

# A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

HEALTH ADVICE FOR  
AUSTRALIAN MEN  
ISSUE 11 // NOVEMBER 2009

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# QUESTIONS FOR THE QUACK

with Associate Professor Gary Richardson

This year seems to have flown, and no doubt we are all looking forward to some well deserved R & R over the holidays. It is a great opportunity to catch up with friends and family, and there is some great info in the mag to help you make it a safe and enjoyable time. Also, please let us know if there are any topics you would like covered in the coming year, we're happy to oblige! Cheers, Gary.

*Drew, 36 asks: I've got a work mate who used to be a really good friend, but lately he's been taking sickies all the time and when he is at work, he looks terrible. He's like a totally different person. He's stopped talking to us and has been partying a lot. It's obvious something is going on in his personal life and he needs help. How can I help him?*

It's not always easy to help someone who may be experiencing personal problems. It can help to use open-ended questions like "So tell me about...?" which will lead to more than just a 'yes' or 'no' answer. If he's still not responding or gets angry, stay calm, fair and consistent and don't lose control yourself. Listen to what he's saying – sometimes, when a person wants to talk, they're not always seeking advice, but just need to talk about their concerns. Make it clear he has your full attention and you are really listening. Most importantly, be aware that your friend may be experiencing a mental health problem, so if you suspect this might be the case, it's really important to encourage him to seek professional help from a family doctor or a mental health worker.

**For more information on depression/anxiety, available treatments and where to get help visit [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) or call the beyondblue info line on 1300 22 4636/1300 bb info (local call cost from a landline).**

*Ray, 28 asks: A mate of mine has just been diagnosed with testicular cancer, and he looked perfectly healthy. What can I do to prevent getting it too?*

Firstly, you can't catch cancer; it is not like the flu, it is caused by changes in the cells of the body. While testicular cancer is relatively rare, it is the most common cancer in men aged 15 – 45 years of age. It is more common in men born with undescended or partially descended testicles. No one knows how to prevent it, but treated early it has one of the highest cure rates – and even surgically removing a cancerous testicle does not affect sexual performance or virility. So the key is to catch it early.

Regular self-examination is the best way to find lumps or swelling that could be signs of testicular cancer. Check after a warm bath or shower, when the skin of the scrotum is relaxed. Don't be embarrassed to ask your GP for tips, and make sure you go to your doctor if you feel pain or discomfort in your testicles or scrotum.

**For information and support call the Cancer Council Helpline in your state on 13 11 20, or go to [www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au)**

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This magazine contains general health information and does not take the place of regular medical advice and treatment from a GP. We recommend all men consult a doctor or health professional for a thorough personal examination on a regular basis.

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# Five New Year's resolutions you owe yourself



**New Year's resolutions are notoriously difficult to keep, but don't let that put you off. Switching to a healthy lifestyle is easier than you think. Here are a few resolutions to get you going!**

## **Resolution one – I will quit smoking**

With tobacco still the leading cause of premature death in Australia, quitting smoking is the most important resolution you can make. Maximise your chances of success by having a strategy to deal with the tough times. Set a quit date and contact Quit Victoria for advice. Talk to your doctor and enlist the support of family and friends. Remember, cravings only last a couple of minutes and start to diminish after one week. For more information visit [www.quit.org.au](http://www.quit.org.au).

## **Resolution two – I will exercise regularly**

Physical inactivity is the greatest risk factor for heart disease so it's time to get moving! National guidelines recommend five 30 minute sessions of moderate exercise, or three 20 minute sessions of vigorous exercise each week. Dr Joann Lukins, director of Peak Performance Psychology, says many people fail to realise their goals because they set unrealistic expectations for themselves.

"They don't think about why they want to change or what some of the barriers might be." Plan your exercise and chose an activity you enjoy. Exercising with a friend or joining a sports team can help keep you on track.

## **Resolution three – I will have that health check**

Make your health a priority this year and get to know your GP. Men are much more likely to take a "she'll be right" approach to their health. An annual check-up is vital. Plan your visit around a significant date like your birthday, and bring a list of questions. It's important to keep an eye on your cholesterol levels, blood pressure and weight and ask about screening tests you might need such as prostate, bowel or skin cancer. Your mental health is also important. If you're often feeling down, anxious or uptight, it's important that you talk to your doctor.

