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PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL Patient & Survivorship Education Newsletter

May is Melanoma Awareness Month

By Annette Cyr, Chair of the Melanoma Network of Canada

Ranked by incidence, melanoma is one of the fastest growing cancers worldwide. In Canada, this form of skin cancer has more than tripled over the last 30 years and continues to increase. In 2011, there were over 5,600 new cases of melanoma diagnosed with approximately 950 deaths. The chance of developing melanoma increases with age, but this disease affects people of all ages. In fact, it is one of the few cancers to affect young adults and is the second most common cancer among 15-34 year olds. Overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays either from the sun or from tanning beds is the leading factor in the development of skin cancer and melanoma and is the most preventable cause of the disease.



The Melanoma Network of Canada (MNC) was founded in 2009 by Annette Cyr, a two time survivor of Melanoma. Since its inception, MNC has grown to become the largest representative patient group in Canada for melanoma. We provide support services, patient advocacy, education and funding for research. We provide patients with an opportunity to connect with other patients through our on-line discussion forum and our free national teleconference peer support program. MNC works with cancer centres across the country to organize patient education sessions to give patients access to information on new therapies and advancements.

MNC is focused on public awareness, prevention, and providing patients with information. We strive to improve the standards of care and research for melanoma patients in Canada. For more information visit: www.melanomanetwork.ca

Diet and Brain Tumours

By Connie Giordano Ziembicki, MHSc, RD, Clinical Dietitian, Princess Margaret Hospital



It is estimated that 55,000 Canadians are living with a brain tumour and that 27 Canadians are diagnosed every day.

Treatment for brain tumours can include a combination of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

Radiation and chemotherapy work to destroy tumour cells, but they also cause side effects that affect your ability to eat. Nutrition plays an important role when you are experiencing these side effects.

Eating a balanced diet can help you:

- Manage the effects of treatment
- Fight off infections
- Avoid weight loss or excessive weight gain
- Repair cells and heal wounds by building new tissues, and
- Feel better

Managing Side Effects During Treatment

Loss of Appetite:

Loss of appetite is a common side effect people experience when receiving treatment for their brain tumour. Short periods of loss of appetite may not be a problem, but if it lasts a long time and leads to weight loss, this can pose a problem and you should consult with a registered dietitian.

Celebrate National Cancer Survivors Day With Us!

By Myann Marks, ELLICSR Coordinator, Oncology Survivorship

On June 11th, ELLICSR is hosting a full day of exciting events on the art of cooking with Wellness Chef, Geremy Capone, the art of movement with Tai Chi as well as visual arts, comedy and much more.

This year we are honoring the late Dr. Robert Buckman by Surviving & Thriving, celebrating survivor stories through artistic expression. Dr. Buckman, a beloved member of the Cancer Survivorship team at Princess Margaret, passed away on October 9, 2011. Dr. Buckman was an inspiration to cancer survivors and their families at Princess Margaret and around the world.

Come and celebrate his life and unite with other survivors while enjoying art, food and entertainment.

SAVE THE DATE

Surviving & Thriving

Celebrating survivor stories through artistic expression

Remembering Dr. Robert Buckman

Monday, June 11
11:00 am - 4:30 pm

Watch for updates at:
www.ellicsr.ca/ncsd2012

A National Cancer Survivors Day with the Princess Margaret Survivorship Program at the ELLICSR: Health, Wellness & Cancer Survivorship Centre

The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation
national cancer survivors day 2012

Try the following suggestions until you find those that work best for you:

- Eat more when you feel the hungriest. Example, make breakfast your main meal.
- Use small portions of food and get the satisfaction of finishing a meal.
- Eat a number of small meals and snacks during the day instead of 3 large meals.
- Have ready-to-eat snacks such as cheese and crackers, canned pudding, ice cream, yogurt, muffins, nuts, and seeds.
- Get back to a normal meal schedule, which will remind you to eat.
- If food is not appealing at all, choose a liquid nutritional supplement at meal or snack time.

