



Good Health News

December • 2011
Volume 4 Number 9

Looking forward to the holiday season

Health in Motion director Natan Gendelman gives his advice on multiple sclerosis and the upcoming holiday season



Good morning everyone! With the holiday season fast approaching, there are many reasons for us to be cheerful in the weeks to come. Of course, it's important to remember to stay healthy and active at this time of year. This is especially true for those with multiple sclerosis (MS) and other conditions, as a balanced lifestyle can help to minimize any symptoms which may arise. As a result, today I will be looking at MS and some suggestions for lifestyle changes which can help you manage the symptoms of your condition.

To begin with, **multiple sclerosis** is a complex, chronic disease which targets the central nervous system (CNS). While the effects of the condition will vary greatly from one person to another, symptoms related to the disease can include fatigue, loss of muscle coordination, tingling, numbness, dizziness, blurred vision, loss of bladder control, memory loss, problem solving difficulties, pain, heat sensitivity, and spasticity. In order to reduce these symptoms, there are a few things you can try to change as a part of your lifestyle. These include:

- **Eliminating allergens from your diet.** While there is debate over whether allergies can actually trigger MS, some studies show that eliminating allergens from one's environment can relieve a person of their symptoms (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). As a result, make sure to pay attention to the effects of foods such as dairy products, wheat (gluten), soy, corn, legumes, chocolate, preservatives, additives and refined/processed foods on your condition, and stop consuming them when necessary.
- **Eating more antioxidant-rich foods.** Getting in the habit of eating more nutritious, antioxidant-rich foods such as green, leafy vegetable, peppers, blueberries, tomatoes and cherries and fruits is a good way to boost your immune system and combat MS symptoms (www.umm.edu).
- **Eating foods rich in essential fatty acids.** Studies show that the consumption of foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids and Omega-6 fatty acids may help minimize MS symptoms by preventing T-cell migration into the nervous system (www.msrc.co.uk).
- **Exercising and drinking lots of water.** Drinking 6-8 glasses of water and exercising moderately contributes to a healthy lifestyle, which can minimize the occurrence of symptoms in a person with MS.

By keeping a healthy, active lifestyle, you will definitely see a difference as the year comes to an end. Before making any of these changes however, be sure to ask your health care practitioner about whether these choices are right for you. With these points in mind, I hope that you remain safe, happy and healthy this holiday season. Thank you, and I wish you all the best for the new year!

In This Issue

Looking forward to the holiday season
.....Page 1

Watch our polar bear dip at Lake Wilcox!
.....Page 2

Hearty winter eats
.....Page 2

GM crops and their impact on unborn babies
.....Page 2

How your child's snacks are harmful
.....Page 3

What are the risks associated with Botox?
.....Page 3

January 2012 LIFE Program
.....Page 4



General Health

► Watch our polar bear dip at lake wilcox!

On Monday January 2nd, 2012, Natan and his polar bears will be starting the new year off with a splash! Every weekend, the group goes up to Lake Wilcox for a dip—even during the wintertime. We invite you to join us at the lake to watch this event. Hope to see you guys there!

For more information about this event, please contact the clinic at: (416) 250-1904.



► Hearty winter eats

For more information, visit www.foodland.gov.on.ca.

With winter well on its way, here are a few fruits and vegetables to include in your next meal. These are perfect for home-made casseroles, stews and soups to share with your family and friends.

Beets. Rich in Vitamin C, potassium and folacin, beets are a healthy root vegetable which can be baked, put into salads, roasted, creamed or made into traditional soups such as Borscht.

Carrots. Carrots are a great source of beta carotene, folacin and fibre. Available most of the year, they can be bought in Ontario year-round. Carrots are a great addition to salads, soups, casseroles, baked goods, or even eaten raw.

Potatoes. Full of Vitamin C, potassium, fibre and folacin, potatoes make a great choice for warm, hearty dinners both alone or for a side dish. They are delicious boiled, steamed, mashed, and oven fried. To prepare, scrub and check for spots before cooking.

Beans. An excellent source of protein fibre, folacin and B vitamins while being low in fat, beans are a great meat alternative. They are a wonderful addition to soups, stews, as a spread, in chili or in a curry with your favourite vegetables.



► GM crops and their impact on unborn babies

For more information, visit <http://www.dailymail.co.uk>, www.gmwatch.org and www.huffingtonpost.com.

The cultivation of genetically modified crops (GM) has become a common practice in agriculture throughout the US and the Americas. Since the introduction of GM crops, pesticide use has increased dramatically by 318 million pounds. While GM crops use less insecticide than regular crops, unfortunately they require the use of more herbicides to compensate. In order to measure the impact of these products and the pesticides they require, independent doctors at the department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Sherbrooke Hospital Centre in Quebec, Canada, implemented a study that involved taking blood samples of 30 pregnant women and 39 other women who were not pregnant.

The doctors found traces of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), toxin genes that are the leading modifications of crops, in the blood of 93 percent of pregnant mothers. Also, traces were found in 80 percent of the umbilical cords. In the non-pregnant group, traces were found in 69 per cent of the women. Alarmingly, the toxins implanted within GM foods to kill off pests have reached the blood stream of mothers and unborn babies. There is speculation that such toxins can lead to allergies, miscarriage, abnormalities and/or even cancer.

