



Exercise keeps the mind fit

AN Australian study has found some answers from men on the subject of keeping young when they live long — and some disturbing findings

When you ask people about living a long time, most will say there is little point unless you enjoy the extra years, and there are few things more miserable than not being in good mental health, University of Queensland Evidence Based Health Care Professor Konrad Jamrozik said.

“We’ve been following the health and wellbeing of 600 men in their 80s, looking particularly at their mental health. Things like depression,” Prof Jamrozik, who presented his findings at the second International Conference on Healthy Ageing and Longevity in Brisbane, said.

“What we found has surprised us. Most of these men — about three-

quarters of them — had aged very well when it came to their mental health — as judged from both their thinking and their mood. Whether or not they were married, and even the extent of their physical illness didn’t seem to be factors.

“Nor were aspects of lifestyle such as diet or smoking habits in their 70s particularly important.

“What did stand out though was physical activity. Men who were physically active in their later years were almost twice as likely to be in good mental health at the age of 80.

“This fits with a growing body of research indicating that exercise has far greater impact on overall wellbeing than people used to think.

“For instance, physical training helps to both prevent depression in the elderly and to lift it faster if depression does occur.

“And the great thing is that phys-

ical activity is safe, cheap, and in theory available to everyone.”

Prof Jamrozik was one of more than 80 Australian and international experts who addressed the second International Conference on Healthy Ageing and Longevity at the Brisbane Convention Centre last week.

These world-class speakers will provide evidence-based knowledge on the achievement of increased human longevity and freedom from disability in later life.

The conference will explore the full spectrum of proven interventions including pharmaceutical, nutritional, clinical, educational, policy, complementary, preventive and restorative means and the scientific underpinnings supporting them.

The object of the conference is to promote longer and better lives for all.



TAKE A LOOK AT YOURSELF: Will you be happy in your older years?