



# Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley

**NEWSLETTER  
March/April 2025**

[www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au](http://www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au)  
**My heart, My health**

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**HEARTBEAT VICTORIA INC. No. A00015737N  
ABN. 76 073 229 523**

**VISION:** Every individual and family affected by heart disease has access to a compassionate community, vital resources, the highest quality care, enabling them to live empowered heart healthy lives.

**MISSION:** To foster an active, compassionate and inclusive peer support network in Victoria for individuals and families affected by all forms of heart-related issues.

Through our Community driven groups, we provide emotional support, share information, advocate for better health outcomes and raise funds for cardiac equipment and improved cardiac care.

**VALUES**

**Respect    Empowerment    Collaboration    Hope**

Hello All members and friends,  
Heartbeat newsletter time has come again, as has Autumn. We have had many hot weather days and I know a lot of members prefer the cooler weather, especially the effect it has on the health of those with heart failure. Hopefully now it is coming cooler you are able to attend some of the heartbeat activities on our 2025 calendar.

I have gone back to a more detailed newsletter as I have produced before, as this proves more suitable to post on our website and helps spread the word about the benefits of the support group and activities we offer.

At the last meeting we implemented the changed meeting format as requested to more of a reporting style, with information from different members of the Committee. This seemed to be well received and shortened the meeting time to allow those present more time to socialise.

Thanks to Gerald and others for the jokes presented and the laughter therapy they provided. This could become quite a competitive session.

I will put some copies of our previous meeting reports on the tables at each dinner meeting. Any feedback on other improvements would be welcome.

Special welcome to new member Lynn Jephson.

Thirteen members attended the Coffee Morning and chat at "Muffin Break" on February 17th .  
It was pleasing to see all present enjoying time together and catching up after the holiday recess.

We hope to see members at our walk in March as the weather should be OK, and its such a nice environment to walk around Lake Victoria. Remember it is important for your health to walk each day, if possible, with a distance and pace you are comfortable with.

I have attached the 2025 activity calendar to this email please discard any previous draft copies as some dates have changes. Hope to add a couple of special social events when we are able to complete the organizing. **Please note this newsletter cover March and April events.**      **Bye, ROBYN**

**LIVING: The sun will rise and set regardless. What we choose to do with the light while it is here is up to us. Journey wisely**

## MARCH DIARY OF ACTIVITIES.

### DINNER MEETING



**Monday March 3rd**  
**at Peppermill Inn Conference room**  
**Dinner 6.00pm**

7.00pm Short heart health educational video.  
 Summary of Heartbeat GV Branch happenings over the last month through Committee reports.

Time to chat and socialise.

Friends welcome



**COFFEE MORNING**  
**THURSDAY 20TH MARCH 10.30AM**

**BAKING DOUGH CAFÉ**  
 251-253 Maude St Shepparton.

Free parking behind café enter by back door.

See you there. Don't forget we can provide transport .Phone Kevin or Gerald.



**WALK AND LUNCH MONDAY**  
**17th MARCH**

Meet at rotunda next to SAM at 11.00am  
 for walk around Lake Victoria.

Lunch 12 noon GV Hotel Shepparton.

Research shows those who walk 30 min each day  
 have 35% less risk of Cardiovascular Disease

**Lets get moving**

**Member Welfare**  
**HB GV Branch is there to help you.**

Please contact,

Welfare coordinator .

**Jenny Hyland**  
**M. 0422 820 491**

**Happy Birthday**

**BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

***To all members with Birthdays in  
 March***

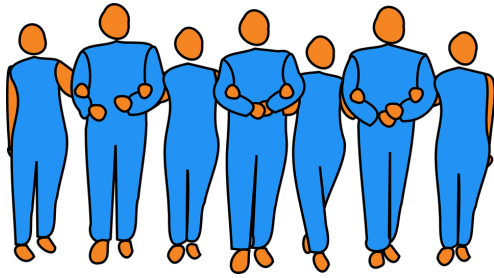
***Best wishes, good health  
 and happiness.***

***Hans Vandebosch 11th***

***Kerry Balmer 24th***

## APRIL DIARY OF ACTIVITIES

### DINNER MEETING



Come join us on  
**Monday April 7th**  
 at Peppermill Inn Conference room  
 Dinner 6.00pm  
 7.00pm Heart health presentation.  
 Short meeting.

Time to chat and socialise.  
 Friends welcome



**COFFEE MORNING**  
**WEDNESDAY APRIL 16TH 10.30AM**

**MUFFIN BREAK, RIVERSIDE PLAZA**  
 Shepparton.

Friends welcome  
 See you there.

