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Save the date for our 2015 Family Picnic!

Join us on **Saturday, July 25th at 4 pm** for our annual picnic. Members, volunteers, sponsors and their families are all welcome!

Call Lonnie for more information at 1-800-268-7582, ext. 7259
Will you say, "Lunch is on me!"?

Half way through the first day of the West Kootenay Glacier Challenge Scotiabank MS Bike tour, 85 riders and 25 volunteers will stop in Salmo for lunch. If you happen to drive by around that time you'll see bikes lining the building and fences. You'll see participants stretching and chatting, and volunteers helping out. And they will all be enjoying a fabulous and healthy lunch prepared by a local business.

By the time they get there, the riders have already ridden 44 km and are enjoying a nice break before they get back on their bikes to head back to Nelson, another 44 km of peddling away. The volunteers are doing what they can to keep the riders on the right road, topped up with water, and safe.

Tomorrow they will do it all again, leaving Nelson and heading to Procter. In total they will have ridden 156 km.

They do this to show their support for people living with multiple sclerosis, and to contribute to vital research to find improved treatments and a cure. Some of them have MS themselves.

Would you like to treat them to lunch? Donate online at WestKootenayGlacierChallenge.ca

Every donation of $12 will cover the cost of lunch for one rider or volunteer.

Are they riding for you? Or someone you know? Say "Thank you" by buying them lunch! Donate $12 now!

If you share your name with your donation it will be posted on the lunch sponsor banner that will be set up in Salmo's KP Park to show your appreciation for their efforts.
New Route for 2015!

Day 1 - Nelson to Salmo for lunch, and back
Day 2 - Nelson to the Village Bakery in Procter for cinnamon buns, and back

Still a fabulous ride at 156 kms over two days for 2015. Back to our original route & 222 kms for 2016!

Register * Donate * Sponsor * Volunteer

Contact leona.dimock@mssociety.ca for information or inquiries.

Please support the businesses that support the MS Society!

THE 9TH ANNUAL

New Location!

IT’S BACK, BY POPULAR DEMAND...
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd

PRESTIGE LAKESIDE RESORT

Thank you to our 2015 Title Sponsor
Roughly 50% of people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) experience MS-related pain. The pain is thought to arise from damage and inflammation to the central nervous system (CNS), leading to abnormal processing and/or transmission of pain-related messages from the body to the CNS. The pain can manifest in a variety of forms, such as appearing with no provocation or from a simple touch and causing hot, painful prickling sensations or muscle spasms. No matter the manifestation, MS-related pain reduces quality of life and represents an important need for people living with MS.

One promising therapeutic option that is being studied is exercise, as it has already been shown to be capable of alleviating other MS symptoms such as depression, fatigue and anxiety. A team of MS Society-funded researchers at the University of Alberta – including doctoral student Curtis Benson and Donald Paty Career Development Award recipient Dr. Bradley Kerr – set out to determine whether running exercise could mitigate both disease progression as well as pain sensitization in mice with an MS-like disorder. Their work was published in the journal Experimental Neurology.

The Study

An MS-like disorder was experimentally induced in mice. Each mouse was allowed to run for an hour every day on a running wheel, both before and after the onset of symptoms (measured as tail and limb disability). Mice were only given an hour of wheel access in order to simulate a realistic amount of exercise in the average person. How running affected the disorder’s progress, as well as pain sensitivity, was recorded over time. To measure pain sensitivity in the mice, the researchers used a standard test where they applied fibres of varying thicknesses to the rear paw and observed changes in behaviour to determine a pain “threshold”.

In the final phase of the study, researchers explored how running affected the MS-like disease on a cellular level. Using a combination of microscopy and advanced screening techniques, the authors studied the animals’ spinal cords, which are affected by MS-like lesions and are home to a pain-processing centre. The researchers assessed infiltration of immune cells into the spinal cord, nerve cell activity (higher activity suggests elevated pain processing and, therefore, elevated pain) as well as a number of factors indicating overall health of the spinal cord.

Results

Running one hour a day delayed the onset of symptoms and reduced pain sensitivity in mice with an MS-like disorder compared to mice without running access. However, running did not reduce symptom severity (tail and limb disability) once the symptoms began.  

