

JUNE IS **STROKE MONTH**

Your support for the Heart and Stroke Foundation funds public awareness campaigns like *The Warning Signs of Stroke*, running across BC this June to reach people at risk. People like Doreen.



THE WARNING SIGNS OF STROKE

HEADACHE
DIZZINESS
VISION PROBLEMS
TROUBLE SPEAKING
WEAKNESS

If you experience one or more of these symptoms, even temporarily, seek immediate medical attention.

www.signsofstroke.ca

“I felt like I’d lost control of the words coming out of my mouth,” says Doreen Crawley when she describes the confusion and difficulty speaking she experienced during her transient ischemic attack (TIA).

Doreen was out for lunch, when she began to have difficulty communicating and articulating her thoughts. Passing the experience off as tiredness, she went home to rest, and felt better after a nap. Since it was the weekend, she waited until Monday to visit her doctor.

“I felt like I’d lost control of the words coming out of my mouth”

The jumbled utterance was of course one of the warning signs of a stroke, and upon explaining her symptoms to her doctor, Doreen was immediately sent to Victoria General Hospital for a series of tests. It was determined that Doreen had suffered a TIA, often referred to as a “mini-stroke.”

But what strikes Doreen is that her symptoms went undiagnosed despite a history of stroke in the family: both her mother and sister suffered strokes in the years before the incident.

“I should have been more aware of the warning signs, but I was not around my mother or sister when they had their strokes, and so I didn’t recognize what I was experiencing,” Doreen says. “If there is anything others can learn from my experience, it is that knowledge about stroke warning signs is your greatest weapon in maintaining your well-being.”

In 2010 and 2011 BC launched a provincial campaign to raise public recognition of the warning signs of stroke and the need to call 911 immediately. But continued support is needed to maintain momentum and keep the message top of mind. The Canadian Stroke Network identified that up to 57% of people who experience TIA’s or “mini-strokes” like Doreen do not make it to the hospital within the short timeframe needed to receive the emergency clot-busting drug, tPA.

This year, support from AstraZeneca, Bayer and Boehringer Ingelheim has enabled the Heart and Stroke Foundation to continue to reach people across BC, like Doreen, with the warning signs of stroke. ■

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PLEASE DONATE

Help us raise stroke awareness
heartandstroke.ca/donate



Stroke Month in BC

In BC, we are fortunate to be pioneering some of Canada's leading public awareness, public policy, and research initiatives to improve the recognition, immediate treatment, care and recovery for stroke survivors. If you're reading this newsletter, your support has played an important role in enabling that work.

It is only through the very generous support of our donors, our volunteers and fundraisers, and our corporate partners, that we are able to fund BC's talented stroke researchers, and broaden public recognition and care for stroke through programs and policy. And there is critical need to do so: in Canada, a stroke occurs every 10 minutes, and stroke continues to be BC's primary cause of acquired long-term disability.

For the past two years, the Foundation's Signs of Stroke campaign has helped to address one of the greatest obstacles to stroke patients: recognition of the warning signs of stroke, and calling 911 immediately. Yet still, more than 40% of stroke patients arrive at the hospital more than 12 hours after the onset of their symptoms.

The Foundation has been a catalyst for improving stroke care in BC. The BC Stroke Strategy, our review and recommendations for optimal stroke care in BC, has now found a good home with Stroke Services BC, a newly created agency in the Provincial Health Services Authority. The Foundation also provided a detailed Provincial Stroke Action Plan with guidance on how to put the recommendations from the strategy into place. The Foundation continues to be involved in provincial stroke care through our participation at the Provincial Stroke Steering Committee, and our support for programs and partners like the Stroke Recovery Association of BC.

At the national level, the Heart and Stroke Foundation has confirmed Stroke as a priority focus for our organization with the recent hiring of Ian Joiner, Director of Stroke. As Director, part of Ian's role will include ensuring that provincial stroke strategies grow and evolve across Canada in order to bring continuous improvements to all areas of the stroke care continuum.

As a friend of the Foundation, we thank you for your valuable support. We share the successes and progress of the organization with you, and we hope you will continue to support the Foundation to realize a future free of heart disease and stroke.

Diego Marchese

Diego Marchese
CEO, Heart and Stroke Foundation,
BC & Yukon

"...in Canada, a stroke occurs every 10 minutes, and stroke continues to be BC's primary cause of acquired long-term disability."



