

# HAUORA MANAWA HEART HEALTH

The Community Heart  
Study



March-April 2009

WAIROA

Issue 1

## Study Update From Suzanne Pitama

### Kia Ora Koutou,

Welcome to our very first Hauora Manawa newsletter for Wairoa. We are working this year at ensuring you receive information from us bi-monthly to keep you up-dated on where the project is at.

We would like to pay tribute to Tumanako Rangī who has passed on since the initial screening clinics. We especially mihi to his whānau and loved ones. Tumanako's contribution to this research will always be valued. E aroha nui atu ana i tenei wa.

Last year we completed the Christchurch part of the study (524 people), half of this group are Maori and half are non-Maori. However this year our focus will be on **Wairoa**. We are interested to see how you are going with your health. This means we will be asking you to do the following:

- Fill out a survey form
- Attend a 10 minute clinic with us where we will take your blood pressure and body measurements
- Have another blood test so we can see how your cholesterol, sugars etc are currently.

We will provide you with more information about this follow up in the near future.

### Did You Know...

In **Wairoa**, nearly 4 out of every 10 people we tested had cholesterol levels above the recommended guidelines. There were slightly more males than females with high cholesterol.

In the **Christchurch Maori** cohort, we found that again, approximately 4 out of every 10 people we tested had high cholesterol, this time however about 60% of the participants with high cholesterol were male, while 40% were female.

In the **Christchurch non-Maori** cohort, slightly fewer people had high cholesterol – about 3 out of every 10 people we tested, and of those 70% were male and 30% were female.

## In Your Community

The Community Centre is a fantastic facility offering a wide range of fun and affordable sports and leisure activities for the whole community. If you are finding it a struggle to make exercise a part of your daily routine, drop into the Centre and have a look at what's going on.

There are many different classes and activities to choose from, and most are suitable for beginners right through to the more advanced. Come in and talk to Denise Gasson about the Green Prescription Scheme. All clients on this scheme receive an individual assessment and are provided with customised diet and exercise programmes. Clients on the programme are given a GRX card which entitles them to one free entry to either the pool or fitness centre, and each session thereafter costs only \$2.

For more information phone: (06) 838 3017 (Denise Gasson)  
Or: (06) 838 3086 (Reception)

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### Healthy Heart

3 Foods that  
Reduce  
Cholesterol

\* **“Good” Oils** help to lower both your total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol. Try cooking with any of the following oils:  
**Canola, Olive, or Flaxseed**

\* **Omega 3 fatty acids** commonly found in **fish**, especially: **Herrings, Mackarel and Trout**

\* **Nuts**, especially **Walnuts and Almonds**, but because they have lots of calories limit the amount to just one small handful per day

## Heart to Heart

### with Lesley Armstrong of Christchurch

When Lesley Armstrong, 48, received an invitation letter to participate in The Community Heart Study, she set it aside and almost forgot about it. But thanks to some gentle encouragement from husband Ray, and a chance stop right in front of a post box, Lesley became the very first participant attending our Christchurch Clinic. Her attendance quite possibly saved her life. During the ultrasound exam of her heart, it was discovered that Lesley had a myxoma, a very rare benign heart tumor. Dr Gillian Whalley, who performed the ultrasound, alerted Dr Gary Nicholls who immediately arranged Lesley's admission to Christchurch Public Hospital. Lesley says "Because I went in feeling well, it came as quite a shock and it took a while to sink in." Though not usually cancerous, myxomas require surgical removal as they can cause life threatening events such as strokes and heart attacks. After a successful surgery, Lesley has made a full recovery and wears her impressive scar with pride.



**Lesley Armstrong with husband Ray**

"I can't believe how lucky we were" says Ray of Lesley's selection into the study. "It's like winning lotto". Lesley says she feels like she's been given a second chance at life and she has made some significant lifestyle changes since attending the clinic – she quit smoking that very day and is now a regular at the gym. "It was a huge wake up call and I haven't looked back" she says.

## In The News

By Vicky Cameron

Cholesterol is a fat that is a natural part of human cells, and the body creates enough of it to maintain health.



Eating foods rich in saturated fats adds extra cholesterol that can clog your arteries and cause heart disease. Until recently doctors believed that as long as your levels of cholesterol were within a healthy range, cholesterol was not a factor in your risk of getting heart disease. However, last year researchers in the USA reported that even in apparently healthy people with normal cholesterol (but with high blood levels of a marker of inflammation, hsCRP), lowering their cholesterol further through treatment with a statin drug significantly reduced the number of heart attacks. This research, known as the JUPITER Study, showed that **as far as cholesterol goes, the lower the better.**

### **What can you do to reduce your cholesterol and prevent heart disease?**

It's pretty simple - reduce fat in your diet and increase exercise in your life. And everyone 20 years or older should get their cholesterol tested every five years.

For more info:

<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/short/359/21/2195>

## Your Views, Comments and Questions

Do you have a question about your heart health that you'd like us to answer? Drop us a line and we might include your question along with the answer in an upcoming issue of our newsletter! Your comments and views are always appreciated too and you can submit these by email to:

[miriam.esteves@otago.ac.nz](mailto:miriam.esteves@otago.ac.nz)

**Please let us know if you'd be happy to receive future issues of this newsletter via email**

Or you can post letters to the address listed under Contact Us.

## WIN with The Community Centre!

We have 5 free passes to the Fitness Centre and 5 free vouchers for aqua aerobics to give away. To win one, simply contact us by email or letter and let us know your current address and contact details. Every one who submits a comment or question to the newsletter automatically goes in the draw... Good Luck!

## Contact Us

Have you moved or changed your phone number recently? It is important that we have your current contact details so please let us know of any changes by calling or dropping us a line.

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