Don't forget we can provide transport  
 Phone Kevin or Gerald

*Happy Birthday*

### **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

*To all members with Birthdays in  
 April  
 Best wishes, good health  
 and happiness.*

**Margret Gray 12th**  
**Gerald Quinn 24th**  
**Elizabeth Woodyard 29th**

**No walk or lunch in April due  
 to Easter holidays.**



**This Easter, celebrate with  
 love, joy and hope.  
 Happy Easter**

## Dietary supplement developed in Melbourne shown to restore cardiac function.

<https://www.baker.edu.au/news/media-releases/rejuvenating-failing-hearts>  
07 February 2025 **Media release**

A dietary supplement developed at the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute has been found to stop the progression of heart failure in animal models, providing further evidence of the supplement's efficacy for potential use in humans.

The new paper, published in *Journal of Molecular and Cellular Cardiology Plus*, has shown that feeding mice a diet that included this supplement, elevated energy-boosting, anti-oxidant fats that circulate in our blood, called plasmalogen lipids, which restores the integrity of damaged cells in a failing heart.

Plasmalogens make up about 15 per cent of cell membranes — the outer layer of cells — and are predominantly found in the brain and heart. They are important for immune function, energy metabolism and for their antioxidant properties, co-senior author Dr Yow Keat Tham said.

“The cell membrane is the barrier between what happens outside and inside of the cell,” Dr Tham said. “What we're doing is adding something to the diet that would increase the levels of these plasmalogens, which help to smooth out the surface of the cells that have been damaged by disease, and restore functionality,” he said.

Disruptions to the cell membrane can change the composition of the lipids within cells and that can contribute to and exacerbate the seriousness of diseases including obesity, neurological and cardiovascular diseases, paper first author Teleah Belkin said.

“A heart with cardiomyopathy — or heart failure — has reduced levels of plasmalogens, so we were looking at whether including this plasmalogen-enriching dietary supplement was able to replenish the plasmalogens in a diseased heart,” Ms Belkin said.

“What we found was that the dietary supplement was able to restore cardiac function and lessen other pathological features associated with heart failure.”

Earlier Baker Institute trials using variations of this dietary supplement have already shown the therapeutic potential of enhancing plasmalogen levels in preclinical models of atherosclerosis, fatty liver disease and even in obese human study participants, but this is the first study that shows this plasmalogen-modulating dietary supplement has therapeutic potential for the heart, lungs and kidneys in a preclinical model of dilated cardiomyopathy.

“We showed that when we elevated circulating and cardiac plasmalogens with this dietary supplement in mice with heart failure, remodelling of the lipid composition in the heart occurred, reducing the negative effects associated with cardiomyopathy, including tissue scarring and impaired mitochondrial properties, which are crucial for producing energy for the heart,” Dr Tham said.

“Interestingly, this approach provided greater protection in males than females and highlights the importance of including both sexes in preclinical and clinical research.”

Plasmalogens can be found naturally in foods, including mussels, scallops and octopus, and even strawberries, but you would have to consume large quantities of these food items to potentially receive the health benefits. The Baker Institute supplement, licenced to Juvenescence Ltd, contains natural components that support the production of plasmalogens in our body.

Human clinical trials to test the efficacy of the patented supplement on a range of health outcomes, including arterial function, lipid metabolism and inflammation, will start in late 2025, and there are hopes that the supplement will be available sometime within in the next two years.

“We'd also like to test the diet in other models of heart failure, or even different heart settings, including in people who have had a heart attack,” Dr Tham said. “We'd test whether we're able to reverse some of that heart damage that occurred from the heart attack with this supplement.”

**Tracey Ellis . BI**

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/10-nutrition-questions-answered#soysauce>

## **Nutrition questions answered**

### **Is fruit sugar bad for you?**

Fruit does contain sugar, but also vitamins and minerals. Eating whole fruit rather than having it as juice will also add fibre to your diet. Jam, sweetened yoghurts, biscuits, cakes and sweets are the biggest sources of sugar in our diets. So, before you cut out fruit, focus on where else you could cut back on sugar.

### **Is dark chocolate good for you?**

Dark chocolate does have more flavanols than milk or white chocolate. Flavanols are a sub-group of flavonoids, a type of antioxidant, and have been found to have health benefits. The higher the cocoa content, the more flavanols. But chocolate also contains cocoa butter (which is high in saturated fat) and sugar. These are likely to outweigh any positive impact of the flavanols. You can also get flavonoids from healthier foods such as tea, berries, apples, pears and grapes. If you like chocolate, enjoy it as a treat – but don't eat it as a health food.

