

Dr Geoff Holt

Geoff Holt offers a well considered insight into why so many doctors find themselves attracted, and then subsequently addicted, to cycling.

According to the Brisbane-based cardiologist, the social aspects of the sport match the well recognised health benefits of sustained aerobic exercise..... a longer life with less heart disease, diabetes, cancer and surprisingly, less arthritis.

“Doctoring is a very intensive job – often people seek outlets outside of medicine such as reading, or going to the theatre to help them switch off and relax. Others choose a dynamic interest outside of their professional stratosphere to help them reconnect and feel valuable in a way that is not job related – cycling offers that opportunity” Holt explains.

He says doctors have a great fear of becoming mono-dimensional.

Mono-dimensional, Holt is not.

The 56 year-old combines a love of cycling (he covers 200 km a week on the bike) with a further two fitness disciplines – running and swimming. He competes in three or more triathlons a year with several of his seven brothers.

It is exhausting just listening to a break-down of Holt’s weekly training regime.

Early mornings (up from 4am) are his specialty, with a substantial run and ride session over before breakfast time begins in his busy household (he is a father of four).

There is no room for late nights – Holt says everything in his life fits in nicely as long as he is disciplined about going to sleep.

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On Saturdays he squeezes in an early 100km bike ride and is home by 10am to participate in family time.

When the weather is poor or there isn’t time to join a group cycling session, Holt swaps his custom-made Colnago C50 (recently voted the “best bike ever”) for his wind-trainer and puts one of his Boston Legal DVDs into the player for an equally effective stay-at-home training session.

The health benefits of cycling, according to Holt, make it a fitness pursuit almost everyone should be giving a go.

“It offers one of the most effective modes of health control,” he explains.

“There is a connection here to being obesity savvy. In a modern society such as ours the calorie options are prolific, so if you are not going to be able to avoid partaking in these calories you will need to exercise to balance things out.

“Cycling is one of the highest calorie burning forms of exercise, offering a comfortable trade-off.

“And one of the added attractions of cycling is that overuse injuries are rare. You can continue cycling well into your later years,” he says.

Of course the other winning aspect, as we have already discovered through our three other doctor profiles is cycling’s social side.

“Yes, the appeal of cycling certainly goes beyond the activity,” Holt agrees.

“The cycling fraternity is very social and outgoing. It is great to be a part of.”