## **Resolution four – I will choose the healthy option**

More than 65 per cent of men are overweight or obese, putting them at increased risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke. Small changes to your diet can make a big difference to your health. Instead of a white roll for lunch, have wholegrain bread or a wrap. Moderate your red meat and dairy intake, and aim for two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables a day. Top tip for weight management: Don't eat until you're full. Leave the table when you could still eat a little more.

## **Resolution five – I will catch up with friends and family**

Most of us are working harder and putting in longer hours. Studies by Relationships Australia have shown many of us don't spend enough time with family and friends. Having a strong social support network reduces stress and helps to promote good mental health. Family dinners are a great way of connecting and provide a stable environment for children. Work on your relationships by being a good listener and staying in touch. Be proactive about making plans - don't wait for someone else to make the first move!

## **F49's Top 10 health tips**

- 1 Don't smoke
- 2 Exercise regularly
- 3 Have an annual health check
- 4 Know the health risks for your age
- 5 Limit alcohol to 2 standard drinks per day
- 6 Eat well – 2 pieces of fruit and 5 serves of vegies per day
- 7 Make time for you, your family and friends
- 8 If you have kids or grandkids, be a great dad and granddad
- 9 Manage your mental health, talk to your GP if you're feeling down or anxious
- 10 Make your health a priority

# Flying with the Roulettes

Flight Lieutenant Michael Briggs

## 1 When did you first become interested in flying?

My father was an Airframe Fitter in the RAAF, stationed at RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland. He sat me in the cockpit of a Canberra Bomber when I was 18 months old, and I think from then on flying was all I ever wanted to do. Growing up in Ipswich with the base close by, I was fascinated by the aircraft. I even saw the first landings of the F-111 back in 1972 (Dad got me out of school for the day).

## 2 How did you end up being a Roulette?

All Roulettes are selected from the Instructing Staff at the RAAF Central Flying School (CFS). I was fortunate enough to be selected to complete a RAAF Flying Instructor Course in 1996. I then gained sufficient experience as an Instructor to qualify for a position at the Central Flying School, where our daily job is to teach graduate pilots to become Qualified Flying Instructors.

## 3 What type of planes do you fly, and what is your personal favourite?

I have been very fortunate in my career to have flown many different aircraft, each holding great memories. Since completing pilots' course on the Macchi Jet, I have flown the C47 Dakota, Caribou, Pilatus PC-9/A, and the T6 Texan (on a year-long posting to Moose Jaw in Canada). But for pure enjoyment, my personal favourite would have to be the Blackhawk helicopter; it is a truly magnificent machine. I think the greatest sense of satisfaction a pilot can get is when you use all the skills you have been taught to get the most out of the aircraft.

Even though they are quite different, the satisfaction of landing a Blackhawk carrying a full load of troops on a small pad in Timor is every bit as rewarding as being a Roulette and performing formation aerobatics at the Formula One Grand Prix.

## 4 Where did the name Roulettes come from?

The name 'Roulettes' came from the name of one of the manoeuvres that the original team performed. The routine gets reviewed and changed on a regular basis, just to keep the show fresh, but there are some manoeuvres that are crowd favourites and we keep them in all the shows.

## 5 What are your training requirements, how many hours a week?

Each display season is six months long, and to keep a progression in the team, generally two members are replaced each season. This means that every six months, the team works up the two new members. The workup consists of 26 sorties, during which time we will fly the display about 50 times, so it is quite an intensive regime. Once the team completes the work up, the normal display schedule is enough to keep our skills fresh, without having to do any dedicated training.

## 6 What does G Force mean, and how many are there when you fly? Have you ever blacked out?

G Force is the force of gravity, and in normal day-to-day life we are all at 1'G'. At 1'G' I weigh in at 85kg, and at 4'G' I weigh 4 times that amount (340kg).