HELPING STROKE'S SMALLEST SURVIVORS

Colton Marfleet suffered a stroke in utero, before ever entering the world. His mother Shelley Marfleet relays the experience, and how they are both connected to stroke today.

About a week and a half before her due date, Shelley's water ruptured slightly and it had to be determined whether baby had entered the birth canal feet first, which might prompt the doctors to induce labour and initiate a c-section.

On the ensuing ultrasound, the technician noticed that there was something peculiar with the baby's brain – an assessment that was dismissed by the radiologist.

Shelley would later understand how premature that dismissal was when Colton was born with small red spots called petichiae all over his body – a result of dangerously low levels of the platelet cells that help blood clot. It was quickly determined that Colton had suffered a stroke in the womb.

"To discover that a stroke had occurred during pregnancy, was unbelievable" explains Shelley. "Everything was happening so quickly, and it was hard to understand the circumstances or context at the time – all I was concerned about was getting him treatment."

Colton was transferred from Maple Ridge, to Royal Columbian Hospital, to finally Children's Hospital, where he recovered for the following next two weeks.

Healthy today at 9-years-old, Colton and his mother Shelley both maintain a connection with stroke, by raising awareness about stroke and by raising funds to support the work of the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Through school, Colton participates in the Heart and Stroke Foundation's JUMP Rope for Heart program. The funds raised

by Colton and his classmates today help further research and support for other children and families coping with stroke and cardiovascular disease. Colton is not only a stroke survivor, but his JUMP fundraising makes him a Heart Hero as well.

"To discover that a stroke had occurred during pregnancy, was unbelievable"

Shelley regularly converses with a group of mothers who act as support for one another, but even more importantly, work to create awareness about the perils of stroke that can be felt at any age.

"Never before did I ever think of stroke as something that could happen to a young person – never mind a baby. But now I know that stroke discriminates against no one, and no age," says Shelley. ■

STROKE FACTS

- Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Canada, and around the world
- Stroke is the leading cause of acquired adult disability
- 50,000 strokes happen every year in Canada – one every 10 minutes

ROAD TO RECOVERY

Jose Suganob's Road to Recovery began in 1989 and took him in a direction he could never have predicted.

In April 1989, in the middle of a doubles match, Jose Suganob began to feel numb on one side of his body. And even though it was windy and quite cold, he knew immediately that something was wrong.

Jose has no recollection of the next three days due to a hemorrhagic stroke. An artery burst in his brain, which prompted emergency surgery.

The months of recovery that followed his stroke demonstrated how different life could be for Jose. With his "brain circuits in a jumble" Jose was 42 years old, in a wheelchair, unable to speak a word, and paralyzed on the right side of his body.

Jose was referred to the Stroke Recovery Association of BC (SRABC). Over the next three years, Jose participated in Tai Chi, horseshoe pitching, chair hockey and regular walks to recover normal mobility from his paralysis. His daily interaction with other members combined with regular speech therapy and a passion for Karaoke helped Jose to relearn English as a second language.

"My involvement with SRABC transformed my angry "why me?" stage of recovery into an opportunity to rise to the occasion. I took what I loved and used these passions as tools for growth," says Jose.

Jose improved his ability to register sequences of numbers as a bingo caller for the branch. He began musical instruction to improve as a singer. He studied Desktop Publishing through correspondence, and after purchasing a brand new computer, Jose began to produce a branch newsletter entitled "The Stroke Recoverer's Review."

The array of programs and activities offered by SRABC is largely facilitated by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, according to SRABC Executive Director, Tim Readman.

"The funding we receive from the Heart and Stroke Foundation is critical because it provides much of the core funding for our offerings for members," says Readman. "The linkages we have with the Heart and Stroke Foundation also ensured that we were included in the development of the BC Stroke Strategy, and that our voice continues to be heard in discussions regarding community reintegration of stroke survivors."

For Jose, SRABC proved to be one of the most important influences in his life as a whole, including his existence before having a stroke.



"Becoming involved with the SRABC was a life changing decision," exclaims Jose. "It took my life in a direction I never would have expected. Anything is possible – a stroke should not be the end of an active life. For me, it was just the beginning." ■

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LEARN MORE

The Stroke Recovery Association of BC
strokerecoverybc.ca or 1.888.313.3377

STROKE RESOURCES FOR PATIENTS

Find these resources and more at heartandstroke.bc.ca/patient



DOES YOUR HEART SKIP A BEAT?

From skydiving to white water rafting, there are many experiences in life that could "make your heart skip a beat" but Atrial Fibrillation shouldn't be one of them. If you find your pulse is racing or your heartbeat is irregular, it's time you had a talk with your doctor.