Diabetes:

People receiving treatment for their brain tumour sometimes develop diabetes. Diabetes is a condition in which the body cannot use sugar properly. It may be due to the disease itself or some drugs used for treatment. A proper diet is important when you have diabetes to help control your blood sugar. Use the following as a guide and consult with a registered dietitian about helping design a plan that meets your personal requirements.

- Eat 3 meals a day and snacks.
- Eat at the same time everyday. Avoid skipping meals.
- Have a starchy food at each meal. For example: whole grain breads, cereals, rice, pasta, and potato.
- Choose snacks that are high in protein. For example: skim cheese, mixed nuts.
- Avoid sugar and foods that are high in sugar. For example: jam, honey, regular soft drinks, and candy.



- Choose fresh fruits and vegetables daily. Choose canned fruits in juice only.
- If you like fruit juice, drink it at mealtime.
- When thirsty, drink sugar-free fluids. For example, water, mineral water, sugar free soft drinks.

Changes in Taste:

Radiation to the head, some chemotherapy drugs, antibiotics, painkillers and other drugs can alter the taste of foods. Foods will not taste like they did before your treatment, but the ability to taste usually returns. Here are some tips to help you deal with taste changes:

- Rinse your mouth before and after eating to clear your taste buds. Use Club Soda or a solution of 1 teaspoon of baking soda mixed with 1 cup (250 ml) of water.
- If food tastes metallic:
 - Try chicken, dairy foods, peanut butter, eggs, tofu, fish, legumes, and nuts for other protein sources. Some people find that meats have a bitter, metallic taste.
 - Try lemons, citrus juices and pickled foods. Tart foods may help overcome a metallic taste. Do not try this if you have a sore mouth or throat.
 - Use plastic cutlery and glass cooking pots.
- Add sugar to increase the taste of foods or decrease the salty or acid taste of other foods.
- Serve foods cold or at room temperature to reduce strong tastes and smells.
- Fruit sorbet, sherbet, and fruit smoothies usually taste good.
- If water tastes funny, add fresh mint leaves or lemon slices to flavor it.



If you would like to speak with a dietitian, ask a member of your healthcare team about a referral.

Lunch & Learn: Colorectal Cancer

By Michelle Snow, Librarian, Patient & Survivorship Education

Colorectal Cancer
Association of Canada

On March 27, the Patient Education Program invited Filomena

Servidio-Italiano, Director of Education/Clinical Information at Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada and Shaniah Leduc, Oncology Marketing and Nursing Consultant to speak to staff and patients about colorectal cancer.

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada (CCAC) is a national organization that offers support services to colorectal cancer patients and caregivers. They spoke about COACH, a national peer-to-peer program that responds to patients and caregivers needs. Dedicated volunteers or paid workers help new patients navigate the maze of information and options. The volunteers receive extensive training in treatments, biomarkers and complementary therapies, screening and prevention, psychosocial coping, communication, emotional support, genetic and hereditary syndromes and navigation of the Canadian healthcare system.

They also spoke about the networking and support groups that CCAC run throughout Canada. Some benefits that participants have reported include learning more about their cancer and the resources available to them, and feeling better prepared to talk with family and friends about their cancer.

Shaniah Leduc leads a support group for CCAC in Toronto each month:

When: 3rd Sunday of each month, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Where: ELLICSR: Health, Wellness & Cancer Survivorship Centre, located at Toronto General Hospital, Basement Level

Contact: shaniah@cancerinsight.ca for more information

Special thanks to Filomena Servidio-Italiano and Shaniah Leduc for a very interesting and informative talk and to Starbucks for providing coffee.

Our next Lunch & Learn
will be on Clinical Trials

Date: Tues, June 26

Time: 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: PMH, 6th Floor Auditorium



Patient & Survivorship Education

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Please forward comments, questions or submissions to Alaina.Cyr@uhn.ca

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