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Special Interest Articles:

- *Reminder!* Membership fees are due for 2008
- "Seizure Smart" Presentations
- Scissors for Seizures 2008

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First Mousa Abdel-Hussein Memorial Award Presented to Michel Chikwanine

Ann Abdel-Hussein, on behalf of Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton, presented the Mousa Abdel-Hussein Memorial Award to St. Patrick High School graduate Michel Chikwanine on June 27, 2007. This award was founded in memory of Mousa Abdel-Hussein, who died in June 2004 from Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy Patients (SUDEP).

This scholarship is presented to a member of the graduating class who has contributed to and supported multiculturalism at St. Patrick High School and its community. This is a student who is, as was Mousa, a role model for all.



Ann Abdel-Hussein presented the first annual Mousa Abdel-Hussein Memorial Award to St. Patrick High School graduate Michel Chikwanine on June 27, 2007.

Public Information Meetings – A Recap

Dr. A. Guberman provided an update on the proposed Comprehensive Epilepsy Care Program in Ontario at **September's meeting**.

It has become obvious that there are drawbacks in epilepsy care in Ontario, including inequality of care, inefficiency of care, lack of care for the co-morbidities of epilepsy, lack of community support and problems with transition between pediatric and

adult programs.

In light of these deficiencies it has been proposed that three regional epilepsy centers be established in Ontario (Ottawa is one of the proposed centers). These centers will establish comprehensive teams which would include neurologists, neurosurgeons, psychologist, psychiatrists, etc. specializing in epilepsy

and epilepsy-related disorders.

October's Meeting

At October's meeting, Tammy Kuchynski, the program manager of the Vista Centre, provided an

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**March is
Epilepsy
Month!**

Remember to check with your pharmacist to see if you are at risk [for an interaction] with the medications, over-the-counter drugs and herbal remedies that you may be taking.

Public Meetings ... (from page1)

outline of the services provided by the centre. The Vista Centre provides support to individuals living with the effects of an acquired brain injury, changes in cognitive, physical and/or emotional behaviours. Individuals who have had neurosurgery for a seizure disorder are considered to have an “acquired brain injury.”

November’s Meeting

Rosemary Killeen, a pharmacist, discussed drug interactions with anti-epileptic drugs at the November meeting.

In pharmacy text books, a drug-drug interaction is defined as the pharmacological or clinical response to the administration of a drug combination that is different from that anticipated from the two agents given separately.

The classification of interactions were listed as “Antagonism” where one drug reduces the effect of

another; “Synergism” where one drug increases the effect of another; and “Idiosyncratic” where an unexpected reaction occurs.

How an interaction actually affects a patient’s treatment or condition can depend on many factors, including their age, gender, stature, kidney and liver function, presence of other chronic diseases as well as genetic factors.

Some examples of drug-drug interactions were given with respect to **Dilantin**:

- Chlor-Tripolon (antihistamine), lorazepam, diazepam and other benzodiazepines can increase the amount of Dilantin in your system. ASA (aspirin) can also increase the amount of Depakene.
- Antacids like Tums, Rolaids, Mylanta can decrease Dilantin levels.
- Dilantin or carbamazepine can also reduce the effect of Tylenol.

- Taking Dilantin can also interfere with other drugs, e.g. oral contraceptive pills. Women who are taking Dilantin (as well as Topamax and carbamazepine) may not get the full contraceptive benefit of oral contraceptive pills and may be advised to use other forms of birth control.

There can also be an interaction between anti-epileptic drugs.

Grapefruit or grapefruit juice was given as an example of a drug-food interaction. Herbal medications such as St. John’s Wort may also interact with some AED’s. Herbal medications should be included in your list of medications. Smoking, caffeine and alcohol can also interact with medications.

Remember to check with your pharmacist to see if you are at risk with the medications, over-the-counter drugs and herbal remedies that you may be taking.

Anti-epileptic Drug Pregnancy Registry



The Anti-epileptic Drug (AED) Pregnancy Registry is dedicated to determine the safety of anticonvulsant medications that can be taken by women during pregnancy to treat disorders such as epilepsy, mood disorder, and chronic pain. The primary goal is to determine the frequency of major malformations, such as heart defects,

spinabifida and cleft lip, in the infants exposed during pregnancy to anticonvulsant drugs.

Who is eligible?

Any women who is currently pregnant and is taking AED’s (anti-epileptic drugs) for any reason can enroll in the Registry. Enroll by calling toll-free at 1-888-233-2334.

Participation involves only three brief telephone interviews. The first interview is at the time of enrolment, the second takes place in the seventh month of pregnancy, and the third is conducted a few months after delivery.

