Chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) and MS

Chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) describes a hypothetical disruption of blood flow in which the venous system is not able to efficiently remove blood from the central nervous system resulting in increased pressure in the veins of the brain and spinal cord which in turn results in damage to these areas. Recent reports have revived the idea of an association between inadequate venous drainage and multiple sclerosis. The MS Society of Canada is aware of recent reports on the subject of CCSVI that may open up new avenues of research including new therapies for MS. While the early data shows promise, it is important to acknowledge that the concepts surrounding CCSVI and multiple sclerosis are still relatively new and requires replication and validation in much larger, well-designed scientific studies before they can be accepted as established. The MS Society of Canada is closely monitoring all research related to CCSVI and will post new information on www.mssociety.ca.

CHAPTER COMING EVENTS

Scotiabank MS Walk: Each year in Prince George, participants affected by Multiple Sclerosis from around northern BC gather to walk, run or roll to try to find the cure for MS. This year, the walk will be at Fort George Park on Sunday June 6th 2010. The walk starts at noon, but arrive early to register. You can preregister, log in to check your account and pledge funds to a participant or team online or even form a team at www.mswalks.ca. You can also contact the Chapter office for more information.
The walk is also social. Come out and enjoy the company of peers aiming for a common goal! Make new friends and see old ones at the events! Being with peers is one of the best ways to live well with MS. Supporting these events is even healthier for everyone!

CARNATIONS IN MAY: Carnations are the official symbol of hope for Multiple Sclerosis, presented during “MS Awareness Month”. Annually in May, Prince George is host to 9 booths offering carnations by donation all around the city. The money collected stays in the region to assist MS clients enhance their quality of life. This year, in Prince George, look for us May 7th 8th and 9th starting at 9am at a location near you! Ask how you can volunteer in your own community!

If you want to volunteer for any of the above events, please contact Joann at the Prince George Chapter office. Phone: 250-564-7074 Email: info.princegeorge@mssociety.ca

MS CLINIC
Northern Health operates a clinic at the University Hospital of Northern BC. It is the first contact that the newly diagnosed MS patient will have with the altered world they now live in. The clinic consists of a nurse and a nursing unit assistant who together coordinate the medical side (neurologists) and the support services side (Social Workers, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists) focused on MS. The clinic often travels to remote areas for outreach clinics to provide services and support to isolated areas.

Upcoming clinics are as follows:
July 7-8, 2010 in Kitimat
October 26-27, 2010 in Dawson Creek

Regular MS clinics are held in Prince George. For further information or to reach the Northern Health Authority Prince George MS Clinic please call 250-565-2304. If you’re calling from outside the Prince George area, please call 1-888-967-6774.

VOLUNTEER LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM INFORMATION WORKSHOP
The MS Volunteer Legal Advocacy Program offers free advocacy support and legal advice for people affected by MS. The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada BC & Yukon Division along with the Prince George Chapter will be hosting an information workshop in the fall of 2010. The details will be announced at a later date.

ONGOING EVENTS

SUPPORT GROUP
The Multiple Sclerosis Self-Help Support Group is for everyone in the local community affected by MS, not just "patients". We work with the MS Society and the MS Clinic; however we are our own separate community group dedicated to living life with MS at the peer level. We are usually members of the chapter, supporting it as we volunteer for fundraisers and provide MS awareness with our presence at events. We share information about therapies and life strategies, supporting each other through good times and the odd rough patch. Check us out in communities where MS lives
Adapt & Survive

We meet monthly between September and June on the second Thursday of the month (weather permitting), from 1 to 3pm at the first Baptist church at 483 Gillett Street. We welcome everyone in Prince George who has been affected by Multiple Sclerosis in any way. Contact pgmssupport@gmail.com for information.

ACCESSIBLE TOURISM
By Ken Biron, Facilitator, PG MS Self-Help Group

People like to escape. They like to “pick up” for a week or two a year and travel to new and exotic destinations and have adventures. However, if the tourist has a disability, the adventure starts long before someone says “Let’s Go!” There are various methods of travel available. For each of the methods, the person with a disability must examine the service to make sure needed mobility equipment or aids will not become a challenge.

The Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) is working to solve public transport challenges like these. Travel in other countries can be more challenging, so do lots of research before leaving home. A Google search is a good place to start or try this website for more good ideas. www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/travel/disability/index.shtml.

For the full article, and more about issues that affect MS, visit Ken’s website princegeorgemssurvey1.blogspot.com.

BC PERSONAL SUPPORTS NETWORK - EQUIPMENT & ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

A new financial assistance program is now available which may help individuals who require assistive technologies and/or mobility devices. In partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Social Development, the BC Personal Supports Network is responsible for delivering the Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (EATI). EATI provides a source of funding for assessment, trialing, acquisition and/or training with equipment and assistive devices for people with disabilities who have employment or volunteerism goals.

To be eligible, applicants must be 18 or older, self-identify as having a disability, and be both unemployed and ineligible for EI, or be employed but low skilled. For more information, full eligibility requirements or to apply, please contact the EATI hotline toll free at 1-877-333-7554 or email eati@bcits.org.