GM crops are increasingly finding their way into the marketplace, both in fresh and processed and/or packaged foods. The best way to avoid such products is



by being well informed. The major GM crops include soy, cotton, canola and corn, and if the product doesn't say organic, then it most likely has been genetically modified. Based on USDA regulations, genetically modified ingredients are not permitted in any category of certified organic food; therefore, buy organic whenever possible.

ENABLED Kids
www.enabledkids.ca

▶ How your child's favourite snacks are harmful

For more information, visit www.livestrong.com and www.cbc.ca.

Enabled Kids is a resource web site for parents, teachers, caregivers and fellow therapists. Be sure to check it out for the latest in news, special needs resources and valuable blogs and articles from our experts!



Hundreds of thousands

of gallons of artificial food dyes are added to food products such as cereal, gum, and granola bars every year. Alarming, food colouring may indirectly contribute to seizure activity and disturbed sleep patterns. Based on a study published in November 1994 by the *Journal of Pediatrics*, a possible link was examined between the consumption of artificial food dyes and the levels of hyperactivity in children originally recommended for a possible ADHD diagnosis. If a child is sensitive to food colouring and experiences sleep disturbances after consuming products with artificial dyes, the risk of seizure is likely to increase. Health Canada is encouraging food manufacturers to improve labels of food dyes on products by declaring food colours by their individual names.



It is important to start teaching one's child about foods during their pre-school years as they are influenced the most by their families at that age. If children are properly taught, they will learn to make healthy food choices in the future. As a result, make sure to take the time to read food labels thoroughly and check for any problematic ingredients in the products your child consumes.

▶ What are the risks associated with Botox®?

For more information, visit www.fda.gov and www.hollandbloorview.ca.

Many parents have decided to consider the use of OnabotulinumtoxinA (marketed as Botox/Botox Cosmetic) as an option to help their special needs children. But before you do, do you know the risks and dangers that are involved? The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had put out a list on their website of the potential risks involved and cautions parents should know about before they consider this treatment for their child. The list includes unexpected loss of strength or muscle weakness, hoarseness or trouble talking (dysphonia), trouble saying words clearly (dysarthria), loss of bladder control, trouble breathing, swallowing issues, double vision, blurred vision and drooping eyelids.

For children with cerebral palsy and other conditions, swallowing and breathing difficulties may be life-threatening and could consequently lead to death. These symptoms may occur as a result of the toxin spreading from the injection site after local injection. A concern of these risk and cautions not being properly labeled on these products have led to the FDA stating that these labels must be updated to ensure their continued safe use. Bloorview Kids Rehab is one of the leading institutions responding to this call for change, and have formalized their practice of not treating children who have pre-existing aspiration pneumonia and swallowing problems. In the rare situation where such a child could benefit from Botox®, the case will be reviewed by a physician panel before proceeding.

Health Canada has confirmed that there have been no deaths related to the use of Botox® in Canada. However, before you decide on this procedure for your child, please be aware of both its pros and cons before committing to the treatment.





Learning Independent Function Everyday. That's LIFE.

- ▶ A specialized treatment and education program for kids with neurological conditions

Mini Program

For: kids 0-12 & 12-15 with CP, ABI, or stroke
Frequency: 1-3 times a week, 2-3 hours/day
Duration: Ongoing as needed

Maxi Program

For: kids 0-12 & 12-15 with CP, ABI or stroke
Frequency: 5 times a week, 3-5 hours/day
Duration: 4 weeks

Contact us if you are interested in booking for **2012**. Limited spots available. Call or email us for information about our adult LIFE Program.

For more information, visit our website:
www.healthinmotionrehab.com.

Standing for *Learning Independent Function Everyday*, the LIFE Program was first conceived by Health in Motion's director Natan Gendelman. Following the key tenets of the LIFE Concept, it is designed as a **specialized education and rehabilitation system** for children with neurological conditions such as cerebral palsy, autism and autism spectrum disorders, Down syndrome, pediatric stroke, child developmental delay, and acquired brain injury.

The LIFE Concept is as follows:

- ▶ If a child can move, he can learn.
- ▶ The brain has neuroplasticity.
- ▶ Brain stimulation comes from verbal and motor guidance.
- ▶ Only independent function can develop a child into independency.
- ▶ Treatment must continue outside of the clinic and become a part of the child's life.
- ▶ There is no exercise, just function; no therapy, only life.

Want to subscribe?

Good Health News publishes articles about current health issues. The material in this newsletter is not copyrighted, and may be reproduced and shared with family and friends. Articles in GHN are for informational purposes only. **If you have a health condition, please consult your physician or health care provider before following any advice.** *Good Health News* is published by the Health in Motion Rehabilitation Clinic, Toronto, Ontario, (416) 250-1904, info@healthinmotionrehab.com. Previous issues of *Good Health News* are posted at: www.healthinmotionrehab.com. If you would like a subscription, or a copy of past issues, feel free to contact us. We hope you enjoyed this issue! **-The Health in Motion Team**

Have something you'd like to share?

Email us! We'd love to
hear from you.

Send your stuff to:
healthinmotion@bellnet.ca

Note: We reserve the right to select content which will benefit our readers.

 www.twitter.com/EnabledKids
 Health in Motion Rehabilitation