To learn more about the AED Pregnancy Registry, please visit www.aedpregnancyregistry.org

Lavender Ribbons, Lavender Bracelets and other Lavender Things...

March is epilepsy awareness month.

Did you know that lavender is the national emblem for epilepsy? The lavender colour symbolizes the feelings of isolation and seclusion that people living with epilepsy and seizure disorders often experience.

As well, did you know that more than 300,000 Canadians have epilepsy?

Each day, an average of 42 Canadians learn that they have epilepsy and about 60% of new patients are young children and senior citizens. Epilepsy is a physical disorder caused by sudden, brief changes in how the brain works. It affects people from all walks of life and it is the second most common chronic

neurological disorder affecting humankind, after chronic headache.

Throughout the year, and especially during the month of March, EOC works to educate the public in order to eliminate the myths and stigmas surrounding epilepsy and to indicate the critical need for funding research into all aspects of epilepsy.

**Circle Sunday,
March 30th on
your calendar...**

**EOC is pleased to
host its third
annual *Scissors
for Seizures*
fundraiser!**


**We hope to see
you there.**

Roast Chicken with Honey and Lavender

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 ½ tablespoon (22mL) rosemary leaves
- 1 ½ tablespoon (22mL) thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon (5mL) lavender flowers
- 1 teaspoon (5mL) lavender leaves
- ½ cup (125 mL) honey
- ¼ cup (50mL) balsamic vinegar
- 2 or 3 pound (1-1.5 kg) roasting chicken

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190C). In a bowl, combine garlic, shallot, rosemary, thyme, lavender flowers and leaves, honey and vinegar. With your fingers, lift the chicken skin from the breast and thighs; spread herb mixture under the skin.
2. Place chicken in roasting pan and cover with foil; roast for one hour. Remove foil and roast another 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Chicken should be 180 degree (80C) when cooked.
3. Allow chicken to rest 20 minutes before carving.

From the *Ottawa Citizen*



March is
Epilepsy
Awareness Month

Elle Image Hair & Spa
4 Lorry Greenberg Drive, Unit 4
Ottawa, ON K1G 0M6
T: (613) 738-6119

Sunday,
March 30, '08
12:00 - 4:00

Hair Junkie
260 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 0K7
T: (613) 563-8679

**Scissors
for seizures**

Men, Women and Children welcome!
Cuts & blow drying only (no chemical services)

For more information, please call
Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton at (613) 594-9255
or visit www.epilepsyottawa.ca

All proceeds of this fundraising event will help Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton provide support and information to people living with seizures in the Ottawa Region. No money will be provided upon request.

(For more details... see page 6)

Young Adult Support Group

This group of young adults, aged 18-30, meets for an informal gathering at 6:00 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month at the EOC office on Bronson Avenue.

For young adults who are

living with epilepsy, it's an opportunity to talk about their personal experiences with other people who can relate to their situation. It's not all about epilepsy – rather, it's a chance to get together with other people

who are having similar experiences and just hang out.

For more information please contact Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton at epilepsy@magma.ca or at 613 594-9255.

Go Green!

In an effort to save trees and reduce the use of paper, envelopes and postage we are encouraging our members to sign-up to receive *Brainwaves* online.

Members who sign-up do not receive a paper copy in the mail. An e-mail notification advising that the latest issue is on our Web site will be sent out instead.

Visit us on the Web:
www.epilepsyottawa.ca

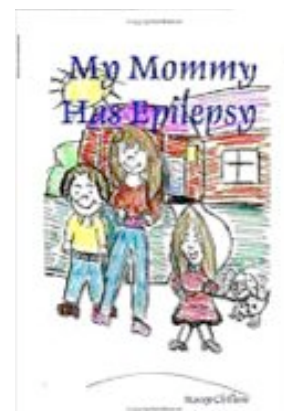
New in the EOC Resource Library

We have added a new book *My Mommy Has Epilepsy* by Stacey Chillemi to our resource library.

My Mommy Has Epilepsy, is an children's book that helps children understand what epilepsy

is and what to do if someone is having a seizure.

For more information: <http://authorsden.com/staceychillemi>. This book is also available from www.amazon.com.



Public Awareness Presentations

The Bronson Centre invited their tenants to showcase their "raison d'être" during the evening of the *Bronson Centre Gala* on October 11th. EOC participated that evening with an information table. The table was staffed by volunteer Angela Albert. **Thanks Angela!**

Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton also participated in an awareness campaign on Friday, 30 November at *Statistics Canada's Information Fair*. This information fair was sponsored by the Sub-Committee on Disability Issues at Statistics Canada to commemorate International Day for Persons with a Disability. **Thanks to Lise-Marie Andrews** (pictured to the right) for helping to staff our information table.



