

# The *Life!* program: effective in improving behavioural, physical and bio-medical outcomes, and reducing diabetes and cardiovascular disease risk factors

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## Introduction

### **Life! program:**

- community-based, lifestyle modification program in Australia.
- aimed at reducing risk factors and contributing to decreasing the incidence of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD).
- 7 intervention sessions over 12 months.
- delivered via in-person Group Course & individual telephone health coaching services (THC).

### **Study aim:**

to assess the program effects on participants' behavioural, physical and bio-medical outcomes.

## Methods

### **Pre-post study design.**

#### **Study period:**

1 Jul 2019-1 Aug 2020.

#### **Participant eligibility criteria:**

Victorian adults at risk of type 2 diabetes or CVD.

#### **Outcome measures (baseline, 6 and 12 months):**

fat/fibre score, physical activity minutes/day, weight, waist circumference, and blood pressure measures.

#### **Data analyses:**

Paired t tests, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, repeated-measures analyses.







#### **Significance level:**

2-tailed  $p < 0.05$ .

## Group Course participants (n=1053):

- mean age: 66 years
- 72.6% women
- 22% Bachelor degree or above
- 23% medium to high income
- 28.1% employed
- 60.9% married/de facto

### Improvements in outcomes over 6 months

	Increase in mean fat/fibre score (range 1-5) (n=1053)	0.4
	Increase in physical activity (mins/day) (n=1053)	9.0 minutes
	Decrease in sitting hours/weekday (n=1053)	0.9 hours
	Weight loss (n=943)	1.7 kg
	Waist size reduction (n=940)	2.7 cm
	Decrease in blood pressure (n=405)	Systolic blood pressure 1.7 mmHg; Diastolic blood pressure 1.5 mmHg

### Weight and waist circumference at baseline, 6 months, 12 months







	Weight (n=54)	82 kg vs. 80.5 kg vs. 80.4 kg
	Waist size (n=45)	100.4 cm vs. 98.5 cm vs. 98.4 cm

Note: All findings are statistically significant

## THC participants (n=306):

- mean age: 51.5 years
- 75.5% women
- 40.8% Bachelor degree or above
- 70.3% medium to high income
- 70.3% employed
- 74.5% married/de facto

### Improvements in outcomes over 6 months

	Increase in mean fat/fibre score (range 1-5) (n=306)	0.67
	Increase in physical activity (mins/day) (n=306)	22.4 minutes
	Decrease in sitting hours/weekday (n=306)	0.9 hours
	Weight loss (n=270)	3.0 kg
	Waist size reduction (n=278)	4.2 cm
	Decrease in blood pressure (n=160)	Systolic blood pressure 1.6 mmHg; Diastolic blood pressure 1.8 mmHg

### Weight and waist circumference at baseline, 6 months, 12 months

	Weight (n=49)	88.5 kg vs. 85.8 kg vs. 85.2 kg
	Waist size (n=50)	104.3 cm vs. 101.3 cm vs. 100.1 cm

Note: All findings are statistically significant



*“The Life! program has worked for me. I feel a million times better mentally and physically. My blood pressure has dropped and I've lowered my risk of developing type 2 diabetes. For me, the Life! program has been life changing.”*

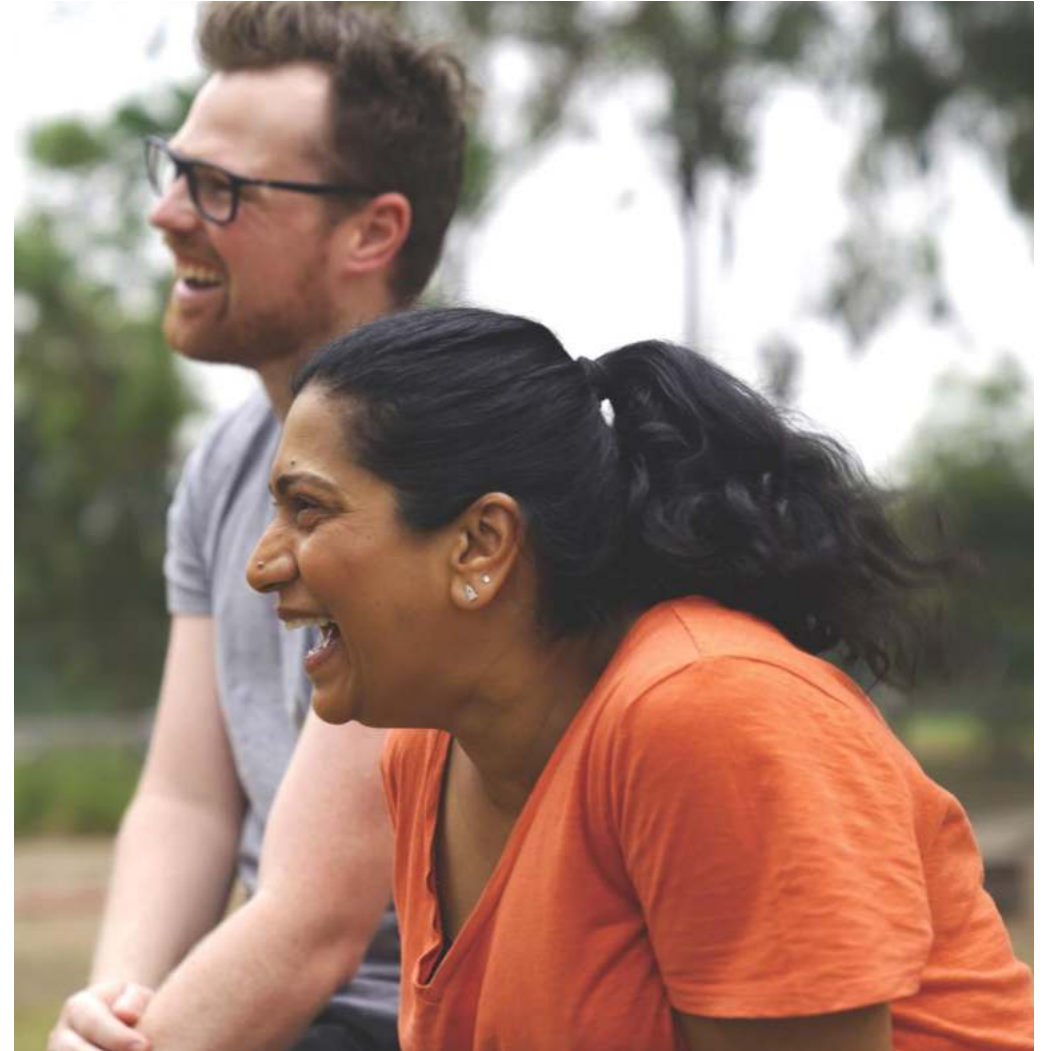
**– Goya, Life! participant**

## Limitations

- Non-experimental study design.
- Small sample size for examining the trends in participant outcomes over 12 months.

## Conclusions

- The *Life!* program is effective in improving participants' behavioural, physical and bio-medical outcomes.
- The findings provide sound evidence of the value of continuing to deliver the program to individuals with risk of type 2 diabetes and CVD.
- Future research could examine the outcomes of some Group Course participants attending the program via online options introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic (since April 2020).



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