

# fitness+balance

● your no-fuss guide to getting fit + feeling great



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## Racing for change

This summer more than 14,500 kids will be lacing up their sneakers to be part of the biggest Under 16s triathlon series on the planet. **The Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon 2010** kicks off at Sydney's Olympic Park on January 31 and then heads to seven venues across Australia. But no times are taken and every participating child gets a medal. The aim is simply to encourage kids to have fun and enjoy an active lifestyle.

At a time when one quarter of all Aussie kids are thought to be overweight or obese, organisers hope the event will help spur kids towards a healthier body image and inspire them to keep exercise as part of their lives into adulthood.

This is especially important for girls, who are very vulnerable to body image problems. In Australia, the extreme dieting disorder anorexia nervosa is the third most diagnosed chronic illness in females aged 15-24, after obesity and asthma. Recent studies from the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC) workshop in Canberra found that nearly 60 per cent of the 14-25 year olds surveyed knew between one and five people with an eating disorder.

With research in the US concluding that doing any sort of exercise can have a positive impact on your body image, getting kids active before their teenage years – and keeping them exercising – may truly be their ticket to a healthier future.

For Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon 2010 registration and details, go to [www.weetbix.com.au](http://www.weetbix.com.au)



## SUPER FLY

The best ideas come in small packages.

The **Fly Active Wrist Pocket** is the brainchild of two Aussie sisters and is the perfect solution for anyone who wants to exercise without the worry of keeping hold of keys, medical/ID cards, asthma inhalers, coffee change or gym cards. This soft wristband has a handy zip pocket that's the perfect size for holding those one or two essential items and is still absorbent enough to mop a sweaty brow. The Wrist Pocket costs \$10 and comes in four colours. We think it's brilliant! Check out the range at

[www.flyactive.com.au](http://www.flyactive.com.au)





Quercetin may be a not-so-secret weapon for boosting performance.

### Blueberry benefits

Running faster, having more energy, enjoying quicker recovery times and being less likely to get sinus infections if you overdo things – for anyone interested in boosting their fitness, these are pretty appealing prospects. The secret ingredient promising all this is quercetin, the powerhouse antioxidant found in blueberries, red apples and red onions.

Recent research in the US suggests quercetin could be the new wonder supplement for elite athletes. Superstar cyclist Lance Armstrong was so convinced by its benefits he bought shares in a company manufacturing products with quercetin before his 2009 Tour de France campaign.

The recommended optimum daily dose at this stage is 1000mg – roughly the amount in 124 red apples or 217 cups of blueberries – which makes quercetin more vitamin shelf than greengrocer territory. It's still proof, however, that the most powerful thing you can do for your health is to eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegies.



### Not so rash!

Chafing and sweat rashes may not be ideal topics for a gym chat, but they're a summertime reality for many women – especially under the breasts and between buttocks and thighs. Kiwi company Neat Feat claims to have come up with the solution in the form of 3B Action Cream (\$12.95 for 75g, \$18.95 for 100g), a medicated emollient cream that not only soothes inflammation but also – cleverly – includes an antiperspirant to help reduce the amount of sweat and prevent the rash recurring. Go to [www.neatfeat.co.nz](http://www.neatfeat.co.nz) to learn more.



### Stop the fat coming back

Not all fat is created equal. The fat that lurks under our skin may tighten jeans and even wobble a bit, but the most dangerous fat is where we can't see it, clinging around our internal organs.

This visceral fat increases the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Losing this fat is a triumph in any health terms – but a new study has found that exercise is the key to keeping it from returning, even if the odd kilo creeps back on elsewhere.

A recent US study followed 97 women who each lost around 11kg on low-kilojoule diets. Some then exercised for two 40-minute sessions a week for the following year. While some women in the exercise group regained small amounts of fat under their skin (subcutaneous fat), none regained the visceral fat. Those who didn't exercise regained a third of their visceral fat.

WORDS Donna Ogier PHOTOS Corbis/Getty Images

### DODGING DIABETES

A 10-year follow-up to a diabetes trial in the US has found exercise and diet are more effective than conventional drugs in stopping people developing Type 2 diabetes.

The Diabetes Prevention Program split 3000 overweight people into three groups. One of the groups was prescribed lifestyle changes, another was given the drug metformin, and the other received no treatment.

After three years, those in the lifestyle group who lost seven per cent of their weight and exercised for 30 minutes five days a week had

58 per cent less chance of developing Type 2 diabetes, while the drug therapy group had 31 per cent less chance. The group on no therapy had no reduction in risk.

Seven years on, the lifestyle group was still 34 per cent less likely to develop diabetes, while those on drug therapy had only an 18 per cent reduction in risk.

Experts predict there could be 366 million cases of diabetes worldwide by 2030 – but exercise and diet could still stop this figure becoming a reality.

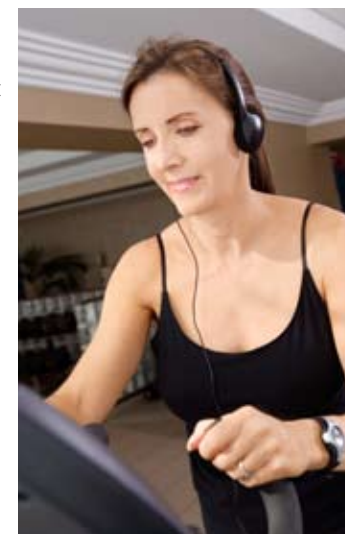
### Go on, leg it

Slow walkers are more likely to die of heart disease than their fleeter-footed cousins – that's the finding of a French study that looked at more than 3200 men and women, aged 65-85. The five-year study ranked people into slow, medium and fast groups depending on their walking speed. Slow walkers were three times more likely to die of heart disease and, overall, were 44 per cent more likely to die than the fastest group. So it seems the key to living a long life is to keep yourself agile and active!

### YOU'D BETTER CHECK THE SUMS

Exercise physiologists in the UK are warning that the speed, heart rate and kilojoule burn estimated by fitness machine monitors are often wrong, and could be out by up to 20 per cent. Dr Emma Ross, an exercise physiologist at London's Brunel University, also warns that inaccurate heart rate monitors can be harmful for some people.

The bottom line is that if you're pregnant or have heart or blood pressure issues, you should get your own heart monitor rather than relying on one on a fitness machine. As for kilojoules burned, you're better off asking a trainer to help you work out your energy output based on your body fat percentage. Cardio machine readings are a guide only; everyone's body is different.



### Beating knee pain

For years knee pain patients have been told to rest, avoid pain-inducing activity, and wait to see if their pain subsides. But new research suggests supervised weekly exercise with a physiotherapist may speed the recovery process.

A Netherlands study looked at 131 patients aged 14-40, with patellofemoral knee pain (also known as runner's knee), the pain most often felt under and around your kneecap.

The group of 65 patients who were prescribed exercise had less pain and better knee function both three months and

one year after the initial tests. The scientists say more research is needed to confirm the results, but some physio visits along with your usual GP care, may get you back training again faster.