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is a type of irregular heartbeat that, undiagnosed, can put you at 3 to 5 times greater risk for stroke. With an irregular heartbeat blood can pool and clot in the heart, possibly causing a stroke if circulated outside of the heart. It is estimated that up to 15% of all strokes are caused by AF.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation has launched the "Be Pulse Aware" campaign to educate Canadians and healthcare professionals that AF is a leading risk factor for stroke. ■

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LEARN MORE

heartandstroke.ca/bepulseaware



This summer, eat for heart health with Health Check™. Try this low-fat, high-protein summer treat, and inspire your culinary repertoire with other recipes from HealthCheck.org. Look for products with the Health Check logo at your grocery store.

Frozen Ricotta Treat

Makes: 8 servings

Ricotta cheese is light in flavour and full of protein. By adding a few other ingredients it's makes a tasty treat for a hot night or after dinner snack.

Ingredients:

- 1 tub (500 g) light ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup (50 ml) granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) frozen wild blueberries
- 1 cup (250 ml) chopped fresh strawberries
- 1 cup 250 ml) non fat sugar free strawberry yogurt
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh mint

Directions:

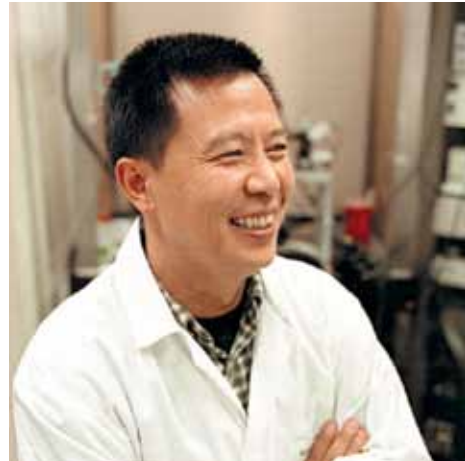
- 1** In food processor puree together ricotta cheese, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Scrape into bowl and stir in blueberries and strawberries; set aside.
- 2** Line 8 x 4-inch loaf pan with plastic wrap and scrape ricotta mixture into pan, smoothing top. Cover top with plastic wrap and freeze for about 4 hours or until firm.
- 3** Cut into 1-inch slices and dollop each slice with yogurt and sprinkle with mint before serving.

Helpful Hint: You can freeze the loaf for up to 2 weeks.

Berry Option: You can use raspberries or blackberries for the strawberries and blueberries. ■

Not long ago, stroke was a mystery. Today, the Heart and Stroke Foundation's increased investment in stroke research has successfully unraveled the mystery enough to delivery life-altering advances in treatment and prevention.

Here is a snapshot of a few of the mysteries that are unraveling – right here in BC.



Saving brain cells from stroke

Dr. Yu Tian Wang,
Heart and Stroke Foundation
Chair in Stroke Research

While much is known about why stroke occurs, there is much we can still learn about the brain's reaction to stroke and the series of events that occur that – without intervention – lead to cell death and long-term disability.

Dr. Wang is investigating small molecules called inhibitor peptides that could stop this process and prevent cells from dying in the brain during stroke – even if administered many hours post-stroke. This potential treatment is currently undergoing early-stage clinical trials in stroke patients and healthy volunteers.



Improving balance to regain ability

Dr. Jayne Garland,
University of British Columbia

Recovering the ability to stand and walk is a major milestone for patients recovering from a debilitating stroke. Dr. Jayne Garland's research could make that milestone easier for stroke survivors to attain. Dr. Garland has an innovative exercise training program called FAST: Fast muscle Activation and Stepping Training. It focuses on strengthening the stabilizing and balancing muscles needed to stand and walk, in an effort to improve the learning curve. Dr. Garland's pilot studies have shown promise, and her patients have improved their walking balance significantly. Her next step is to compare this new rehabilitative approach to traditional methods, to determine whether it provides improved benefits that physiotherapists and patients alike can use.



Exercising hope for Dementia

Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose,
Heart and Stroke Foundation of
Canada Barnett Scholar

The key to minimizing stroke related dementia may literally be a few simple steps. Although people often expect the solution to be more complicated, according to Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose, it might be as simple as aerobic exercise training, three times a day. She's investigating whether exercise allows stroke survivors to better cope with everyday life, from problem solving to social engagement and their general sense of well being. To date, she has observed not only a drop in falls by older adults, but other positive changes.

