moderate intensity PA."
- HEALTH TIP: Avoid inactivity!!! The American College of Sports Physicians have recently reiterated my views, after reviewing all studies, that ongoing moderate to high intensity exercise is the secret to disease prevention. ie: You must stay FIT!!!! They state....
 - "The guidelines state that all adults should avoid inactivity, that some physical activity is better than none, and that adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits. However, the guidelines emphasize that for most health outcomes, additional benefits occur as the amount of physical activity increases through **higher intensity, greater frequency, and/or longer duration**. No amount of physical activity can stop biological aging but that evidence to date affirms that by limiting the development and progression of chronic disease and disabling conditions, regular exercise can reduce the physiologic harms of an otherwise sedentary lifestyle and improve active life expectancy. Older adults who engage in regular exercise may also experience significant psychological and cognitive benefits."
- HEALTH TIP: Your Mental Health is far more important for your children so blow the expense, ring up the baby sitter or mother-in-law and get there this Saturday night. It will be great to get to

know the WAGs (I hate that term!!)... but it will!!!! Let this be the build up for a big game against Southern Saints, then Footscray and then next year!!!!

- HEALTH TIP: Re skin lesions...If it CHANGES get it CHECKED!!!!
 - A close family relative in his 30's booked in with me to get a skin lesion removed. He had had it checked by another doctor who said leave it for another 6 months. As it had changed he did not accept that advice and booked directly in with me to get it off. Fortunately he did that as it turned out to be a Malignant Melanoma. Thankfully it is superficial and his prognosis is good but he will require a wider excision by a Plastic surgeon and follow up by an Oncologist (Cancer Specialist). Things could have been very different if he had waited another 6 months. If skin lesions change because they get knocked or rubbed it is reasonable to have another look at them when they settle down but if they appear new or change for no reason, then get them off (Biopsied)!!!
 - Doctors use an ABCD system to assess skin lesions.
 - A= Asymmetry or irregular shape
 - B= Border being irregular –raised and lumpy
 - C= Colour- more than one shade or very dark
 - D= Diameter or size especially greater than a ½ cm
 - I throw in a H – if it has a hair coming out of it is safe as it means it is well developed and hence unlikely to change
 - Stay healthy!! I luv use all!!!
- HEALTH TIP: One of the Baldies came to me recently for a general health check up under the Governments 45-49 yo check up. The nurses at my clinic do a lot of the basic check ups and certain blood tests are organised. His examination was all normal. He was fine blood test wise with the main ones such as cholesterol, prostate, liver and kidney function being normal. But he was low in a Vitamin called Vitamin B12 which I routinely test for. This can be low in Vegetarians, particularly Vegan vegetarians as Vitamin B12 is only found in animals. As he was a meat eater, further tests were arranged and it turns out that he has the auto immune disorder called Pernicious Anaemia or Addison's Disease. He has antibodies that attack the protein that aids B12 absorption and hence he can't absorb any oral B12. If untreated it leads to premature heart disease as a toxic level of homocysteine builds up (far more toxic than cholesterol). He had a raised Homocysteine level already. If further untreated, a neurological condition called Sub acute combined degeneration of the spinal cord would have developed and he would have become paralysed below the waist. He now requires a 3 - 4 monthly injection of Vitamin B12 for the rest of his life and he will be fine. He will live a totally normal life. A simple solution to a complex problem..... and only picked up because he went for a check up!!!!!!! You are not infallible – get a regular check up!!!
- HEALTH TIP: When the economy goes South, so too can your health...A bad economy can take its toll on the heart with increased stress, poor eating and forgoing healthful activities like going to the gym when money is tight. The following are tips to help protect the heart during this time of financial uncertainty.