In the display we regularly operate at up to 4'G' when in formation, and Roulette 5 sometimes achieves 6'G' during his solo display. To help us fight the effects of increased G forces, we wear an Anti-G suit, which fits tightly around our legs and abdomen and inflates under high G to assist in preventing blood pooling in our lower limbs by constricting the vessels in our legs. I came close to 'blacking out' when I conducted some centrifuge training in Canada. We were spun around (just like in the movies) at 6 'G' without the protection of the 'G-suit'. We had to be able to maintain this for 15 seconds. It was a long 15 seconds, and I started to get some tunnel vision and lack of colour perception. This is called 'greying out', and precedes black out.

## 7 How many Roulettes are in your team, do you have spares?

There are 6 Roulettes in the display team, and Roulette 7 flies our spare aircraft and provides commentary during the display. Each position in the display team is quite specialised, so it is not really possible to change positions within the team during the season. If a team member is unable to fly, a limited 5 aircraft display can be flown.

## 8 What has been the most frightening experience you have had as a pilot?

Can I say my annual aircrew medical? I have had a few emergency situations develop over the years, but the training given to all RAAF pilots gives us the skills necessary to deal with all those situations. We are fortunate in that the level of maintenance of the aircraft, and the training we receive has all been first-class.



**9 Have you ever had to eject yourself from the plane? What was it like?**

Thankfully no. The last Roulette to eject was in a training accident in 2005, and he walked away virtually unharmed. An ejection is quite violent. Once you pull the ejection handle, you are fired out of the aircraft (through the 8mm thick Perspex canopy) at about 16 'G', and find yourself under a smallish parachute 2.5 seconds later. What happens from then on is all 'on the job training'.

**10 What level of fitness do you need for your job, and how do you keep fit?**

All members of the military are required to pass a fitness test annually. The test comprises a number of sit ups and push ups to test abdominal and upper body strength, and a 2.4km run to assess cardio vascular fitness. The amount of push ups and sit ups, and the maximum time for the run is based upon your age. The RAAF Base at East Sale has a fully equipped gym, staffed by Physical Training Instructors. Depending upon the daily flying program, I try to get there at least three times per week. Regular walking of the dog, tennis, and riding to and from work each day complete my training regime.

**11 How do you manage a healthy work / life balance?**

There are limits on the maximum number of days in a row we can be on duty, so we will generally get a day or two off during the week if we fly over a weekend. Also, as aircrew, we are very fortunate to receive 30 days leave per year, so this means I can usually take some holidays when the kids have their time off from school. I also keep involved with the kids' sport, both football and netball, and get away for a surf with the family whenever I can.

**12 How often do the Roulettes perform (if that is the right word)?**

Each season, the team goes through all the requests that have come in for the next season and put together the display program. Generally speaking, we get committed about every second weekend. At least once each season we do a state tour, last season this was in Tasmania. Unfortunately we only get to the top end and Western Australia every couple of years due to the distances involved.

**13 How often do you get a medical check-up?**

As aircrew, we are required to pass an annual medical check to keep our flying status. Our annual medical is essentially a screening process to provide feedback on our lifestyle, and to effect any changes before they become a medical issue. Consequently about two months before this check I attempt to lift my game, but as I get older I am finding my usual resilience getting tested. This year, the blood results showed a slight elevation in blood sugar. The levels were all within limits, but indicate that maybe the body is not bouncing back as it used to. Fortunately these regular checks are able to highlight these trends before they become an issue. So the impetus is now to lose a little weight, or give myself maybe three months ahead of the medical to lift my game. If only food and wine didn't taste so good!

**Pilatus PC-9/A technical specifications**

Manufacturer	Pilatus
Role	Two-seat advanced trainer; forward air control and aerobatics
Crew	Two; instructor and student or pilot and observer
Engine	Pratt and Whitney PT6A-62 turboprop (950 shaft horsepower)
Airframe	Length: 10.18m Height: 3.28m
Wingspan	10.24m

Weight	2250kg basic, 2710kg maximum (PC-9/A (F) max 3210kg)
Range	1,850km (with two underwing tanks), combat radius 650km
Ceiling	25,000 feet
Weapons	Two underwing smoke grenade launchers
Avionics	VHF omni-directional range/instrument landing system, two multi-functional cathode ray tube displays

# Taking care of your mental health over the holidays

With the year drawing to a close, it's safe to say 2009 hasn't been an easy one for many people. Thousands of workers around the country lost their jobs as America's financial woes made it to our shores. Floods and fires consumed Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales, interest rates rose and crippling drought continued across the country.

