

## **Hawkes Bay Today Vital Signs Column, January 2012.**

### **Healthy Living**

The divide between a healthy lifestyle and the lifestyle of an "average" person in our society seems to be growing and growing. We are now seeing children treated for type-II Diabetes and heart disease claims one New Zealander every 90 minutes. Many of these deaths are premature and preventable. I find this very frightening and although there is no quick fix, we could look to make improvements in our diets or find a few minutes to be active outdoors and improve our health.

Healthy living is all about choices, some big ones and lots of little ones. The Heart Foundation website is a great source of information. I have tried to pick out some fun and interesting ways we can make healthy choices below.

### **Healthy eating**

I'm sure we are all aware of the need to eat healthy food for good health, but sometimes that is easier said than done. Here are five great tips to make a big difference to our diets or see for healthy recipe ideas.

- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Choose lean meat, chicken or fish
- Choose low fat milk
- Replace butter with margarine and healthy oils
- Reduce salt and check sodium on food labels

See the recipe page at [www.ahuriripharmacy.co.nz](http://www.ahuriripharmacy.co.nz) for delicious treats like the Grilled Citrus Chicken with Vegetable Salad Burritos or many more at [www.heartfoundation.org.nz](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz).

### **Be physically active**

This doesn't mean you have to run marathons. Moderate physical activity for 30 minutes a day, even in 10 minute chunks, is enough to ensure you reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes and keep fit.

For a fun idea, join in **Go By Bike Day** on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February - a one-day annual event where thousands of people throughout New Zealand switch from cars, buses or trains and bike to work for a day. See [www.bikewise.co.nz](http://www.bikewise.co.nz) for details.

### **Be a non-smoker**

We all know this one. For hints and tips, check out the Health News column on quitting at [www.ahuriripharmacy.co.nz](http://www.ahuriripharmacy.co.nz).

### **Manage stress**

Some ideas to cope with life's challenges include taking one step at a time, practice positive self-talk, connect with others, do a little something that you enjoy every day and get help when you need it. Relaxation methods, meditation, yoga or going for a lovely walk along the beach can also help some people.

Follow us on facebook and join us in making small changes every week to a healthier lifestyle.