### **Is soy sauce bad for you?**

Soy sauce is high in salt – just two tablespoons of it contains your maximum daily salt intake of 6g (the equivalent of around 1 tsp of table salt). Too much salt over time is linked to raised blood pressure, which can increase your risk of heart and circulatory diseases.

It's true that gram for gram, soy sauce contains less sodium than salt. But it's still very salty and the chances are you might add more of it to your food than if you were adding table salt. Reduced-salt soy sauce is a better choice, but even that is still high in salt.

Remember that other savoury sauces like sriracha or fish sauce are also high in salt, so look for reduced-salt versions and use them sparingly. To lower your salt intake, you'll need to adjust your tastes to enjoy food with less salt – so cut back on salty foods and be prepared that it might take a short while to get used to.

### **Is coconut milk good for you?**

Tinned coconut milk is high in saturated fat. Too much saturated fat can increase our cholesterol levels, and high cholesterol is linked to a higher risk of heart and circulatory disease. "Light" coconut milk is better, but still high in saturated fat, so don't include it regularly in your diet.

Coconut drinks sold as a dairy alternative can be mostly water with a small amount of coconut, so are much lower in saturated fat and can be a healthy choice. If you're using them as a dairy substitute, choose one that is unsweetened, with added calcium. Check the labels of coconut yoghurt as the saturated fat content can vary and choose unsweetened versions.

### **Is coconut oil good for you?**

Switching from animal fats like butter, ghee or lard to plant-based oils is usually a healthy choice. But coconut and palm oils are the exception. They are high in saturated fat and so aren't the best choices when it comes to managing cholesterol levels. Instead, choose unsaturated oil – such as olive, rapeseed (often sold as vegetable oil), sunflower or corn oil.

### **Are olives good for you?**

It's true that olive oil is a healthy type of fat. Having unsaturated fat (like the monounsaturated fat in olive oil) instead of saturated fat is one of the reasons why the Mediterranean diet is so healthy.

Olives, though, are a different story. Although they will still contain the healthier unsaturated oil within them and will add fibre to the diet, the way they are preserved means they also contain a lot of added salt. Stick to olive oil and keep olives to an occasional treat.

Senior Dietitian, Victoria Taylor, answers some common healthy eating questions. BHF

[https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/wholegrain-foods?utm\\_campaign=2883459\\_HeartMatters\\_enewsletter\\_non-HCP\\_Feb2\\_2025](https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/wholegrain-foods?utm_campaign=2883459_HeartMatters_enewsletter_non-HCP_Feb2_2025)

## Refined grains explained

When wholegrains are refined to make white rice or white flour for white bread, pasta and most packaged cakes, biscuits and pastries, their bran and germ are removed.

This strips away most of the healthy nutrients. That's why it is important to keep your grains 'whole' whenever possible.

Wholegrains provide extra vitamins and minerals, polyphenols, heart-healthy fats, and other important nutrients that refined grains do not offer.

## Fibre and wholegrains

Wholegrains are whole foods such as corn, wheat, brown rice or oats. Fibre is found in many plant-based foods – fruit, vegetables, nuts and wholegrains.

The fibre in wholegrains comes from the tough outer part, called the bran. This type of fibre, cereal fibre or roughage, is not broken down by the digestive system and helps to reduce constipation.

While you can add bran to foods like cereals, smoothies, yogurts and muffins to increase fibre content, these will not provide the additional nutrients found in wholegrains.

The bran fibre is just one part of wholegrains that contributes to their health benefits.

## The difference between wholemeal and wholegrain

Wholemeal, wholewheat and wholegrain bread are all considered wholegrains.

However, granary and multigrain breads, which contain added malted wheat flakes or grains for texture and fibre, may not be made from wholemeal flour.

Wheat germ bread is made from white flour, with added wheat germ and is not wholegrain.

To ensure a food product is wholegrain, check a wholegrain is among the first ingredients listed on the label. Look out for the word 'whole' as in wholemeal, wholegrain or 100 per cent wholewheat.

*Tracy Parker is a registered dietitian and sports dietitian with over 20 years' experience. At the British Heart Foundation, she advises on nutrition, diet and heart health.*

Life is short,  
Time is fast. No replay,  
No rewind. So enjoy  
every moment as  
it comes.

**Keep  
Healthy  
Happy and  
Enjoy life.**

**IF YOU DON'T  
HAVE  
WRINKLES,  
YOU HAVEN'T  
LAUGHED  
ENOUGH.**

PHYLLIS DILLER