Adults: 10 healthy heart tips in a bad economy

- **Avoid salty, fatty food.** To save money, eat out at restaurants less and cook at home from scratch – eating simple fresh foods. Also maintain a healthy weight. Obesity has been shown to increase the risk of heart attacks, heart failure and diabetes. A healthy diet and exercise program is the best way to maintain a normal weight.
- **Don't skimp on healthcare.** Delaying seeking care when you have symptoms or splitting pills to cut costs is not helping your health in the long run. Studies show that individuals

who stop their cardiovascular medications are at much higher risk for heart attacks, strokes, heart failure and reduced survival compared with those who adhere to their medical regimen.

- **Keep up the exercise.** Even if you have to drop your gym membership due to costs, participate in more inexpensive options like walking in the neighbourhood or swimming at the local pool or training with the Baldies!!!!. New recommendations are to exercise for 30 to 60 minutes daily. Exercise helps you maintain a healthy weight and keeps your heart strong and disease free.
- **Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke.** It's better for your heart and wallet to quit smoking since it's an expensive habit. Smoking markedly increases the risk of heart attacks and heart failure. Quitting smoking rapidly reduces your cardiovascular risk.
- **Reduce stress.** Spend more time with family and friends (like your mates at the Baldies) – meditate. Life can be stressful, especially during times of financial hardship. The key to keeping stress from harming your health lies in finding a positive outlet, like exercise, or meditation. These activities can relieve stress and also improve your health.
- **Get your cholesterol levels checked.** High cholesterol does not cause any symptoms until it is too late. The only way to know if you have a healthy cholesterol level is to get it checked. If you have not had your levels checked in the past year or two, get them checked now.
- **Maintain a healthy cholesterol level.** The ideal level for your LDL ("bad" cholesterol) is less than 3.5. Certain individuals need to achieve even lower LDL cholesterol levels. Keeping your HDL ("good" cholesterol) levels up is also important. Know your lipid levels and talk to your physician about the best plan of action to keep your cholesterol levels ideal.
- **Get your blood pressure checked.** Many patients with hypertension are not aware that they have this condition. There are very well-tolerated and effective treatments for high blood pressure.
- **Maintain a normal blood pressure.** High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart attacks, strokes and heart failure. Your systolic blood pressure should be below 140 and your diastolic blood pressure below 90. Certain individuals need to achieve even tighter control of their blood pressure.
- **See your doctor.** Regular medical follow-up is one of the best ways to keep your heart healthy and avoid problems down the road.
- **HEALTH TIP: Low carbohydrate beer VS Low alcohol beer – which is better???** There are two issues – if you are drinking to keep yourself under .05 then stick to the low alcohol beer. If you are wanting to help reduce your weight (or at least not add to it) then there isn't a great deal of difference between the two. Both have about 25% less calories than full strength beer. So both are probably healthier than Full strength beer in their own way. Don't email me back all that crap about taste etc- get used to it!!! Blondes have 13% of their calories coming from carbohydrates and 89% from alcohol and light beers have 32% from carbohydrates and 63 % from alcohol but there is double the amount of calories in alcohol than carbohydrates and that is why they balance each other out. Every person I have seen that has dropped back their alcohol intake loses weight. Try having a glass of Sparkling mineral water on the table at the same time.
- **HEALTH TIP: Over 50 get your heart checked out thoroughly.....** from my personal experience (more about that later)!!!