(cont. next page)
At the cellular level, running reduced the number of infiltrating immune cells throughout the spinal cord and dampened nerve cell activity in the spinal cord’s pain processing centre. Overall, running appeared to promote a healthier cellular environment in the spinal cords of mice with an MS-like disorder.

Comment

This study demonstrates that an hour of daily running can delay onset of MS-like symptoms and reduce pain sensitivity in mice. While it is difficult to make a definitive conclusion about how these results would benefit people living with MS, that the improvements were achieved with relatively moderate amounts of running make the findings extremely promising. Not only is moderate exercise generally regarded as a healthy lifestyle factor, but recent experimental evidence strongly suggests that it can offer an effective non-drug based therapeutic strategy for the treatment of various MS symptoms alongside disease-modifying therapies (read our recent update on the benefits of certain types of exercise on cognitive performance in people living with relapsing-remitting MS). Future work in the field could focus on understanding what types of exercise, including duration and intensity, should be incorporated into ongoing therapeutic regimens to best benefit people living with MS.

Source


Show your support with a Banner Ad in The West Kootenay Contact
The newsletter of the West Kootenay Chapter of the MS Society of Canada

$50/issue or $200/year (6 issues)
Contact Lonnie at 1-800-268-7582, ext. 7259 or email info.westkootenay@mssociety.ca
Summer heat: How to find relief

Summer is a mixed blessing for people with MS. While it is great to be rid of endless rain and snow, summer also means heat, and that can make MS symptoms worse for many who have multiple sclerosis.

Fortunately, there are some things you can do to stay cool.

Air conditioning at home may be the best answer. The cost of air conditioning became a medical expense for Income Tax purposes in 1995. Following a favourable judgement in a court case supported by the MS Society, the federal government made air conditioning tax deductible if prescribed by a physician. You can claim 50% of the cost, up to $1,000.

Some divisions and local chapters can help with the cost of air conditioners through special assistance programs. Contact your division office at 1-800-268-7582 to find out if help is available.

Sometimes simple things can help such as:

- Dress lightly, eat cool foods and drink cool fluids.
- If an air conditioner isn't available, use a fan. A fan near an open window away from the sun will help in circulating cooler air.
- Cool baths or showers are refreshing; be sure hand rails and other supports are installed in the tub for safety.
- Try "cool clothing" -- these are products such as scarves, hats and vests that contain substances that can hold either cold or heat depending upon your need. Various kinds are available at pharmacies or at some department stores.
- Do your exercise in the pool (make sure it's not overly heated) so you can stay both fit and cool.

(Adapted from MS Canada, August 1999)
Save On Foods in Nelson is this month’s choice for our Wall of Fame. They have supported our Chapter for many years and their sponsorship of events has really stepped up. Their support of the Carnation Campaign every year helped us to promote awareness, and sponsorship of the Nelson MS Walk enhances the event for all our participants. Their biggest contribution however has been as a Gold Sponsor of the MS Bike tour for the past four years. Not only do they donate the Saturday evening dinner for all our participants, they prepare and serve it as well. It's great to have so many of their staff at the Saturday Save-On Celebration in Lakeside Park to show their support of the efforts of our riders and volunteers, and some of those riders are their very own staff. We once again want to welcome the Save On Foods Cycling Team to the MS Bike tour for 2015! Thank you for being such great community champions!

If you would like to support the Save On Foods Cycling Team, watch for fundraising events taking place in the store over the summer, or you can donate online!
Why Volunteer?

Canadians like to give back. About half of us contribute our time, energy and skills to organizations and groups while 84 percent of us donate money. In fact, in 2010, the average individual donation was about $446 per year. That translates into $10.6 billion dollars donated by Canadians every year. But while giving your time or money benefits communities at home and abroad, research shows that doing good does you good too.

Why do so many of us take time out of our busy lives to volunteer in our communities? Why do most of us donate our hard-earned money to charitable causes? We do so because it makes us feel good. But giving back not only makes us feel good, it does us good in many other ways. It can:

**Improve your health.** Studies have shown that those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional abilities and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not. They also experience less stress, lower blood sugar and less sensitivity to pain.

**Improve your mental health.** Volunteering may be good for the soul, but it’s also good for your mental health. One of the major risk factors for depression is social isolation. Volunteering gets you out and among other people and is a great way to make new friends. If you’re looking for ways to reduce your stress levels, study after study recommends working with animals, so give your local animal shelter a helping hand.