Many people will be looking forward to some well-earned R and R over the Christmas period. While the holidays are usually thought of as a time to forget about the pressures of the year, for many, this down time can be stressful, disappointing or lonely.

Dr Nicole Highet is a psychologist and Deputy CEO of *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*. She says given the hardships many people have faced this year, the Christmas period may be a time for intense introspection.

"If people have been through significant life changes, the holiday season is often a time of reflection that can lead to distress," Dr Highet said. "Some men, or their family members, may have been affected by natural disasters or the global financial crisis this year and for many it would've been a big year of making adjustments.

"If you have family members, friends or colleagues who have been through a big change, this is a time to be proactive and reach out to them. Make sure they're connected with other people and invite them to social functions. Make sure they're OK – ask the question."

Dr Highet added that people who are alone, or have lost a loved one, or currently have depression/anxiety are particularly vulnerable to feelings of distress during the holidays.

"When someone is experiencing depression or anxiety, it's easy to say 'well they're not a bag of laughs, I'm not inviting them', but they are the people who need the most reaching out to," she said.

"Be aware of people who might be on their own. If you're lucky enough to have family around you, I'd suggest inviting those people in your life who are facing the prospect of a lonely Christmas to share that with you."

beyondblue's info line – **1300 22 4636** – will operate 24/7 over the holiday period for anyone needing information on depression, anxiety and related drug and alcohol problems. A list of symptoms of depression and anxiety, checklists and other information about effective treatments and how to help someone can be found at [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au).

If you need urgent assistance call Lifeline on **13 11 14**, Mensline Australia on **1300 789 978** or Suicide Call Back Service on **1300 659 467**.



## Warning signs to watch for over the holiday period

- If you've had depression before, be aware of the symptoms that may lead to depression. If you haven't, watch for the loss of ability to function normally, out-of-character behaviour, suicidal thoughts, feeling like there is no hope for the future, not being able to sleep or eat or feeling nervous and anxious.
- In other people, you may notice they withdraw and no longer seem to enjoy themselves, are overly moody and may appear to have slowed down or may get angry easily.
- If someone you know is partying too hard and drinking too much, be aware that this may be a sign of a mental health problem.
- It's important to think realistically about the holidays. If you're facing the holiday season without your family and you know you'll find it difficult, let people know. Plan ahead to make sure you'll be spending time with people you like.



beyondblue  
the national depression initiative  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)



**Mark Gable** is the lead singer of Aussie rock band The Choirboys. He experienced depression in his 40s and 50s. He is now an ambassador for beyondblue: the national depression initiative.

**“During the summer of 1998, I was in a severe state of depression heading towards Christmas. Only a few years before that, I had split up with my wife.**

It was the most dramatic year of separation. There was a lot of fighting and disagreements and we were trying to work out settlement on the house. It was a very difficult time, so it was hard for me to gain access to the kids.

So it was the first time I wasn't going to spend the day with family. I didn't realise it was going to have the impact that it did. I was in the flat by myself and the sense of loneliness was unbearable.

I couldn't believe that even in the midst of this severe depression I could feel that much worse primarily because Christmas had always been spent with my kids. I can remember sitting in my bathroom, crying and covering my face. I had never felt so alone and so incredibly sad.

Christmas really is about family and friends. It's a time for people to share love and show compassion and that was severely absent on Christmas Day.

If I ever face that situation again, I would definitely plan to be around my friends and do anything other than hang around the house. I would go outside for a walk or hire movies or get some exercise.

I think that if you really do have to face the Christmas period alone then whatever you do, do not drink. Alcohol is a depressant and drinking to overcome your problems is one of the worst things you can do when you have depression. While drinking feels like it might relieve the depression, unfortunately alcohol invariably ends up dropping us off in a place that is far worse than when we started drinking.

It has now been 11 years since that Christmas and it's an entirely different story. I got the treatment I needed and because of that, it's a totally different world for me. I look forward to Christmas and it's a joyous time for me.”

