



QFHT NEWS

NEWS & INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS OF THE QUEEN'S FAMILY HEALTH TEAM



MEASLES

Make Sure You're Protected

Measles are highly contagious and very serious. With confirmed cases this year in Canada and the United States – the majority unvaccinated – a disease thought to be eradicated in the Western world in 2000 has made a comeback.

Is this reappearance a cause for concern? Yes it is. In fact, measles will infect nine out of every 10 unprotected people who come in contact with the virus. Three people out of every 1,000 cases of measles will die from complications linked to the disease.

What are the most common symptoms of measles? A fever accompanied by a cough, runny nose or reddened eyes and a generalized rash are commonly seen. Anyone who develops these symptoms is urged to consult their health-care provider.

A great deal of misinformation exists that may lead some people to decide not to immunize against measles. For example, a number of years ago, a study showed a

link between vaccinating one's child with the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine and that child developing autism. There were errors in this study, and medical experts subsequently discredited these findings. Unfortunately, however, some media sites continue to perpetuate this myth, even though no other studies have documented a causal link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

There are also people who believe that natural immunity – protection received from being infected – is the best approach to fighting the disease. Evidence has shown us that being infected with measles does not guarantee a stronger immune system.

How can we protect our children and ourselves? The MMR vaccine provides the best protection against measles. Higher vaccination rates translate to better protection for you and your community.

Who can be vaccinated?

Children:

Children 12 months of age and older: Once shortly after their first birthday and again between four and six years of age. (Children between six and 12 months can receive the vaccine if they will be travelling to an area where measles is a concern, including the U.S.)

Adults:

All Ontarians, regardless of date of birth, are eligible for two doses of measles-containing vaccine based on their health-care provider's judgment. A second dose of the vaccine is particularly recommended for young adults between the ages of 18 and 25, post-secondary students, persons who received killed vaccine previously (born between 1967 and 1970), health-care providers and those who plan to travel internationally (including the U.S.).

For more information about measles or the MMR vaccine, consult your Queen's Family Health Team health-care provider or visit www.kflapublichealth.ca

ATTENTION READERS!

In respect for the environment, and in recognition of prohibitive mailing costs, this will be the last issue of *QFHT News* we print and mail to patients. Many of our patients already receive this twice-annual newsletter via email, rather than traditional mail, and we're hoping to include the majority of our patients on this email distribution list. If we do not yet have your email address, please send it to us at info@qfht.ca and we'll continue to send you each issue electronically.

Hard copies of *QFHT News* will continue to be available in our clinics, and will be mailed upon request to those who do not have email access. The newsletter is also posted online at qfht.ca.

Do we have your current email address? If not, please send it to info@qfht.ca so we can keep you and your family well informed.

FAST FACTS

ER AND HOSPITAL VISITS

If you were recently discharged from hospital or had a recent emergency room (ER) visit, please let us know. We can provide follow-up information, arrange any additional testing, or simply chat with you to make sure you're doing OK. (This is particularly important for avoiding re-admission to hospital.) The hospital typically sends us a record of your visit, but this can take a few days. Also feel free to call us if you have any questions about your health after a hospital or ER visit. A member of your care team can follow up with you over the phone or arrange an appointment – or even a home visit.

PLEASE PRESENT YOUR HEALTH CARD

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care requires each patient to show a valid, up-to-date health card at each clinic visit.

If you have a question about your Ontario Health Insurance Plan, if your address or name has changed, or if your card has expired, please visit a Service Ontario site or visit the ministry's website at www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/ohip/.

AFTER HOURS CLINIC

Queen's Family Health Team (QFHT) offers both booked and drop-in appointments during our After Hours Clinic. To book an appointment, please call 613-533-9303 and speak to your usual clinic receptionist.

Our After Hours Clinic is open to QFHT patients Monday to Thursday from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. at our Haynes Hall, 115 Clarence St., location. If you need to speak to a QFHT health-care provider after 5 p.m., please call 613-533-9303 and our answering service will contact the physician on call.