**Improve your mood.** There’s a biochemical explanation for why giving back makes us happy. Helping others releases feel-good chemicals in our bodies called endorphins. In his 2001 book, The Healing Power of Doing Good, author Allan Luks coined the term, “helper’s high” to describe the powerful positive feelings people experience when directly helping others.

**Give you confidence.** Knowing you are making a difference gives you a feeling of accomplishment and pride and that can be a big boost to your self-esteem. And improving your interpersonal skills as a volunteer can increase your confidence in other areas of your life. The greater your self-esteem and confidence, the more likely you are to have an optimistic outlook on life and your personal goals.

**Improve your social skills.** Some of us find it very difficult to meet new people. Volunteering gives us the opportunity to practice and develop our social skills in an informal environment with a regular group of people with similar interests.

**Advance your career.** Volunteering is also a great way to expand your professional network. If you’re considering a new career, volunteering can give you exposure to a new field and people who can offer advice. What better way to see if social work or counselling will be a good career fit for you than to work at a women’s shelter or with the homeless?
Help you to develop new skills. Whether it’s fundraising, marketing, event planning, communications, public speaking, training and leadership skills, volunteers get to learn and practise skills that can benefit both your professional and personal life.

Provide work-life balance. If you love the outdoors but spend most of your working day at a desk, coaching a community kids’ soccer team or helping with a community garden will get you outside doing something you enjoy while helping the community. Likewise, if you work alone from home, volunteering is a way to work with others, have some fun and connect to your community.

But maybe the most beneficial aspect of giving back is knowing you are making a real difference to the lives of people, animals and communities in need in your country.

FREE SCOOTER!!
1992 SHOP RIDER (will require a new battery and a tune up as it hasn’t been used in years) has been offered to a person with MS who can show real need. Call our office for details at 1-800-268-7582, ext. 7259
The 2015 West Kootenay Scotiabank MS Walks were another success, with $30,000 raised. The weather was beautiful on Sunday May 24 as walkers converged on Lakeside Park in Nelson and Gyro Park in Trail for the annual Scotiabank MS Walk. Participation numbers were down but we had many new walkers and several who have been walking since the first West Kootenay walks were held.

As always, our Volunteers played a huge part in the success of the events. Thank you all! And a special thank you to Riley Spencer and Kristen Yorston, who headed up the Volunteer Committee in Trail.
Thank you to our sponsors:

National Sponsors:

Student Works Painting has contributed over $100,000 this year to the MS Society of Canada. Student Works Painting has also been working to enhance the lives of people living with MS – in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, they have painted the homes of families living with MS for free - it is part of their training program.

Genzyme Pharmaceutical is the newest National sponsor of the MS Walk and this year contributed $500 to each Walk in BC/Yukon Division.

Protegra helped the MS Society build an app for the MS Walk.

Brinks Canada has been a long-term National Sponsor in the movement to end MS.

Local Sponsors:

Nelson & District Credit Union
Gerick Cycle
Nelson Chamber of Commerce
Century 21—Mountainview Realty
Shoppers Drug Mart
Real Canadian Wholesale Club
Columbia Power Corporation
Goat FM
EZ Rock
City of Trail
City of Nelson
Pharmasave
Black Press

Provincial Sponsors:

Global
BCTV
Island Farms Dairy
ShoeMe.ca

Title Sponsor: Scotiabank
Self-Help Groups are formed by volunteers who are interested in bringing together individuals and families whose lives are affected by MS. These groups operate independently, supported by the MS Society of Canada with information and resources. The West Kootenay Chapter recognizes the importance of support in one’s own community, and of providing a means for individuals and families to reach out and connect with each other. The following is a list of communities in which there are volunteers who provide support to individuals with MS and their families. Each community is unique in the kind of support that is available. For further information on a particular group, please get in touch with the contact person as listed.

**Valley Support Group** - meets the last Thursday of each month from 2 till 3:30 pm at the Slocan Lake Community Health Center Education Room at 401 Galena Avenue in **New Denver**. Contact Linda at 250-358-2220 or 250-358-2203.

**West Kootenay Yoga for MS Group**—Offers regular, specialized yoga classes for people with MS and their care-partners, followed by a monthly social coffee party as well as fundraising events and occasional group gatherings. Offered in **Trail and Castlegar**, but open to all. Call Janice for more information at 250-365-5428.

