

# Hearty Tips

**Congratulations on setting the goal of completing this event!** Your heart will thank you and you'll feel better every day when you start exercising regularly. Balancing your efforts with healthy eating helps your heart health, and helps your body get the best benefits from exercise. Remember the following tips as you prepare for the big day:

- ♥ Exercise with a **buddy** – you'll be safer and more likely to do it.
- ♥ Make exercise a **priority** – even if it means skipping on coffee with workmates one lunch time a week.
- ♥ Create **daily goals** – have a goal each day for your physical activity. Challenge yourself to take more steps, watch less TV, and be more active.
- ♥ **Budget time** for exercise – for those with busy schedules, act like you're booking a meeting. Set a time for yourself to get out and be active.
- ♥ **Do it** – at the end of the day, when you are tired and worn out, put on your shoes and get out the door. It's often said that 90% of doing your exercise is getting out the door.
- ♥ Keep **hydrated** throughout the day – water is often the best tonic. Drink more fluid directly after exercising – a general guide is two cups for every 30 minutes you have been exercising.
- ♥ Head for **soft surfaces**, like grass or trails rather than sidewalks or roads – your hips and ankles will appreciate it.
- ♥ **Time your last meal before training** so that you can exercise comfortably – one to two hours for a light or liquid meal (eg. fruit salad and low-fat yoghurt, or low-fat smoothie) and up to three or four hours for a larger or heavier meal (eg. reduced-salt baked beans on toast, or pasta with tomato based sauce).
- ♥ Try to **eat something as soon as possible after exercise** – this should be a carbohydrate-containing food with a little protein (eg. A high-fibre breakfast cereal with yoghurt and fruit, or a banana sandwich with a small flavoured glass of milk).
- ♥ Select **simple snacks** throughout the day to increase your fruit and vegetable intake. A box of raisins, some grapes, carrot or capsicum sticks, or cherry tomatoes make quick snacks. Your local supermarket offers plenty of prepared items, including sliced melon, fresh pineapple, salad mixes and a salad bar.
- ♥ **Limit your intake of high fat foods.** Choose lean cuts of meat, fish and chicken, and remove all visible fat and skin before cooking. Try low-fat dairy products, while butter, cream and ice-cream are to be avoided since they lack the qualities of other milk products.
- ♥ One important thing to know about any type of exercise is that it is **easier to maintain fitness than to gain it.** Once this event is over, keep active by continuing regular running or walking workouts, or find another challenge to aim for.

The National Heart Foundation of New Zealand is the charity that leads the fight against cardiovascular disease (heart, stroke and blood vessel disease) through funding research, advancing cardiac rehabilitation and promoting healthy lifestyles. As a charity we rely on the generosity of donations from the public to continue our life-saving work.