ABOUT THE QUEEN'S FAMILY HEALTH TEAM



Queen's Department of Family Medicine HR Co-ordinator Vanessa Patterson passes donations over to Sandy Singers, executive director of the Partners in Mission Food Bank

The Queen's Department of Family Medicine has adopted the Partners in Mission Food Bank as its Charity of the Year. Donating to a different charity each year provides staff and faculty members an opportunity to give back to their community as a team. During the year, donations are collected through a variety of events and other means. To date this year, about \$1,800 has been raised for the cause.

The Queen's Family Health Team (QFHT) has earned its fifth award from the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario through its Bright Lights Awards program. The program recognizes the leadership, outstanding work and significant progress being made to improve the value that family health teams deliver to patients. The QFHT won the award for the best submission under Accountability and Governance for Patient-Centred Care, entitled "With Patients, for Patients: A New Kind of Board of Directors for a New Kind of Care." The association praised the fact that the team's advisory board "...is made up almost entirely of members of the community ... works hard to work with patients by including them on the board and in strategic and quality-improvement planning ... and creates structures to ensure patient voices are heard." The board comprises representatives from Queen's University, KFL&A Public Health, St. Lawrence College, local hospitals, QFHT physician and program representatives, patients and invited guests. The association describes the QFHT as "a leader in mentoring other family health teams in quality-improvement approaches."

Dr. Karen Hall Barber has been recognized by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for her dedication to health care quality and safety. Dr. Hall Barber, respected as a passionate advocate for improving quality and safety in primary care, was chosen for the Honour Roll – Individual Champion – in the Minister's Medal Honouring Excellence in Health Quality and Safety program. Her colleagues at the QFHT nominated her for this award.

Dr. Ruth Wilson won this year's College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) Calvin L. Gutkin Family Medicine Ambassador Award, which recognizes a dynamic leader in Canadian family medicine distinguished for his or her vision, innovation and relationship-building with organizations that support and positively influence the ever-changing role of family physicians in Canada. It's named in honour of Dr. Calvin Gutkin, Executive Director and CEO of the CFPC from 1996 to 2012.

PHOTO: Rob Whealan Photography

SPOTLIGHT

LIVING WITH DIABETES

There are two types of diabetes: type 1 and type 2. In type 1, the pancreas makes little or no insulin, and a person must inject insulin into their body and test their blood glucose levels often. Type 2 is the most common type of diabetes today, and the focus of this article. The good news is there are ways to manage and live well with diabetes.

What is Type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a disease that occurs when the body cannot manage blood glucose well.

When we eat, carbohydrate in food like bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, milk and fruit is digested and turned into sugar or glucose. Glucose then gets absorbed into our blood. The glucose goes from our blood into our cells with help from a hormone called insulin, which is made in the pancreas. We then use the glucose in our cells for energy.

If you have diabetes, your body cannot move glucose from your blood into your cells well. When glucose cannot go into your cells, it stays in the blood, causing high blood glucose levels or "high blood sugar."

The good news

You can live a long and healthy life by keeping your blood glucose (sugar) levels in the target range you set with your health-care provider. You can do this by:

- Eating healthy meals and snacks
- Enjoying regular physical activity
- Monitoring your blood glucose (sugar) using a home blood glucose meter
- Aiming for a healthy body weight
- Taking diabetes medications including insulin and other medications, if prescribed by your health-care provider
- Managing stress effectively

What are some health problems related to diabetes?

If you do not manage your blood glucose well, you have a higher risk of:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Poor blood flow to the legs (peripheral vascular disease)
- Kidney disease
- Vision problems
- Nerve damage to fingers and feet (neuropathy)

Keeping your blood glucose levels under control can lower the risk of these health problems.

Who can I go to for help?

Your family doctor, endocrinologist (a doctor that specializes in diabetes), diabetes educator (nurse practitioner and/or dietitian), pharmacist, social worker and foot care specialist can work together to support you with your diabetes. They can answer your questions about how to manage diabetes and work with you to adjust your food plan, activity and medications.