**Risky levels of drinking can impact not only on your physical health, but also your mental health. Some men use alcohol to deal with problems like depression.**

**To find out more visit [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) or call the beyondblue info line on 1300 22 4636. You can also download, or order, beyondblue Fact sheet 9 – Reducing alcohol and other drugs.**

# Safe holiday driving

Holidays can be a great time with family and friends, and here are a few tips to keep you on the right side of the road!!

## Before you start your trip

### Plan ahead

- Plan to have rest stops every two hours if you're driving a long distance — make them part of the fun.
- Plan not to speed — allow extra time for delays and extra traffic on the road.
- Arrange fun activities for kids along the way to help make their trip more enjoyable.

### Be prepared

- Get a map so you can estimate how long it will take to get there and plan your route.
- Pack a picnic basket and enjoy the rest stops along the way.
- Make sure you get enough sleep and don't drink alcohol the night before you set off.
- Pack wisely and don't put the children in the car until you're ready to go.
- Check your medications with your doctor (in case they make you drowsy when driving).
- Eat properly — not too little, not too much.

### Check that everything is okay

No matter where you're going, it's important to make sure you, your vehicle, trailer, caravan and/or boat are in tip-top condition. Before going on a long trip, it is advisable to book your vehicle in for a thorough safety check by a reputable mechanic. It's also advisable to run through the following checklists before you go.

### For all vehicles

You should check:

- that all lights (headlights, brake lights and indicators) are in working order
- that wipers, washers and horn operate properly
- the fan belt condition and tension
- the brake and clutch fluid levels and battery water level
- the cooling system and hoses
- the oil levels (and check for leaks)
- that your tyres (including your spare) are inflated to the pressure specified for your vehicle.

### If you're towing a trailer, boat or caravan

You should check that:

- the vehicle you will drive is suited to the type and size of the trailer, boat or caravan
- any loads you are carrying are evenly distributed and properly restrained
- fittings, couplings and safety chains are correctly fastened

- your vehicle, trailer and caravan are roadworthy and registered
- your number plate and registration stickers are not obscured
- you are carrying only one trailer or caravan at a time (not both)
- you don't overload your trailer.

If you have children, it's also a good idea to pack some 'boredom beaters' for the trip. Maybe you could try:

- music — take along a portable music player with head phones for the children
- audio books suitable for everyone onboard
- car-friendly games, puzzles, drawing books, toys and small computer games
- car games like 'I-spy' and a book on car games from the library or book store

### Also, it is handy to remember:

- plastic cups with their own lids and straws to avoid unnecessary spills
- rations of food and drinks — but nothing too sweet or messy
- a small, cuddly blanket in case your children feel like having a nap — remember to ensure children are always restrained properly.

Are you packing bikes for the children? Remember to pack bicycle helmets. Also, remember to pack a rubbish bag so you can easily dispose of litter.

Right, now you're ready to go. Have an enjoyable trip!

# Hitting the road

## Remember — seatbelts for everyone!

Seat belts improve your chances of surviving a serious crash by up to 50 per cent. Along the journey, keep checking to make sure children are still wearing their seat belts.

## Remember — don't drive when you are tired!

Driving while tired accounts for one in six crashes that result in serious injury or death.

## Rules for survival

- Share the driving if possible.
- As soon as you feel tired, stop and have a break.
- Take a 15 minute break every two hours to rest your eyes and refresh yourself.
- Don't drive for more than 8–10 hours in a day.



## Stop for a break

Be sure to stop for a break when you suffer from:

- sore or heavy eyes, dim or fuzzy vision
- you start 'seeing' things
- droning and humming in your ears
- general tiredness, day-dreaming
- stiffness and cramps, aches and pains
- delayed reactions, fumbled gear changes
- unintentional increases or decreases in speed
- your car wanders across the road.

## Driver reviver breaks

Look out for the driver reviver signs on the highway. The distinctive coffee cup logo means you're just minutes away from a relaxing break with some free refreshments.

During peak holiday periods it's important to be patient, as there is likely to be extra traffic on the road. Give yourself extra time to get to your destination — it's better to arrive safely and late, than not at all. Don't be tempted to speed to catch up on any lost time. It's simply not worth the risk.

