

Council threat to fine kids for playing in a park

Grains curb a deadly cancer

Kamahl Cogdon

EATING two serves of whole grains a day could slash the risk of pancreatic cancer, research reveals.

A diet rich in wholemeal bread, brown rice and other wholegrain foods was found to reduce the risk of the deadly cancer by 40 per cent.

Pancreatic cancer claims the lives of almost 2000 Australians every year and has the lowest survival rate in Victoria of any cancer — 95 per cent die within five years.

But a US study of more than 2000 men and women revealed a clear link between the amount of whole grains eaten and the chance of developing the disease.

Those who ate at least two helpings of whole grains a day — the equivalent of a cup of brown rice or porridge, or two slices of wholemeal bread — were 40 per cent less likely to develop the disease than those who ate less than one portion.

The University of California study also found those who ate more than 26.5g of fibre a day were 35 per cent less likely to develop pancreatic cancer than those who ate less than 15.6g.

"There is a possibility that diet can affect one's risk of pancreatic, as well as other cancers," lead researcher Dr June Chan said.

"Eating a diet rich in a wide variety of grains is likely not only to help in the prevention of diabetes and heart disease, but also this very deadly cancer."

But eating more refined and sweetened grains — such as two or more servings of doughnuts a week — was found to raise the risk of pancreatic cancer.

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends Australians aged four and over eat at least four serves of grain foods every day.

But a recent Newspoll phone survey of 1200 adults found most were unaware of the recommendations, with just 17 per cent nominating the correct amount.

Dietitian and Go Grains Health and Nutrition executive manager Trish Griffiths said the last National Nutrition Survey of 1995 found Australians were not eating enough wholegrain foods.

Whole grains have been shown to help prevent diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

About 500 Victorians develop pancreatic cancer each year, with the risk greatest in people over 65.

The study, published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, looked at grain intake among 532 people with pancreatic cancer and 1701 people without the disease, all living in San Francisco Bay.

The two groups were similar in age, gender, and body weight, and had a similar history of diabetes.

Those with pancreatic cancer were also more likely to smoke.



It's a sad old world: Ellie, 7, and friends have been banned from a local park. Picture: CRAIG BORROW

Watch out for the fun police

A GROUP of children have been nabbed for running around a park and threatened with fines by their council.

Glen Eira Council has ordered these cute "crooks" out of a Caulfield park and threatened to hit each one with a \$250 fine if they return.

The children and their parents are furious after they were challenged by Glen Eira officers last Thursday and ordered out of Princes Park during after-school exercise.

The council says it is trying to protect the drought-affected park by making it off limits to any organised sporting groups without a permit.

But local families say the fun police are a bad joke.

In recent weeks, about eight children and parents from the

Mary Bolling
urban affairs reporter

three families have been meeting at the park after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The energetic youngsters run a lap of the three-oval park and play games.

Dad Grant Cohen said they were approached last week by a Glen Eira local laws officer who told them organised groups weren't allowed on the grounds.

"It's ridiculous — we're just three families who all live five minutes away," Mr Cohen said.

"We started coming down here because the kids would be getting home after school and playing computer games all arvo. We wanted to give them a chance to run around.

"This park should be full of kids doing exactly that."

Now the kids have gone from running around to being on the run — forced to be fitness fugitives.

"We rang the council and they said that even if we went down the road to Caulfield Park, as long as we were in a group we'd still be fined," Mr Cohen said.

The group were told even a single family of eight kids would not be allowed to run around together.

Glen Eira director of community relations Paul Burke said the by-law banning unauthorised groups from parks had been in place since 2000, and council had stepped up enforcement because of the drought.

While Mr Burke wouldn't say the minimum number

that constituted an organised group, he stuck by the decision to ban the kids.

"It's a judgment call — if there's a group of people turning up regularly to use the facility, any reasonable person would believe it's an organised group," he said.

Since Thursday, the council has put up a sign saying the grounds were closed, except for sports clubs with council permits.

But Mr Burke said there was no issue with dog walkers or picnics at the park.

"We're not in the business of stopping a family picnicking," he said. "The matter does take judgment and to date our officers have been making good judgments."

Mr Burke said he gave the families the option of moving to Duncan McKinnon Re-

serve in Murrumbidgee, but they said it was too far to go.

In May, Glen Eira fined a group of amateur footballers nearly \$5000 for persisting in using the ground for a week-end scratch match.

Mr Burke said several teams from other municipalities had been warned off training on Glen Eira grounds.

But Mr Cohen said his kids and their friends were not a team of footballers.

"They do no damage — less than a bunch of dogs running around — and yet they're being treated worse than the dogs."

"If even a few kids are banned, what's the point of having a park? They might as well put up apartment blocks and cut our rates."

Have your say: Voteline, P19

Cranks get cold finger

THE success of the James Bond films has given Britain's MI6 a recruitment headache — too many cranks want to join.

"It does tend to turn up quite a lot of thrillseekers and fantasists, and we're really not interested in them," said chief recruiter "Mark".

He said espionage wasn't a life of fast cars, fast women and martinis, and "We don't have a licence to kill".



Latest 007: Daniel Craig.

Thorpedo keeps his powder dry

Lauren Williams

THREE months after the opening of the hi-tech Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre, the complex's namesake yesterday made his first lap of the pool — around the outside.

Thorpe mysteriously said he couldn't enter water during his inaugural tour of the centre in the Sydney suburb of Pyrmont, puzzling young fans and the media.

Thorpe nodded appreciatively as Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore walked him

around the 50m pool, leisure pool and spa at the \$40 million complex — designed by renowned Sydney architect the late Harry Seidler.

But the Thorpedo declined to test the water. "Not today," he said.

When asked why not, Thorpe replied cryptically: "Ummm, there's something preventing me from doing it.

"I can't — I've been told I'm not allowed to."

Thorpe's management said a shoulder injury was the reason, but would not elaborate.

Since his bombshell decision to quit professional swimming last November, Thorpe has endured a difficult year.

He said he still swam but did not miss "everything that goes with (competitive swimming)."

Repeating his belief that his name had been forever tarnished following false allega-

tions of doping use, Thorpe said he would not rule out defamation proceedings.

"It's not over yet and never really will be," he said.

Citing business interests in Asia as the source of his current aspirations, Thorpe said he was happy with where his life was.

Thorpe has indicated he will take on a mentoring role for the Australian swimming team at the Beijing Olympics next year.

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