



# Gym programs bring benefits

For Irene Burke, 72, exercise and sport have always been a part of life. But since taking up weight training at the ECU Vario Health Institute Clinic a year ago with husband Ben, she has felt extra benefits.

"When I am crouching down cleaning or reaching into cupboards, I used to get up and feel my knees strain," she said. "Now I can go up and down with no problems at all. I feel a lot stronger."

"I feel a lot fitter and think my body has toned up a bit. All the loose bits are gone."

In twice-weekly work-outs she bench presses 7.5kg, completes sets of lat pull-downs and abdominal crunches, as well as sessions on the rowing machine and treadmill.

"The staff are very helpful and are always watching you in case you are doing

something wrong on the machine," she said.

"I look forward to it but I have always exercised."

Mr Burke, now 85, started going to the gym 12 years ago after suffering a heart attack shortly after retiring from a 50-year career in sideshow businesses. During his rehabilitation he was encouraged to take up some supervised exercise.

He now has an exercise bike and a treadmill at home — each day he does 5km on the bike and eight minutes on the treadmill — and attends the gym twice a week for weights work.

Mr Burke said he found it hard work but it was self-defence for his health. "I feel tired but stronger," he said.

"If I don't do it I could probably have another heart attack."



**Catalyst: Ben Burke began working out after a heart attack.**

Pictures: Michael O'Brien



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Feeling strong: Irene Burke visits the gym twice a week.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Before modernisation we walked very long distances in search of food and water and then we carried it back to camp so for optimal performance our bodies need a combination of aerobic (endurance) exercise and resistance (weights) work for peak performance.

### To maintain normal health people without existing conditions need:

- To accumulate 150 minutes a week of aerobic exercise where heart rate is somewhere between 60 and 85 per cent of their maximum. Or they can do more vigorous exercise and need accumulate only 60 minutes a week.
- Perform two to three sessions of weight training a week.

### For weight (fat) loss:

- Accumulate 250 minutes of aerobic exercise each week where the heart rate is between 60 and 80 per cent of maximum.
- Perform two to three sessions of weight training a week.

SOURCE: PROFESSOR ROBERT NEWTON,  
ECU EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST