



# Women's heart health fun walk



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Heart disease is often overlooked as the biggest killer of Kiwi women.

This week alone another 50 Kiwi women will die of heart disease. That's 50 mothers, daughters, sisters and wives who won't be returning home to their families. And what's worse is that a number of these deaths are premature and preventable.

Jennian Homes are long-time supporters of the Heart Foundation and their nationwide Mother's Day Fun Run/Walk returns this year on May 14, offering families the chance to have fun, get active and support a worthy cause. In 2016 more than 7000 women took part around the country.

This year Jennian are aiming to get 10,000 women walking or running at 23 locations nationwide. More than 300 people took part in the Hamilton event last year.

The Heart Foundation is urging Hamilton women to start taking their heart health seriously and initiating discussions with their GPs before it's too late.

Gerry Devlin, Heart Foundation Medical Director says that Heart Foundation for Women is an initiative aimed at empowering women to take control of their heart health and together fight New Zealand's biggest killer.

"Heart disease is the single biggest killer of New Zealand women.

"Women's heart disease is responsible for more than 2600 Kiwi families losing the special woman in their lives every year. Many of these deaths are premature and preventable," says Gerry.

Women are encouraged to talk to medical professionals about their heart health, as research shows they are slow to seek medical advice for themselves.

Being heart healthy means to

eat a healthy whole-food based diet, exercise regularly, stop smoking, and for women 55 years and older get your heart checked by your GP just the same way you would if you were getting a mammogram or smear test.

For women with risk factors such as diabetes or obesity, Maori, Pacific or Indo-Asian women the risk is higher and they should get their heart checked at 45.

Gerry says another problem is that many women don't know how to recognise the warning signs of a heart attack, which can be different for men and women.

Like men, the most common heart attack symptom for women is chest pain or discomfort.

However, women were more likely to experience other less obvious symptoms, such as discomfort in the upper back, nausea, sweating and unusual

fatigue.

During the month of May, the Heart Foundation focuses its attention on Kiwi women and heart disease.

The aim is to raise awareness of the seriousness of heart disease among women and the need for them and their families to be more vigilant.

The Jennian Mother's Day events are an opportunity to raise both awareness of women's heart health and much-needed funds for this research.

On the day there will be free blood pressure checks as well as information and resources from the Heart Foundation.

For the fun event each entrant will receive a souvenir event T-shirt designed by iconic Kiwi artist Dick Frizzell.

There will also be competitions and prizes.

The Heart Foundation is New Zealand's leading heart charity, leading the fight against the country's biggest killer — heart disease.

It relies on the generosity and goodwill of everyday Kiwis to support their lifesaving work.

They provide support, care and advice for people and

families affected by heart disease.

They fund cutting-edge research and specialist training for cardiologists, while education and prevention programmes tackle heart disease in the community.

■ **The event in Hamilton is on Sun 14 May, 9am-11am, Hamilton Gardens. For a full list of event locations and to register for the 5km event go to [www.jennianmothersday.com](http://www.jennianmothersday.com)**



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2016 participants in the Jennian Homes Mother's Day Fun Run/Walk.