



Doctor's book pokes fun at men's health

By SHANE COWLISHAW - The Southland Times Last updated 05:00 02/09/2009

The way to get men out of their armchairs and into the doctor's clinic is with tongue-in-cheek Barry Crump-style humour, mate.

That was the message from Dr Dave, aka Dave Baldwin, when he dropped in to Invercargill yesterday to launch his book *Healthy Bastards*, which aims to show men the importance of looking after themselves.

With many men suffering in agony rather than going to the doctor, Dr Baldwin decided to approach the issue from a different angle.

"I thought maybe I could write a non-PC, Barry Crump-type book to get across to people and it's just bloody rocked," he sa

Behind the laughter and jokes, however, is a serious message with many New Zealand men dying every year from preventable illnesses such as heart disease.

Dr Baldwin believes smoking is probably the worst thing we can do to ourselves but said it was not his role to police his patients or readers.

"I'm not coming from the angle that you harp on to them to stop smoking, to stop drinking," he said.

"The angle I'm coming at is to get across to men and women you are walking around in a beautifully designed body, you've got to take care of it, mate."

While *Healthy Bastards* is Dr Baldwin's second book, most of his time is taken up by his rural GP practice in Bulls and operating the world's only mobile aviation medical service for pilots, the Bulls Flying Doctor Service.

Dr Baldwin holds a commercial pilot's licence and, with the help of his son, flies around the country providing medicals to more than 1700 pilots on the spot.

Despite his busy lifestyle, he remains passionate about general practice and has a final piece of advice for men and their wellbeing.

"If you can find a GP that suits your personality then what happens is you form a relationship and then you've got someone you can trust when the chips are down."

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