## The faster you drive, the longer it takes to stop

Apart from increasing your chances of having a serious crash, you also run the risk of receiving a hefty fine — which will put a serious dent in your holiday spending money and enjoyment.

# The return trip

You've had a great break, you're relaxed and you're happy. Don't ruin it by risking your safety on the way home.

Remember:

- plan and prepare
- don't drive tired — stop for 15 minutes every two hours
- buckle up
- don't speed
- don't drive after drinking alcohol or under the influence of drugs
- that some people may still be on holiday — be careful when driving through residential streets.

Remember, many crashes happen within 50 km of home. So make sure you're alert during the whole trip. Don't let your guard down just because you're nearly home.

By taking a few simple precautions and driving safely these holidays, you significantly reduce the risks of falling victim to the Fatal 4 — speeding, driving drunk, driving tired and driving without wearing a seatbelt.

Follow these tips to help ensure you arrive home from your holiday safe and happy. After all, the only regret you want to have after your holiday is that it went too quickly!

Thanks to The Department of Transport and Main Roads in Queensland for the use of this information. For more information, please go to [www.transportandmainroads.qld.gov.au](http://www.transportandmainroads.qld.gov.au). No material in this article may be reproduced or used for additional commercial purposes without written permission from the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland.



# Healthy eating tips to reduce your cholesterol!



Summer and holidays are a great time to enjoy long relaxed meals. It can also be a time of over indulgence enjoying all the festive foods! So while you are eating, maybe more than you would normally, give a thought to your heart and caring for it as well as your taste buds!

Many factors contribute to the development of heart disease or stroke. Genes and gender play a role, but for most of us, what we eat is an important factor as well. The good news is that a few small changes to your diet can help lower your cholesterol, which in turn will lower your risk for heart disease and stroke. Here are 15 heart-healthy eating tips to help you in the fight against high cholesterol.

## 1 Eat meat sparingly

Make meat a minor part of your diet instead of making it the centrepiece of most meals. Trim off fat and skin, and avoid fatty cuts of beef, pork, and lamb; instead choose lean meats, or substitute fish or skinless poultry. When dining out, choose a smaller portion of meat, or meatless pasta or fish dishes.

## 2 Opt for low-fat dairy products

Avoid dairy foods that contain whole milk or cream; instead, use low-fat or non-fat versions.

## 3 Watch the snacks

Choose low-fat snacks (homemade popcorn, carrots, dried fruits, or fresh fruits) instead of high-fat ones (potato chips and candy bars). Avoid bakery products unless they are explicitly low in saturated fats and free of trans fats.

## 4 Cut down on saturated fat in cooking

Use cooking oils rather than butter or margarine. Use non-stick pans. Instead of frying your food, bake, broil, roast, steam, or stew. Discard drippings, and baste with wine or broth.

## 5 Avoid palm and coconut oils

Most vegetable oils are unsaturated, but these two contain mostly saturated fat. Choose canola, sunflower, safflower, corn, soybean, olive, and peanut oils.

## 6 Reduce dietary cholesterol

Aim to eat less than 200 mg of dietary cholesterol a day. Limit eggs to no more than four egg yolks per week. Limit lean meat, fish, and poultry to no more than 200 gm per day (a 200 gm portion is about the size of a deck of playing cards). Stay away from cholesterol-rich organ meats, such as liver, brains, and kidneys.

## 7 Increase complex carbohydrates and fibre

Choose foods with complex carbohydrates—such as fruits and vegetables, whole-grain products, and legumes. Eat more water-soluble fibre, found in oat bran and fruits. This type of fibre can significantly lower your blood cholesterol level when eaten in conjunction with a low-fat diet.

## 8 Eat fruits and vegetables

Aim for five serves of vegies and two serves of fruit per day.

## 9 Go for nuts

Nuts are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. They're a healthful and filling source of protein, but go easy; they have lots of calories, so too much could cause weight gain.

## 10 Add fish to your diet

Countries with high fish consumption have a lower risk of death from all causes as well as from cardiovascular disease. Like nuts, oily fish contain the essential fatty acids known as omega-3s and omega-6s. Since our bodies can't make these, we have to eat foods that contain them to gain their benefits, which include improved cholesterol levels.