2008

- HEALTH TIP: Haven't given one for a while so I thought that I should. I was going through my old medical records and noted my old resting heart rate. Before I got into the exercise caper I averaged about the 70 mark per minute which is the accepted for most not very fit people. Most unfit people are much higher. I currently run at 55 which is not bad but could be even better. Thus I have been saving my heart about 15 heart beats per minute. If this is multiplied by 60 to get per hour and by 24 per day and by 365 per year it works out that I have saved myself some $15 \times 60 \times 24 \times 365 = 7,888,000$ heart beats in a year!!!! In order to get there I had to exercise and put my heart rate up so I will need to subtract 130 (Heart rate during exercise) x 60 (the number of minutes exercising) X 365 (Exercising everyday) = 2,847,000. Thus I have still saved my heart an extra 5 million heart beats in a year which is a fairly sizeable stress off the heart you would all agree. I'm firmly of the opinion that we are programmed for a certain number of heart beats in a life time.... Why not save some for later.... GET FIT!!! Don't leave it until too late!
- HEALTH TIP: The new buzz words in weight management now are SITTING TIME. Lack of exercise is a precursor to overweight / obesity but what could be more important is the number of hours in a day that you sit. That time is directly proportional to the amount of lowering in an enzyme called lipase that breaks down fat for utilization as energy. Thus if you sit for a long period of time you are less able to utilize your fat stores. Hence if your job entails sitting all day that 1 or 2 training sessions a week is probably not enough... 6 out of seven days required!!!!
- HEALTH TIP: 40 onwards – yearly blood tests inc Cholesterol, PSA etc; 50 onwards – as for 40 but checks of the bowel as well... Faecal Occult Blood Test +/- Colonoscopy every 5 years
- HEALTH TIP: A swim the day after a footy game is magic.
- HEALTH TIP: Less red and processed meats... more plant foods!!! Why..... 30% less risk of bowel cancer which kills just as many men as prostate cancer!!!!
- HEALTH TIP: This was fascinating. A recent study has shown that if your ring finger is longer than your index finger you will be more prone to osteoarthritis of the knees. My index finger is longer than the ring finger which I thought was the norm but when I brought this up at the family dinner (as doctors do) I noted a marked variation in my family. Don't book your nursing home yet though!!
- HEALTH TIP: Have an event or series of events to aspire to. I was involved in the Pier to Perignon 4.5km swim from Sorrento to Portsea on Saturday and I use this as a goal to train towards throughout the year. Congratulations to Baldies Pete Day in completing it in 48 mins and 12 secs. I also saw a David O 'Callaghan completed it in 52 mins 22 secs (Was that you DOC???) . I was in the middle at 50 mins 50secs. Get passionate about your exercise and train regularly. The camaraderie of the Baldies assists this.
- HEALTH TIP: Prostate cancer – I am just going through a fascinating study that has come out of Sweden. Between 1974 and 1986 a cohort of 21000 men had PSA levels done – they were mostly in the 40-50 age bracket. They have since been followed for the development of prostate cancer, in particular the nasty and aggressive type that kills early. Two thirds of these cancers occurred in males who had an initial PSA at or before 50 of greater than 1.0. Under 1 your risk was 2%. If your level is between 1-2 your risk increases 7 times and if 2-3 it is 22 times!!!!..... the lesson – get a base-line PSA level certainly between 40 and 50. These levels aren't 100% - it doesn't mean definitely you will or won't develop prostate cancer but they assist the doctor in deciding who needs a really close eye kept on them.
- HEALTH TIP: Walk long and far. As Abraham Lincoln said - "I **walk** slowly, but I never **walk** backward". He was known to walk up to 17 miles a day to various places!!!!
- HEALTH TIP: Compliments of Rav re Stroke Thanks Rav. STROKE: Remember The 1st Three Letters....S.T.R.

- My nurse friend sent this and encouraged me to post it and spread the word. I agree. If everyone can remember something this simple, we could save some folks. Seriously..
- STROKE IDENTIFICATION:
- During a BBQ, a friend stumbled and took a little fall - she assured everyone that she was fine (they offered to call paramedics)she said she had just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes. They got her cleaned up and got her a new plate of food. While she appeared a bit shaken up, Ingrid went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening.
- Ingrid's husband called later telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital - (at 6:00 pm Ingrid passed away.) She had suffered a stroke at the BBQ. Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Ingrid would be with us today. Some don't die.... they end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead.
- It only takes a minute to read this...
- A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.
- RECOGNIZING A STROKE
- Thank God for the sense to remember the "3" steps, STR . Read and Learn!
- Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.
- Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:
- S *Ask the individual to SMILE.
- T *Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently) (i.e. It is sunny out today)
- R *Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.
- If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call Emergency immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.
- New Sign of a Stroke ----- Stick out Your Tongue
- NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue.. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.
- A cardiologist says if everyone who gets this e-mail sends it to 10 people; you can bet that at least one life will be saved.

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