Remember, you are the most important member of your health-care team.



PATIENT PROFILE



I think every diabetic can achieve a good quality of life through commitment, a healthy eating plan, daily exercise and a positive attitude.

Now 67 and an insulin-dependent diabetic for 32 years, my journey began in 2009 when my husband passed away with pancreatic cancer. Grieving his death, it was a turning point in my life. My weight, cholesterol, stress, blood pressure and A1C (glucose) levels had all increased, and my eating habits were poor. I knew I had to do something to improve my health.

So I went back to basics. My family physician, the Queen's Family Health Team's Dr. Shayna Watson, referred me to the Diabetes Education and Management Centre at Hotel Dieu Hospital. Here, I received help in nutrition, diet and exercise, and learned how to manage my diabetes. Through this process, I lost 50 pounds.

I then began a weight-training program with a personal trainer. I trained three times a week, and on my off-days I walked and, eventually, ran.

I still had my struggles. With the increased physical activity, my glucose levels dropped, and the diabetic clinic helped me develop strategies to combat the lows. I now frequently monitor my glucose levels, and carry sugar pills at all times to ensure they don't dip too low. I keep all my medical appointments and work closely with Dr. Watson and the diabetic clinic.

I still weight-train three days a week and run or walk around downtown Kingston on my off-days. My A1C levels are good and my overall health and fitness levels have improved. I volunteer and do a variety of activities, and have a much more positive attitude.

Thanks to everyone who supported me in my journey towards a better quality of life. If I can do it, you can do it, too!

Mary Birrell

RESIDENTS AND YOU

Residents are medical doctors who must complete two years of additional training before they become independent specialists in family medicine.

An important component of each resident's experience with us is their supervising physician's ability to directly observe their interactions with our patients. This is often done in person, with your doctor in the clinic room with your resident during your appointment. Sometimes, however, your doctor will observe your resident's conversation with you through a process of live streaming. The live-stream device is focused on the consultation desk only, and there is no recording.

Your doctor is the only person who can view your conversation with the resident, as only your doctor can access the password-protected live stream.

Live streaming serves two primary purposes: it keeps your doctor well informed of your care and needs, and enables your doctor to provide valuable feedback to your resident physician after your appointment.

You have the right to opt out of this live-streaming process. If you wish to do so, please let your doctor or resident physician know, and feel free to ask us any questions you may have.

As always, thank you for your valuable participation in the residency program at the Queen's Department of Family Medicine.

Judy Sakell
Manager of Education



CLINIC CONVERSATION

How are we measuring up to your expectations? Are you able to see your primary care provider promptly when required? Does your provider involve you in decisions regarding your care?

Under the provincial Excellent Care for All Act, the Queen's Family Health Team (QFHT) is required to submit an annual Quality Improvement Plan. Our plan includes a focus on your patient experience, availability of same- or next-day appointments, sufficient time with your provider at your appointment, inclusion in decisions about your care, and your overall satisfaction with your care team. In the coming months, there will be opportunities for you to provide feedback on your QFHT clinic experience. We welcome your input and suggestions through our ongoing clinic and program surveys. At any time, feel free to contact me or your care provider.

Over the past year, patient suggestions have resulted in the installation of handrails at the 220 Bagot St. clinic entrance, improvements to examination room sound-proofing, and the addition of a phone for patient use in the After Hours Clinic. Some patient suggestions, such as providing coffee in the waiting room, may not be implemented for safety reasons or potential compromise to your clinic visit. Thank you to all who have shared their feedback and suggestions.

On a personal note, our work in the health-care sector regularly reminds us of the importance of living each day to the best of our ability. Never miss an opportunity to share a hug, a smile, a laugh, say I love you and be kind to each other. Because we never know what tomorrow will bring...

To you in good health,

Diane Cross
Clinic Manager

DEPARTMENT OF

FAMILY MEDICINE

Delivering the Future of Primary Health Care

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