Creating a future free of heart disease and stroke takes the support of many committed volunteers, fundraisers and donors. Each has a unique story for their participation.

Learn more and get involved: heartandstroke.bc.ca.



Why I fundraise

Haleigh Miklic

Haleigh Miklic is just 7-years-old, but age doesn't deter her from having an impact. As Haleigh explains, she is helping to "fix broken hearts." As an infant, Haleigh herself was diagnosed with a ventricular septal defect and pulmonary stenosis, and successfully underwent open heart surgery to repair her heart. Sadly, her family was soon hit hard again by cardiovascular tragedy when her father suffered a heart attack and died at age 38.

Today, Haleigh is driven to help other families touched by cardiovascular disease, by participating in JUMP Rope for Heart and fundraising for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. She surpassed her goal of \$2,000 in 2012, and hopes to raise \$3,000 in 2013.

"It's important to other people's families and it feels good."

haleighjumpsropeforheart.com



Why I volunteer

Hassan Merali

For 13 loyal years, Hassan has been a familiar face at provincial events and HSF health fair booths, an incredible fundraiser for Big Bike, and a key connection to the successful "Ismaili Walk" fundraiser in 2011. We are proud to present Hassan Merali with the 2012 Heart of Gold award for volunteering.

"Every day that I volunteer for the Heart and Stroke Foundation is a day I look forward to getting up. The people at Heart and Stroke are always affectionate to me, and there is a sense of happiness when I come to the office; it makes me want to come back and do more.

"We have to make people aware: heart disease and stroke take 1-in-3 Canadians, and they are a leading cause of death in Indo-Canadian communities. It is my hope that before I die, I will be able to see some changes in the community. If I can help just one person, save just one life from heart disease and stroke, then my life mission has been fulfilled. I have all the confidence in the world that the Heart and Stroke Foundation is making a difference in the lives of Canadians, and I am happy I can be a part of that change."



Why I give

Ted Nugent,
Genius Factor Games

The greatest obstacle that prevents a bystander from performing CPR is a lack of confidence in their ability. Ted Nugent gave the Foundation a valuable tool to overcome that barrier, when his Vancouver-based gaming company, Genius Factor Games, volunteered to produce a smartphone app that allows the user to practice CPR to the beat of the BeeGee's "Stayin' Alive." Download Heart Hero from your mobile phone's app store to keep your skills honed.

"When I first began the company, I saw a sense of community and volunteerism as vital pillars of our business model. Every year, employees of the company donate what ends up being about two weeks out of the year working on worthy causes.

"My father passed away after a series of strokes. I hope that by working with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, I will have honoured my father's memory and those that helped my family deal with the after-effects of stroke."

UPCOMING **EVENTS**



JUNE IS **STROKE MONTH**

Find out what is happening in your area for stroke month.

Visit: heartandstroke.bc.ca/mycommunity

Heart & Stroke

BIG BIKE

BIG BIKE

The Heart and Stroke Big Bike is pedaling across BC from now until the end of June. Check out the teams near you, and support their rides by making a donation, or coming out to find out what it's all about.

Visit: bigbike.ca



STROKE **RISK FACTORS**

With a healthy lifestyle, you can reduce some risk factors for stroke, while some remain uncontrollable.

Some of these risk factors include:

- *High blood pressure*
- *Smoking*
- *Being overweight*
- *Ethnicity*
- *Physical inactivity*

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ARE YOU AT RISK?

Take a Risk Assessment at:
heartandstroke.ca/risk

CORPORATE **SPOTLIGHT**

Canada Safeway Limited

What do the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Canada Safeway have in common? Both are committed to improving the heart health of British Columbians.

For over 20 years, Canada Safeway and their employees have been supportive, longstanding partners in the fight against heart disease and stroke. Through their support we are making progress.

Over the years, Safeway's employees have shown their Caring Hearts by donating an astounding \$640,000 to advance our mission.

Canada Safeway has also helped better the lives of British Columbians, by putting the "Signs of Stroke" campaign materials into the hands of pharmacy patients, and helping consumers make healthier choices through their Eat Right partnership with our Health Check™ campaign.

"Safeway employees have the option to support several charities in British Columbia, through an automatic payroll deduction." says Mary D'Astolfo of Canada Safeway Limited.

"I'm proud to represent a body of coworkers who have put the heart of our community first. This year employees donated \$59,960 to Heart and Stroke, and significant donations to many other leading charities in BC." ■



Feedback?

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