

Peddalling the fitness message

Proof you can get a handle on cancer

Health | Stacy Allen

TOUR de France winning cyclist Lance Armstrong has long been an advocate of using cycling and physical fitness to beat cancer.

And now a Stonnington surgeon is using the sport to help patients with cancer of the oesophagus.

Cabrini Malvern associate professor Simon Woods, himself a keen cyclist, said keeping fit using the sport had helped three of his patients.

Camberwell's Peter Short, Hawthorn's Gary Waite and Burwood's Bernie Handley have all had chemotherapy followed by radical surgery at Cabrini to treat oesophageal cancer.

But Mr Short, 53, Mr Waite, 51, and Mr Handley, 55, are all now back on their bikes and getting on with their lives.

Prof Woods said surgery for oesophageal cancer was "one of the biggest operations there was" as the oesophagus was removed from the chest and the stomach transposed from the abdomen to the chest.

"These three men were able to



Professor Simon Woods (right) with his patients Gary Waite, Peter Short and Bernie Handley. Picture: MARTIN REDDY N05MP808

cope with the trauma of this major surgery so much better because of their high level of fitness prior to the operation," Prof Woods said.

"Furthermore, there is increasing evidence with various cancers that physical fitness and maintaining a healthy weight improve the chances of long-term survival and cure."

Prof Woods said cancer of the oesophagus was a condition that in the past mainly affected older people, particularly those who smoke and drank to excess.

But he said in recent years there had been a sharp increase in a different form of the cancer mainly affecting middle-aged males.

Prof Woods said the reason for

the increase was not clear, but oesophageal reflux (heartburn) and obesity were thought to increase the risk.

He said anyone with persistent heartburn or difficulty swallowing should have their symptoms investigated as early detection of the cancer greatly improved the chances of a patient being cured.

Across Town
Stories from
around Melbourne

Home search

Moonee Valley | Julia Adler

THE Lost Dogs' Home is sifting through hundreds of applications to find the right home for injured puppy Buckley. The nine-week-old puppy is on his way to recovery after the North Melbourne pound performed plastic surgery last week to smooth his jagged ears and tail after they were hacked off. The shelter manager, Sue Conroy, said the home had to choose the right owner to suit Buckley's needs after his trauma.

Moggie curfew

Bayside | Jon Andrews

CAT owners could soon be forced to lock up their pets overnight or face hefty \$2000 fines. Bayside Council is considering an 8pm curfew to stop marauding moggies attacking birds and hunting local fauna. Cats would only be allowed out of the house during the day from 6am.

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In May 2009, the 2007-08 National Health Survey was released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, reporting that over half the Australian population is being impacted by eyesight problems.

Vision problems not only affect everyday activities such as reading or watching television, but can also impact work and school performance and road safety.

"Eye health can be maintained through a simple eye examination, and all Australians should be

visiting the optometrist every two years" said OPSM Optometrist Phillip Fent.

"In school-age children, even the smallest vision impairment can seriously affect their ability to learn and their future development. In elderly people, vision problems can cause falls, accidents and reduced quality of life. It's therefore vital for everyone to see their optometrist regularly to have their vision checked" added Mr Fent.

With optometry experience totaling over 40 years, the team at OPSM Chadstone has all your eye care needs covered. Not only do they provide overall eye checks, but members of the team specialise in particular areas of eye health such as therapeutics, which saves going to an ophthalmologist for medication, and contact lenses.

Many people don't realise that in addition to detecting eye conditions such as long or shortsightedness which can be simply treated with glasses or contact lenses, eye examinations can pick up a number of other health issues.

The optometrist will check for eye diseases such as macular degeneration, glaucoma and cataract, all of which can cause serious vision problems, or even vision loss, if they are not treated. In addition, an eye examination can detect diabetes, high blood pressure and even some brain tumours.

"The importance of an eye check should not be underestimated and should be part of everyone's

normal health regime. There is no excuse to neglect eye health as Medicare covers the cost of a standard eye test every two years" added Mr Fent.

The optometry team at OPSM Chadstone is not only passionate about the eye health of the Stonnington area, but also ensuring that disadvantaged communities in Australia and overseas have access eye care.

It is estimated there are over 250 million people worldwide who cannot see simply because they cannot access or cannot afford basic eye care. OPSM Chadstone is proud to support OneSight Foundation who is working to reduce this number and give the gift of sight to those in need.

One of the team from the Chadstone team, Cassie Rowe, has donated their time and professional experience to OneSight Foundation by participating in eye screening missions in regional Australia.

"Working with OneSight Foundation is extremely rewarding. The difference that clear vision can make to someone's life is incredible" said Mr Fent.

Residents of the Stonnington area can contribute to the work of OneSight Foundation by donating unwanted prescription glasses and sunglasses at the Chadstone store.

Visit the team at OPSM Chadstone or call (03) 9563 1872 to make an appointment today.