

# Don't forget your toothbrush

BY DR JASON GRAY

IN OUR last article we attempted to simplify the toothbrush selection decision.

We found that scientific studies have found that there was no difference between the effectiveness of manual and powered toothbrushes and that our selection of a toothbrush is largely personal. Our toothbrush of choice should have a

comfortable handle with a small head and soft bristles.

It is obviously important to look after your toothbrush. Once you have finished brushing your teeth (for at least three to four minutes), rinse your toothbrush with tap water to remove any remaining toothbrush and debris.

Store the brush in an upright position and allow it to air dry. Avoid covering your toothbrush or

storing them in a closed container since this will encourage the growth of micro-organisms. If more than one toothbrush is stored in the same holder or area, keep the brushes separated.

Your toothbrush should be replaced every three months or when the bristles start to wear, whichever comes first. That shaggy dog toothbrush is no longer very effective, and it tends to indicate overzealous brushing.

This heavy handed brushing should be discouraged as it causes your gingival recession. Finally, it is often a wise idea to consider replacing your toothbrush after a cold, sore throat or mouth infection to prevent the accumulation of micro-organisms on the brush which may result in re-infection.

To find out more visit [www.smilestudio.com.au](http://www.smilestudio.com.au)

## Put your pelvic floor first

DID YOU know that almost every exercise you do affects your pelvic floor? And that some exercises can actually harm these muscles, leading to bladder or bowel control problems?

The pelvic floor is the base of the group of muscles commonly referred to as your 'core', and your pelvic floor muscles help control your bladder and bowel.

Many of us don't understand how important our pelvic floor is until we start experiencing pelvic floor problems. Inner Strength Physiotherapy is highlighting the link between exercise and the pelvic floor during World Continence Week (June 20-26).

Pelvic floor problems are common, and affect both men and women. Signs that can indicate a pelvic floor problem include accidentally leaking when you exercise, laugh or cough, or needing to go to the toilet and not making it there in time.

You are at increased risk of pelvic floor problems if you are pregnant, have ever had a baby, or have experienced menopause or prostate problems.

Some types of exercise can cause or worsen pelvic floor problems, because some activities

place more stress on your pelvic floor than others. The good news is that, with the right help, these problems can be treated and in many cases cured.

Exercise is an important part of healthy living, so it's important to seek help to make sure your exercise program is the right one for you. Learning how to protect and strengthen your pelvic floor can help you stay in control.

Inner Strength Physiotherapists Celia Bolton and Sarah Kenagy have invited all personal trainers and gym instructors for an information evening this Friday, June 24.

"We know everyone has a pelvic floor, but not everyone can rely on it," Bolton said.

"We want to help the fitness industry identify at-risk clients with early screening so they can steer them into pelvic floor safe Exercises. At risk clients should be taught pelvic floor exercises individually by a suitably trained physiotherapist."

Those in the fitness industry wishing to attend should RSVP to Inner Strength Physiotherapy on 5229 7963.

You can find out more at [www.innerstrength.com.au](http://www.innerstrength.com.au) or [www.pelvicfloorfirst.com.au](http://www.pelvicfloorfirst.com.au)

## Call for men to take action

THE FEDERAL Government is funding DIY male health toolboxes to be sent to men's sheds around the country.

The announcement by the Minister for Indigenous Health, Warren Snowdon, was made as he launched Men's Health Week with Australian Men's Shed Association Patron Tim Mathieson in Canberra last week.

"These are actual metal toolbox that will contain a combination of health promotion materials

featuring resources suitable to a shed environment," Snowdon said.

"We know that men don't always feel comfortable picking up a brochure in public – so these promotion materials such as carpenter's pencils, tape measures, and magnetic clips will be more subtle and hopefully infiltrate sheds with positive health-related messages."

"These toolboxes are a timely reminder for men to address some of the very serious issues raised in AIHW's *The Health of Australian Males report*.

"This report shows some disturbing data, including that less than five per cent of males eat

sufficient fruit and vegetables and two-thirds of adult males are overweight or obese.

"Men need to make a difference to their own health by taking positive health action – now.

"Eat more fruit and vegetables, lose weight, exercise more, think about your mental health and see your GP regularly – this is the call to action for Australian men."

The AIHW report also found nearly one-third of men have a chronic health condition such as cancer or diabetes and Australian men make fewer GP visits than women and only 40 per cent of men discuss healthy lifestyle issues with health professionals.

Snowdon said the statistical bulletin provided by AIHW, was the first in a series being funded by the Federal Government.

The AIHW report is available to download at [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)





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