



# Life has Lenny running

By MELISSA KINEALY

LENNY BLOKSBERG is running for his life.

Training for this month's Auckland Marathon is helping to keep the Manurewa man alive.

Most of his family died of heart disease and he's not taking any risks. He keeps himself fit and he eats healthy food.

"My father was an only child and he died of a number of things but heart disease was the most critical one for him. All my father's dead cousins have died of cardio-vascular disease.

"All my grandparents died of cardio-vascular disease. All my grandparents' siblings died of cardio-vascular disease with the exception of my great-aunt Estelle who is still alive.

"All their parents and all their siblings died of cardio-vascular dis-

ease as far as has been recorded."

Most people know someone whose life has been touched by heart disease, he says.

"If you don't know someone who has been affected by heart disease you are just not listening."

The 48-year-old is a "heart racer" and will be running 21km as part of the adidas Auckland Marathon on October 31.

He and the other heart racers taking part will be aiming to raise awareness and money for the New Zealand National Heart Foundation.

But Mr Bloksberg's not pounding the pavements in Manurewa just for the marathon – running is part of his everyday life.

"I don't train for the marathon, I train for life," he says.

He wants to be around for many

## HEART HEALTH

The National Heart Foundation is the official charity for the adidas Auckland marathon on October 31.

Heart disease claims a life every 90 minutes – or 16 New Zealanders every day.

Cardiovascular disease is still the leading cause of death in New Zealand, accounting for 40 percent of deaths each year. Many of those deaths are premature and preventable.

Obesity is a risk factor for a number of diseases including coronary heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, osteoarthritis and some cancers.

years "to do stuff" so he keeps tabs on his weight and on his resting heart rate which is 39.

"With this heart rate you're either an Olympic athlete or you are about to die."

He and his family also stick to a healthy eating lifestyle – his daughter describes spinach as a "sweet treat", he says.

Working for a good cause is close to Mr Bloksberg's heart when he's not busy running.

He's an area co-ordinator for the Cancer Society's annual Daffodil Day appeal and is using his biomedical science background to set up a new website to help people live a healthier life.

■ See [www.heartracer.org.nz/LennyBloksberg/](http://www.heartracer.org.nz/LennyBloksberg/) to sponsor Mr Bloksberg or other heart racers or for more information.



**Everyday life:** Lenny Blosberg is competing in a half-marathon to raise awareness and money for the New Zealand National Heart Foundation.

Photo: JASON DORDA