



## AMA FAMILY DOCTOR WEEK, 23- 29 July 2017

*Your Family Doctor: all about you*

### REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISKS – SEE YOUR GP

AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said today that the key to a longer and healthier life is eliminating risky health habits and behaviours from your daily routine, and the best advice on minimising health risks is available from your local GP.

Dr Gannon said that many Australians face the prospect of a premature death or lower quality of life through risky behaviours that are often commonplace, but are still very detrimental to their health.

“Many people may not even realise that they are putting themselves, and sometimes others, at risk through everyday poor health habits and decisions,” Dr Gannon said.

“These risky behaviours include smoking, consuming too much energy-dense and nutrient poor foods and drinks, spending too much time being sedentary and not engaging in the recommended amounts of physical activity, and drinking more than the recommended amount of alcohol.

“Modern life doesn’t always encourage us to engage in healthy behaviours.

“People are often overwhelmed by nutrition messages that are all about body image or instant weight loss, but which are not based on evidence.

“It can be very confusing and expensive – and bad for your health.

“Local GPs can help people see through the hype and false claims of these products and programs, and set them on a path to a healthier life.

“The evidence is clear – these risky behaviours are harmful and can shorten lives.”

The results of avoidable risky health behaviours are devastating:

- Coronary heart disease is the nation’s leading single cause of death.
- It is estimated that more than 1.2 million Australians have diabetes, the majority of whom have Type 2 Diabetes (85 per cent), which is largely preventable.
- In 2013, diabetes contributed to 10 per cent of all deaths in Australia.
- Extra weight contributes to a range of cancers, hypertension, musculoskeletal disorders, and impaired psychosocial functioning.
- Excess alcohol consumption increases the risk of cancer. Many Australians drink at harmful levels and endanger their health.
- Smoking increases an individual’s risk for coronary heart disease, peripheral artery disease, cancer of the lung, oesophagus, larynx, mouth, throat, kidney, bladder, liver, pancreas, stomach, cervix, colon, and rectum, as well as acute myeloid leukaemia, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- Developing an avoidable chronic condition will impact on quality of life and increase the costs of health care to the individual.

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