

February 13, 2005

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Hospital promotes healthy hearts

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Canadians in general are making small but unhealthy decisions. However, positive changes are being made says one Scarborough doctor.

People tend to avoid stairs in exchange for elevators, said Dr. Vivian Rambihar of The Scarborough Hospital, General Division at the hospital's 22nd annual Valentine's Day event to promote heart health on Friday. People often use their cars to replace a small walk, he added.

Yet, Rambihar said as public awareness increases Canadians are starting to change their ways.

"More and more people are running and walking," he said, "and they're doing it through daily routine instead of exercising all at once."

Friday's event was split into two parts, a discussion on heart health and a memorial to remember the victims of the Dec. 26 tsunami in Southeast Asia.

Rambihar's comments came a day after the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation's Report Card on Canadians' Health, which said suburban residents are at greater risk of heart attacks due to their lifestyles.

He said he is hopeful that residents will think more about exercise, even if it is only making the decision to take the stairs or walk to the convenience store.

During the tsunami memorial, Scarborough-Agincourt MP Jim Karygiannis talked about his experiences during a recent trip to Sri Lanka to see the damage first hand.

"I want you to close your eyes," he said to the audience.

"I want you to imagine a 40-foot wave hitting the Lawrence area."

Using his own knowledge of the tsunami's destruction he began to describe to the people what the area would look like.

Throughout the event one large candle, in the front of the room, remained lit while several other smaller candles were lit after the tsunami memorial.

It was later explained that the large candle represented the "global heart" that came from the contributions and donations made world wide. The smaller candles represented the countries that were affected by the wave.