

# Fit for Life

BY AMANDA DAVEY



**JUST** four weeks into 2008, and many a New Year's resolution has already bitten the dust. So much for dogged determination and willpower!

A combination of losing weight and getting fit is probably the most common resolution made at the beginning of each year but all too often that initial enthusiasm wanes prematurely resulting in those elusive goals being held over until the next year. And so the cycle goes.

Justin Cantelo, who holds a degree in Health Science and a graduate diploma in Clinical Nutrition, is both a nutritionist and fitness specialist. As founder of the Manly-based health and fitness business, Vital Fit he sees many frustrated individuals who claim to have minimal long-term success with health and fitness programs. According to Mr Cantelo, in many cases this is because they have not combined the fitness program with a sound nutritional diet.

SLIM PEOPLE  
WHO DO NOT EXERCISE  
ARE GENERALLY LESS HEALTHY  
THAN OVERWEIGHT PEOPLE  
WHO DO

"Practicing good nutrition is 80 per cent of the battle," he said. "If you exercise and eat well you will be far more successful. What so often happens is that an individual embarks on an exercise program but finds they are eating more because they are hungrier, which is fine if they don't want to lose weight. That is why fitness on its own is not an effective weight-loss method."

Mr Cantelo says the trick to ensuring long-term adherence to formulated nutritional plans is to develop the program around the individual's preferences and lifestyle. "We try to keep it as close to their current diet as possible by tweaking it here and there to ensure they have the correct ratio of proteins, fats and total calories," he said. "We also assess body composition which includes percentage of body fat, muscle content and hydration – and from that we can determine the individual's metabolic rate and advise accordingly."

While it is possible to lose weight by dieting alone, Mr Cantelo pointed out the benefits of exercising are significantly far reaching in terms of improving both mental and physical health. To illustrate his point, he cited a recent study

showing slim people who do not exercise are generally less healthy than overweight people who do exercise regularly.

"Adapting programs to the individual's current lifestyle is the key to success," he said. "Time and time again research has shown that most people can follow a health and fitness program for eight weeks or so but then tend to revert back to their old habits when the going gets tough, often putting on more weight in the process."

Mindful that joining a gym is not for everybody, Mr Cantelo has devised his fitness program around the great outdoors with group fitness sessions regularly held at Queenscliff Beach.

"Because we run strength circuits as part of our group training, people don't need to go to the gym. Our clients love being on Manly Beach and because we cater for all fitness levels, the sessions are not intimidating at all. It's the nicest way to get fit."

For more information on the Vital Fit programs call Justin on 1300 727 022.

*Pictured above left:  
Founder of Vitalfit, Justin Cantelo.*

