

Media statement

14 August 2019

Helping to get over hump day

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) is encouraging locals to work out what they love, make sure it's healthy, and do more of it in an effort to improve wellbeing and happiness.

Pumping weights at the gym or pounding the pavement does not suit everyone. It's important to find something you enjoy that will brighten up your week and can fit with your lifestyle. Gardening, taking the kids for a bike ride or playing with your pets are all perfect ways to get moving and lift your mood.

Dr Frank Le Bacq, Gympie Hospital Clinical Director of Medical Services and proud owner of 35 camels, said the power of interaction with animals cannot be underestimated.

"The benefits my wife and I get out of our pet camels is immeasurable. They improve our physical health by encouraging our strength, mobility and flexibility because we must get out and about on our farm.

"Mentally, having something completely different to focus on takes your mind off work, we spend a minimum of half-an-hour a day with them. Enjoying time outdoors with them helps reduce stress and promotes a sense of calm.

"We acquired our first camels after hearing what intelligent, sweet animals they are. They're very contemplative animals and remember everything. Our herd recognise our voices and look forward to us coming to spend time with them," Dr Le Bacq said.

"The benefits of animal interaction, often used in the medical field and referred to as 'pet therapy', has been shown to lower blood pressure, boost moods and improve communication.

"As well as the personal advantages of owning such wonderful animals, there is also the land management and environmental benefits; they tend to the farm by eating 80 per-cent of weeds and leaving the grass alone, their pads don't cause the same amount of erosion as cow's hoofs and they open up under-growth for other animals."

Dr Le Bacq added: "Their love is unconditional, they are always making us laugh and that is always good for our health".

You might not be able to squeeze a few camels into your yard but take the time to discover what makes you happy, remember happy and healthy go hand-in-hand!

For tips on how to find your happy healthy today visit www.healthier.qld.gov.au

Sunshine Coast

Hospital and Health Service

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Interview and photo opportunity by request.

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