MedsCheck

A new service offered by the provincial government

MedsCheck is a new, private consultation with your pharmacist that ensures you're getting the most from your medications and that you are taking them correctly.

1. Who is eligible:

Ontarians who have a chronic condition and are taking three or more prescription medications.

2. What it is: An opportunity to meet with your pharmacist privately, once a year, for up to 30 minutes. *It's a free service.* Just bring your OHIP card.

3. How you benefit: Your pharmacist will help you manage your prescription medications and better understand how they interact with each other and other over-the-counter medication you may be taking.

Three things you'll need to bring to your appointment:

- Your Ontario Health Card
- All current medication containers, including those from other

pharmacies, or a list of all your medications.

- Any over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and/or herbal remedies you are currently taking.

Your pharmacist is looking forward to your visit and will book a convenient time for you to meet.

For questions only, call INFO-line at 1-866-255-6701 or visit www.medscheck.ca

Your support is vital to our success! Help us to continue to provide valuable programs, services and support in the Ottawa-Carleton area.

2008 Membership Fees are Due

Please renew today!

2008 memberships are due. The valuable programs and services offered by Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton, which includes "Seizure Smart" educational presentations

and monthly information/support meetings are only possible because of the vital support we receive from memberships and/or donations. **Your support is vital to our continuing success.**

EOC is not included in

the United Way campaign and so we rely almost solely on your membership and generosity to continue to provide our services to our local community.

Donations may also be made to EOC through www.CanadaHelps.org

Please renew your membership today!

"Seizure Smart" Presentations

As part of our outreach program, EOC has given "**seizure smart**" educational presentations to the following schools, organizations and/or community organizations during the past year:

- Lakeview Public

- School St. Francis of Assisi School
- Girl Guide Troop –Orleans
- NAV CANADA
- Torah Academy
- Ray Friel Community Centre –Lifeguards

Feedback has been

consistently positive with teachers, other staff members, employers and co-workers indicating that they have come away reassured and better prepared to deal appropriately with children and adults experiencing seizures.

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DISCLAIMER

Material contained in this newsletter concerning epilepsy research, treatment, patient experiences and summaries of speaker's topics is solely for informational purposes.

Please consult your Family Doctor/Neurologist for medical advice.

Copies of the summer issue of *Sharing* from Epilepsy Ontario are available at the EOC office or at our monthly public information meetings. You can also access *Sharing* from Epilepsy Ontario's Web site at www.epilepsyontario.org.

Epilepsy Canada

Epilepsy Canada continues to share Epilepsy Ontario's offices in Toronto. Rest assured, its direct mail campaign will continue, and the commitments support will be met. It is expected that Epilepsy Canada will re-emerge as an independent organization in the future.

Epilepsy Awareness Bracelets!

Epilepsy Lavender Bracelets are available at the EOC office and at our public information meetings for \$3 each.

The lavender colour symbolizes the feeling of isolation and seclusion that people living with epilepsy and seizure disorder often experience.

Wear a bracelet to show your support!



Donations to Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton can be made in specified amounts and/or by setting up a monthly donation plan with **CanadaHelps** (www.CanadaHelps.org), a secure credit card processing service. A tax receipt from CanadaHelps will be emailed to you at the time of your donation. A list of donors will be made available to our organization. You can access CanadaHelps through the EOC Web site at www.epilepsyottawa.ca.

Upcoming Events!

SUMMERFEST
Summer Camp for children 6-15 years of age living with epilepsy in Ontario

Epilepsy Ontario proudly announces Summerfest, 2008, a wonderful opportunity for children living with epilepsy to enjoy summer camp at the fun-filled Camp Couchiching! Space is limited, so register early!

June 29 to July 11, 2008

Sponsoring this is available
For more information, call 905-764-9039 or 800-463-1119 (toll free in Ontario) or visit www.epilepsyontario.org

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Elite Image Hair & Spa
4 Larry Greenberg Drive, Unit 4
Ottawa, ON K1G 5M8
T: (613) 734-9178

**Sunday,
March 30, '08
12:00 - 4:00**

Hair Junkie
200 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 6M7
T: (613) 943-9878

**Scissors
for seizures**

Men, Women and Children welcome!
Cuts & blow drying only (no chemical services)

For more information, please call
Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton at (613) 594-9255
or visit www.epilepsyottawa.ca

All proceeds of this charitable only event will help Epilepsy Ottawa-Carleton provide support and information to people living with epilepsy in the Ottawa Region. Tax receipts will be provided upon request.