**Trail MS Support Group** - meets the first Wednesday each month at 10 am at Rose Wood Village in the Games Room in **Trail**. For more information, call Jenny at 250-364-1767 or Inge at 250-368-9493.

We are always looking for volunteers willing to start groups… if you’re interested, please call Lonnie at 1-800-268-7582, ext. 7259 for details.
Neda Razaz, a PH.D. candidate at UBC is exploring the impact of having a parent with MS on children’s development.

mssociety.ca/research
A&W Cruisin’ to end MS

On August 27, 2015, A&W restaurants across Canada will participate in A&W Cruisin’ to end MS to raise funds in support of people living with MS. On that day, $1.00 from every Teen Burger sold across Canada will be donated to the MS Society of Canada.

Now in its seventh year as a national campaign, the initiative has raised more than $6.5 million since its inception. Last year, West Kootenay A & W Restaurants raised $8,400 for the MS Society. Show your support! On August 27, enjoy a Teen Burger at the Grand Forks, Castlegar, Nelson and Trail A & W and be sure to thank their staff for supporting MS!

- Facebook: For every RSVP to this event, A&W will donate $1 to the MS Society of Canada, up to $20,000.
- Twitter: for every tweet containing the hashtag #cruisintoendMS, A&W will donate $0.50
Many small molecules in the body are exquisitely sensitive to the presence of a disease. These molecules, which can include DNA, proteins, carbohydrates and fats, can be used as signatures to quickly and accurately detect a disease and to measure its progress or its response to a particular treatment. These “biomarkers” (short for biological markers) are found throughout the human body and can be measured by blood testing, tissue biopsies and advanced imaging techniques.

As MS manifests in a variety of different ways, there is a real need to gauge the disorder on a case-by-case basis – its type, aggressiveness and progression. In particular, identifying biomarkers for neurodegeneration – the process by which nerve cells and fibres become damaged and lead to irreversible disability – would be invaluable for monitoring disease progression and assessing responses to treatment. Biomarkers are perfectly suited to the task, as they provide a unique molecular signature with the potential to reflect how progressive MS evolves over time. To this end, a group of researchers including MS Society-funded postdoctoral fellow Dr. Erin MacMillan used an advanced diagnostic imaging technique to discover biomarkers of secondary progressive MS. Their findings were published in the Multiple Sclerosis Journal.

The Study: The authors used a non-invasive diagnostic imaging test, called magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), to assess chemical changes in the brains of 46 participants with secondary progressive MS. MRS uses the same technology as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). However, where MRI is set to generate anatomical images of the brain, MRS analyzes chemicals within the brain. MRS scans were conducted once a year over a two-year period. The scans measured the concentrations of various molecules in a myelin-rich region of the brain. The researchers followed and compared concentrations of these molecules over the two-year period, looking for any changes over time. They also explored whether there was a correlation between concentrations of the molecules and participant brain size (assessed by MRI) and disability score (assessed using both the Expanded Disability Status Score and Multiple Sclerosis Functional Composite scale) over the two years.

Results: The concentrations of two molecules, glutamate and glutamine, decreased in the brain over the two-year period; glutamate fell an average of 4.2% per year, while glutamine fell an average of 7.3% per year as measured by MRS.

There was no change in disability score, and only a very minor decrease in brain size over time. There was no correlation between the participants’ brain size/disability scores and the fall in glutamate/glutamine concentrations.

Comment: The authors identified two brain molecules, glutamate and glutamine, as potential biomarkers for secondary progressive MS. Glutamate is a neurotransmitter; a type of chemical messenger that communicates signals between nerve cells. Glutamine is a by-product of glutamate that is collected and formed by supporting cells following the release of glutamate from nerve endings. The decline in the levels of these molecules, as noted by the authors, could mark continuing neurodegeneration in secondary progressive MS. Coupled with their high rate of decline year by year – much higher than either disability scores (none) or brain size (very minor) – the authors suggest that glutamate and glutamine offer a sensitive and specific measure of MS progression. This is a promising initial study and, as the authors conclude, with further research and validation, these biomarkers could one day be used in the clinic to monitor individuals with progressive MS and as an outcome measure to assess the response to a particular therapeutic.

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.

The West Kootenay Chapter gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Province of BC in producing our newsletter.