



# Trekking for an MD cure

WHEN it comes to raising awareness for muscular dystrophy, Daniella Villano is willing to put her body on the line.

She is preparing to trek at altitudes of more than 3800m in the rigorous terrain of Nepal as part of North Melbourne's Muscular Dystrophy Association's ChallengeMD!

Ms Villano, 27, is part of a dedicated team of muscular dystrophy advocates and supporters hoping to raise more than \$250,000 for muscular dystrophy research by doing the mountainous 14-day trek in October.

"It'll be tough but it'll all be worth it," Ms Villano said.

"Muscular dystrophy sufferers don't have this opportunity. Since I have healthy muscles I might as well push them to the max and do something like this."

Muscular dystrophy is a progressive disorder that wastes all muscles away, causing immobility and respiratory and cardiac complications.

As neuromuscular nurse coordinator at the Royal Children's Hospital, Ms Villano has seen firsthand the strain the disease can cause sufferers, families and

carers. "It's such a debilitating disease and if we can raise money and work towards a cure then we're doing our bit," she said.

"It's all about raising as much awareness as possible. We are gradually getting the message out."

To raise money, Ms Vilano is helping others to get fit by creating a 10-week Muscle Mania Challenge with 2 Feel Good Personal Health in Moonee Ponds.

More than \$1 million has been raised by ChallengeMD! since 2006. To sponsor, visit [www.challengemd.org/2009](http://www.challengemd.org/2009)



Daniella Villano is taking part in a trek in Nepal to raise money for muscular dystrophy sufferers including Ryan Struk. Picture: EMILY BLACK N06MV401