



# Husbands get more of a kick out of life

MARRIAGE may add almost a year to a man's life, but it does little to boost the lifespan of women, Australian researchers have found.

A study of about 3000 elderly men and women since 1988 found married men lived, on average, 11 months longer than their single counterparts. Women's marital status made no significant difference to longevity.

Epidemiologist John McCallum, who is addressing this weekend's International Healthy

Ageing and Longevity Conference in Brisbane, said scientists were still speculating on reasons for the difference.

"It's the least successful men who are not married and the most successful women who are not married," said Prof McCallum, of the Victoria University in Melbourne.

"One thought is that it's not so much marriage as the fact that it is the fitter people, in a biological sense, who get married. In other words, people who are harder

and stronger, who are going to survive longer anyway, get married.

"It could be that there are beneficial effects of having social support and company as well."

Prof McCallum said the study had also found that being a non-drinker, a diabetic, a smoker or having high blood pressure reduced life expectancy.

"Over the 15 years, men gained about nine months if they had been drinking moderate alcohol and women about five months," he said.