RECENT MEDICAL UPDATE MEMOS POSTED TO THE MS SOCIETY WEBPAGE

These articles can be viewed in their entirety on the MS Society website: www.mssociety.ca/en/research/researchlibrary.htm. Click on the “News in Research”. Check back often for new updates.
Early cognitive impairment in multiple sclerosis predicts disability outcome several years later

Hoping to gain more understanding of the progression of MS, researchers are looking into why some people show greater degrees of cognitive change after diagnosis. The authors found that a poorer cognitive performance, early in the disease, on tasks assessing verbal memory and information processing speed, was associated with a more rapid clinical worsening over the following years. The results of this study shed some light on the search for clinically relevant predictive markers of future disability, which can be very useful in adapting therapeutic strategies in the early stages of MS.

Five Studies explore relationship between Epstein-Barr Virus and MS

Researchers from Canada, the United States and the EU are exploring the relationship between the Epstein Barr virus (EBV) and Multiple Sclerosis. The cause of MS is unknown, but the disease is thought to occur when susceptible individuals encounter a triggering factor or factors in their environment. Most people in the general population have been exposed to the virus. Several previous studies have suggested a possible link between EBV and MS, but other infectious agents have also been linked to MS, leading some researchers to suggest that the way the immune system responds to infections, rather than the infectious agent itself, may lead to the onset of MS.

Available on the MS national website: www.mssociety.ca/en/involved/default or at the chapter office, this video shows some ordinary but inspirational people and how they deal with MS. It’s only about six minutes but it’s a great way to remind yourself of what is important and to show family members or friends what having MS can be like. Encourage people you know to watch this video and discuss it with you.

OTHER RESOURCES

Check out the MS Society website www.mssociety.ca/en/help/pubs.htm for many publications which will help anyone who has or knows someone who has MS. These can be particularly beneficial for those who are newly diagnosed. The Prince George Chapter’s lending library has great resources for anyone affected by MS. Call or visit the Chapter office for more information.

INCOME TAX TIME

If you haven’t filed your income taxes yet, remember that the deadline is the end of April. There are a number of programs that may help you save on your taxes. Some of these include:

- The Disability Tax Credit
- Working Income Tax Benefit
- Allowable Medical Expenses
- Refundable Medical Expenses Supplement
- Caregiver Tax Credit

Please see www.cra-arc.gc.ca/ for more information or talk to a tax expert.
FEATURED WEBSITES

MyMSMyWay.com is a free resource dedicated to connecting people with Multiple Sclerosis to accessible technologies that can help them live their lives better. This site is made for people with MS by people with MS. Check it out at www.mymsmyway.com.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. In the same light, we believe it takes a village to help us on our journey through Multiple Sclerosis. MS Village is a Canadian, bilingual education program and online community that provides the opportunity to connect with peers and share valuable information and support for people with MS and people affected by MS. Check out this website at www.msvillagecanada.ca/index.aspx.

CLIENT SERVICES

The MS Society is dedicated to providing quality programs, services and information for individuals and families affected by MS, health care professionals, caregivers, volunteers and the general public. If you have any questions about client services, please contact the local office. Locally, these valuable services include:

- Support
- Self Help Groups
- Information / Resources
- Recreation / Social Activities
- Educational Workshops
- Community Development & Public Awareness
- Equipment Provision Program (EPP)
- Volunteer Legal Advocacy Program (VLAP)

GREEN NEWS

In an attempt to lessen our ecological footprint, please consider switching from the printed newsletter, to the electronic version by email. Please email or call the office if you would like to switch.

2010 PRINCE GEORGE CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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From Left- Rod Mulligan, Pat Morgan, Joann Smiley and Ken Biron PG MS Chapter members
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**DISCLAIMER**

This newsletter is intended to provide news and information to people living with MS, their families, caregivers, medical professionals, and other stakeholders. Information/opinions contained in this newsletter are obtained from sources believed to be reliable but their accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

The MS Society does not approve, endorse or recommend specific products or services and respects an individual’s right to make their own health management decisions. However, we can provide information to assist people in their decision process. For specific, personalized information, please consult your physician or other health care professional.

The MS Society is not responsible for information or opinions provided on non-MS Society websites, blogs or other sources.

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**Our Mission:**

*To be a leader in finding a cure for Multiple Sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.*

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**HOW TO REACH US**

**Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada**  
**Prince George Chapter**

105 490 Quebec Street  
Prince George, BC V2L 5N5  
Telephone: (250) 564-7074  
Fax: (250) 564-7005  
email info.princegeorge@mssociety.ca

Check out the newly-updated chapter website at [http://www.mssociety.ca/princegeorge](http://www.mssociety.ca/princegeorge). Events and information will be posted, so check back regularly!

**Chapter Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, 8:30 am - 2:45 pm.  
Outside of these office hours, you can contact the BC and Yukon Division office toll free at: 1-800-268-7582 or email info.bc@mssociety.ca

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**Newsletter Committee**

Editor: Heather Lamb  
Contributors: Ken Biron, Ann Bozoki, Louis Kutin, Marcy Moore, Joann Smiley

Please contact one of the members above, through the Chapter office, if you have any comments about the newsletter or things you would like included in the next edition, to come out in the fall 2010.