Issue 3/2018, May 2018

FireFit

Prepare - Fuel - Train - Recover

BE SAFE

Your Health & Fitness Newsletter

Please place on station notice board

FireFit Family

Station Officer Peter Yates of Avalon D platoon recently completed the 3 Peaks Challenge – Falls Creek cycling event, where he raised nearly $10 000 for Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a condition his wife suffers from.

To prepare for this single day, 235km event, Peter contacted the Health & Fitness team to prepare an individualised, structured training routine based around long rides initially of 80-90km and ramping up to 150-200km and shorter high intensity interval sessions.

Peter mentioned his previous training for similar events incorporated "riding for the sake of riding" without having much purpose to his training. When he committed to the set routine he said, "I did plenty of PB's"… Congratulations Peter! Donations for the cause can be made to www.kissgoodbyetoms.org.

From the *"Mental Fitness"* Team

Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz

Sleep and you

What comes first the chicken or the egg? The same question has been applied to mental fitness – does poor sleep = poor mental health or vice versa?

What we do know is that those with poor mental health are more likely to experience sleep problems, and that to recover from any illness, physical or mental, good sleep is essential. Quality sleep – and getting enough of it at the right times -- is as essential to survival as food and water. Poor sleep wreaks havoc on the brain, impairing thinking and emotional regulation. There are more than 70 types of sleep disorders. The most common are insomnia (difficulty falling/staying asleep), obstructive sleep apnoea (disordered breathing), various movement syndromes (like restless legs) and narcolepsy (extreme sleepiness or falling asleep suddenly during the day).

HELP: look at your lifestyle, tweaking a few things could make a difference: no caffeine/nicotine before bedtime; limit alcohol – it might assist in falling asleep but the quality is compromised; exercise – regular aerobic activity helps people fall asleep faster, spend more time in deep sleep and awaken less often; routine where possible (retiring and rising times); relaxation such as meditation, deep breathing or mindfulness. Simple strategies can alleviate the problem, improve your mental health and ensure you are not one of the 33-45% of Australians with sleep problems.

https://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/

https://www.firerescue1.com/health/articles/285477018-Prevent-identify-and-treat-sleep-disorders-in-firefighters/

From the Health & Medical Team

FireFighter Maternity Management Policy

This recently published policy aims to inform firefighters of FRNSW's commitment to providing flexible working arrangements to firefighters during pregnancy.

The first trimester of pregnancy is pivotal in the development of a healthy baby. In the first 12 weeks, the baby's spinal cord, brain and organs develop and are most vulnerable to any external stressors the mother may face. Operational duties may present stressors such as biohazards, chemical hazards, noise, sleep interruptions, heavy lifting or heat exposure, which may have a significant negative impact on the pregnancy or foetus in these early days. To ensure the best for your baby, it's therefore essential that as a firefighter, you let FRNSW know as soon as you find out you are pregnant. FRNSW want you to have a positive experience through your pregnancy and postnatal period so notification can be confidential and alternate duties can be identified to support you during your pregnancy. Please ring Occupational Health Advisor (and Registered Midwife) Wendy Phillips on 9269 6384 if you have any questions.

For previous issues of the FireFit Newsletter go to intranet/toolkit/organisation-wide/health/fitness/articles-and-videos, or just give your Health & Fitness Advisor a call.

"WHO'S IN THE FIREFIT TEAM?" YOU ASK?

David Tchappat – Wellbeing Coordinator
Julie Pert – Occupational Psychologist
*… and **all the Peer Support Officers***

Chrissy Strickland – Team Leader Health & Medical
Taryn Keyser – Occupational Health Advisor
Wendy Phillips – Occupational Health Advisor

Mark Gabriel - Team Leader Health & Fitness
Andrew Richardson - Health & Fitness Advisor (MS,RS,ME1)
Matthew Said - Health & Fitness Advisor (MN,RN,ME2)
Stephen Pascoe - Health & Fitness Advisor (MW,RW,ME3)