## 11 Reduce salt intake

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Diets high in salt increase risk of hypertension.

## 12 Avoid trans fats

There are no redeeming qualities to trans fats, and no safe levels. They raise LDL (bad) cholesterol and lower HDL (good) cholesterol. Avoid or eat only very small quantities of foods that list hydrogenated oil or partially hydrogenated oil among their first ingredients. These products contain a lot of trans fat.

## 13 Drink alcohol in moderation

The national drinking guidelines recommend no more than two standard drinks a day. For more information about the drinking guidelines go to [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au).

## 14 Read labels carefully

Avoid prepared foods that list fatty ingredients such as coconut or palm oil, cream, butter, egg or yolk solids as among the first ingredients. Watch out for fast foods and other unlabeled products; when you don't know what you're getting, eat sparingly.

## 15 Change strategies

If three months of healthy eating doesn't bring your total and LDL cholesterol levels into the desired range, consult your GP and a dietician about the next step for you.

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Information for this article was provided by the Harvard Medical School

# Grow a mo' in November

MOVEMBER, the month formerly known as November, is a time of year enjoyed by men across Australia. For four weeks, men are encouraged to throw away their razors and grow the best moustache possible. One of the wonderful things about Movember is girlfriends, wives (or mothers!) can't complain about fuzzy face because it's for a very worthy cause.

Men who participate in Movember, known as 'Mo Bros', are asked to recruit sponsors who donate money to support the growing of the mo'. These donations will help improve the health of men around the country through research projects and men's health programs.

This year, The Movember Foundation has again partnered with *beyondblue*: the national depression initiative, and with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA). Funds raised during Movember will help *beyondblue* increase awareness of depression and anxiety disorders in men and encourage men to talk about mental health problems and seek treatment.

On average, one in eight men will experience depression at some time in their lives and less than half seek help. If left untreated, depression is a risk factor for suicide.

While men have lower rates of depression than women, they don't seek help as often and are more likely to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. Over 70 per cent of men with a mental illness don't access services.

Through the amazing efforts of the Mo Bros and Sistas and the generosity of the Australian public, The Movember Foundation has donated more than \$6 million to *beyondblue* from the 2007 campaign alone.

*beyondblue* uses Movember funds to:

- continue research into the link between men's cancers (testicular and prostate) and depression
- fund the *beyondblue* information line – a national mental health information and referral service **1300 22 4636**
- Support the Trans-Help Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that supports transport drivers and their families ([www.transhelpfoundation.com.au](http://www.transhelpfoundation.com.au))
- support the **Don't beat about the bush!** campaign which raises awareness of depression/anxiety and related disorders in rural communities
- fund the Men's Sheds and Indigenous Men's Sheds projects - spaces where men can spend time together and learn how to look after their own health.

Each year in Australia, close to 3,000 men die of prostate cancer — equal to the number of women who die from breast cancer annually. Around 18,700 new cases are diagnosed in Australia every year.

Research carried out by *beyondblue* over the past few years has shown a strong link between cancer and depression.

Men with prostate cancer report higher levels of depression than the general community however, the rate of depression and anxiety in their partners is even greater - more than double the normal rate for the Australian community.

It's for this reason that *beyondblue* has used Movember funds to create a new comprehensive booklet *Maintaining your well-being: Information on depression and anxiety for men with prostate cancer and their partners*.

It is easy to register for Movember. Log on to [www.movember.com](http://www.movember.com) and click on 'Register' or call **1300 4769 66** (local call cost from a landline).

For more information about depression, anxiety and related drug and alcohol problems visit [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) or call the *beyondblue* info line on **1300 22 4636** (local call from a landline).



## Mo Fun Facts

- 1 Women are more attracted to men with mo's.
- 2 Mo's are sported by over 3.5 million adult males and some females in Eastern Europe.
- 3 Mo's make you look stronger and will scare off any opponent.
- 4 Gentlemen have always worn mo's.
- 5 A mo will make you richer.
- 6 Mo's make you look smarter.
- 7 There are between 10,000 and 20,000 hairs on a man's face.
- 8 In 1967, the Beatles gave away cardboard mo's with their album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.
- 9 In a deck of cards, the King of Hearts is the only king without a moustache.
- 10 Spanish proverb – "A kiss without a mo is like an egg without salt"

## Fast facts

- Foundation 49 is an initiative of Cabrini Health
- It aims to help all men over 20 years of age – of all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds
- Widespread screening and health promotion are key goals
- We believe supporting men to take control of their health is vital.

## Men at work

Call us to find out about a straightforward and practical health assessment program catering for *all men* in the workplace. We provide individuals and employers with valuable feedback on health risks, recommendations on well-being initiatives and useful health information. Each participant receives an individual health report.

*beyondblue* also have a national workplace program for more info call 03 9810 6100

Foundation 49.  
Promoting Health  
Awareness in Men

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Malvern, 3144

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Foundation 49  
a Cabrini Health Initiative

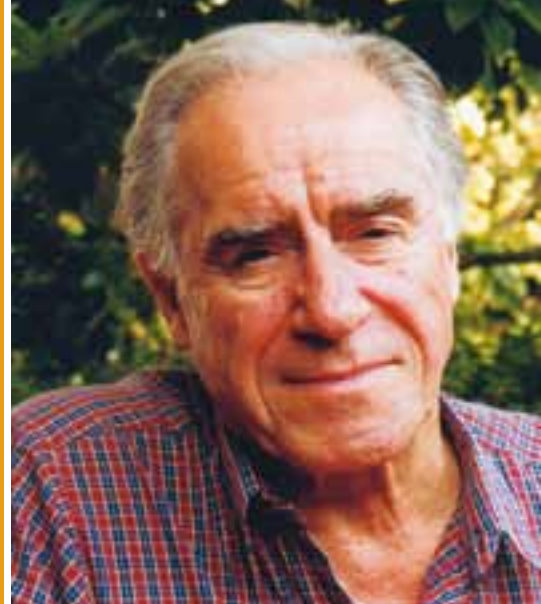


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# Five minutes with... Alan Hopgood



**Alan Hopgood is well known as a playwright and screenwriter (And the Big Men Fly, The Carer, Alvin Purple) and as an actor (Dr Reed in Bellbird, Wally in Prisoner and Jack Lassiter in Neighbours).**

In January 2005, Alan was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to the performing arts, as an actor, playwright and producer and to the community through raising awareness of men's health issues. At 75 he is as busy as ever, and here he shares a few thoughts with us.

### What do you do to stay healthy and fit?

I do a few things actually. I walk regularly, in fact I try to walk every day but it is not always easy when I am touring, so whenever I am away I go for a walk around the local town. I also have a routine of exercises I do every morning before I hit the road. I like to spend time with younger people because I think that keeps you fresh mentally, and I have a young wife, that definitely keeps me young!

### What do you like to do to relax?

I am so busy being a producer, actor and writer that I find it hard to relax! One thing that does relax me though is listening to music.

### What has been your greatest health challenge?

That was definitely my prostate cancer diagnosis. 15 years ago I had a radical prostatectomy (complete removal of my prostate), and I am still here so obviously it worked!

Instead of it being a devastation, I wrote a book about the experience as my urologist suggested it would be helpful to other men and their families to have the topic brought out in the open. Men needed permission to talk. From the book came the play and the DVD 'For better, for worse'.

### Have you written about any other health issues?

Yes, I now have eight health plays, and have become known as a 'Health Playwright'. The plays are about diabetes, palliative care, geriatric sex, depression, prostate cancer, becoming a widow and caring for a loved one. They are all comedies and came out of my, or someone else's, experience. For each play I have explored how out of something bad something good can come.

### Can the plays be performed outside metro Melbourne?

Yes, absolutely. I take the plays to regional Victoria and interstate regularly. The best way to find out how is to contact me on 03 9596 2064 and have a look at the website [www.healthplay.com.au](http://www.healthplay.com.au). I would be happy to discuss what is involved, as they are great for community events.

### What is your favourite drink?

I enjoy a glass of good red wine.

### What is your favourite meal?

It has to be rabbit, not that common these days, but it is delicious!

### If you could head off anywhere in the world, where would it be?

It would have to be Italy!