



Exercise keeps the mind in shape

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's little point unless you enjoy the extra years, and there are few things more miserable than not being in good mental health, says Professor Konrad Jamrozik, Professor of Evidence Based Health Care at the University of Queensland.

"We've been following the health and wellbeing of 600 men in their 80s, looking particularly

at their mental health. Things like depression," said Prof Jamrozik, who will present his findings at the 2nd International Conference on Healthy Ageing and Longevity in Brisbane on Friday.

"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 seventies 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."



LATECOMERS BEWARE: Showing up to class is no longer good enough. Tardiness can have dire consequences in exercise classes.