



The ICD Support Group of Manitoba

THE ICD SUPPORT
GROUP OF MANITOBA

Volume 11 - May 2013

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Our meeting on October 27, 2012 featured Dr. Kevin Wolfe from the Defibrillator Clinic and Barry Guttormson, President of Hotwinters.ca. We had a great turnout with over 100 people enjoying the fellowship, refreshments and presentations. Dr. Wolfe helped us understand why some patients receive a defibrillator with more than one lead. Mr. Guttormson covered a number of points for people with health issues to consider when purchasing travel insurance. See "meeting highlights" on page 2 for more information.

SPRING MEETING - SATURDAY JUNE 8, 2013

Please join us for refreshments, fellowship and information. Throughout the reception representatives from the Pacemaker/Defibrillator Clinic, along with a pharmacist and a dietician from St. Boniface Hospital will be circulating around the room to chat and answer any questions you may have. Our guest speaker will be a representative from The Wellness Centre at Seven Oaks Hospital who will talk about the Cardiac Rehabilitation program and living with cardiac disease. This get together is a great opportunity to meet others living with an ICD. We encourage you to bring along a family member or guest.

**RECEPTION and INFORMATION SHARING: 1:00 P.M.
GUEST SPEAKER: 2:15 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
ST BONIFACE GENERAL HOSPITAL RESEARCH CENTRE
G. CAMPBELL MACLEAN BUILDING
351 TACHE AVENUE
SAMUEL N. COHEN AUDITORIUM, MAIN FLOOR**

The closest parking lot is at the south end of the Hospital (near Emergency). The Research Centre is the large building at the southwest end of the Hospital closest to Tache Ave.

There is no need to confirm your attendance.

CHANGES AT THE PACEMAKER/DEFIBRILLATOR CLINIC

We extend our best wishes to Jan Polson RN, who retired in January. You may still see her at the clinic from time to time as she will continue working on a part time basis.

Kerry Liebrecht, Nursing Coordinator retires at the end of May 2013 after 25 years devoted to pacemaker and defibrillator patients. Kerry was instrumental in the creation of our support group and has been a huge supporter ever since. She truly cares about all pacemaker and defibrillator patients and we will miss her very much. The board of directors would like to express our sincere appreciation to Kerry for all her guidance and encouragement over the years. Enjoy your retirement Kerry - you deserve it.

We are looking forward to working with Esther McGimpsey RN who is taking over the Nursing Coordinator role. Esther has worked with Pacemaker / Defibrillator patients since 2003 in both the implant room and the clinic.

Inside this issue:

<i>Previous meeting highlights</i>	2
<i>Did you know.....??</i>	3
<i>Farewell from Kerry Liebrecht</i>	3
<i>Contact Information</i>	4
<i>Web sites of Interest</i>	4
<i>In Appreciation</i>	4
<i>Support Group Volunteers</i>	4

VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Larry Sherman, President
- Bob Mondy, Treasurer
- Greg Smith, Volunteer Coordinator & Director
- Lori Trapp, Director
- Jake Suderman, Director
- Ruthe Penner, Director
- Dianne Brown, Director
- Bob Mawson, Director



October 2012 meeting highlights

Barry Guttormson, President of Hotwinters.ca helped us understand some of the potential issues regarding travel insurance, particularly as it relates to people with health issues. He pointed out how critical it is to fully understand what limitations and exclusions may affect the policy. You need to protect your assets as a declined claim could potentially cost you many thousands of dollars. Manitoba Health will only cover expenses to the extent they would be covered in Manitoba. Anything in excess is your responsibility. It is important to remember that this not only applies to travel outside Canada but also to Canadian locations outside of Manitoba. Many people don't think extra insurance is needed for travel to other provinces, but just think how much it might cost if you had to be flown back to Manitoba on an air ambulance with medical support staff in attendance.

He provided several examples where people travelling outside the province of Manitoba encountered health issues and subsequently had their insurance claims declined by their travel insurance provider. This could have been the result of something as simple as an error or oversight in completing the original application or perhaps not following through on a suggestion made at some point in time by a physician. The application form is an extremely important document. You need to fully understand what each question and definition means. You must be prepared to provide a detailed and accurate medical history. Even a prescription that was provided at some point in the past by a physician but for some reason was never filled or used by you could be critical to a claim being paid or declined. When in doubt in completing the application it is very wise to check your facts with your doctor. Sample forms for recording your own medications can be found at www.hotwinters.ca or www.safetoask.ca.



Bob Mondy at the Registration Desk



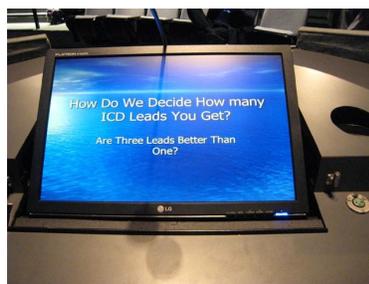
The food is worth the trip



Board Members:
Greg Smith, Bob Mondy, Larry Sherman



Reception area



Dr. Wolfe's presentation



Auditorium

Dr. Wolfe enlightened us on why some patients receive an ICD with one lead (wire) while others get two or three leads. A single lead is generally used to treat Atrial Fibrillation, there is no need for pacing — only defibrillation. A two lead system is often used when pacing is required for a slow heart rate and may be dependant on certain anti arrhythmia drugs. Leads are placed in both the upper right and left chambers of the heart. A three lead system may be used when bi ventricular pacing is needed. Individuals who have an Ejection Fraction less than 30%, specific type of ECG, and shortness of breath when walking less than one block "may" be a candidate for a three lead system. You might ask why they don't just give everyone the three lead device. Dr. Wolfe says "you don't want more than you need" as there are risks associated with any type of surgery. The number of leads required for each individual will be determined by the electro physiologist.



DID YOU KNOW.....??

Support Group feedback

At the meeting in October we conducted a survey to obtain feedback on how the support group is doing. Below is a recap of the results:

- Our semi annual meetings are seen as beneficial and should continue.
- The social time prior to the meetings is much appreciated and gives patients and others an opportunity to chat amongst themselves.
- The current location at the SBGH Research Centre was felt to be convenient as was holding the meetings on a Saturday. We received one comment on the cost of parking at the hospital.
- The newsletter is popular and should continue, although the support group needs to ensure it is distributed in a timely fashion prior to meeting dates.
- It was mentioned that some attendees suffer from exposure to strong scents, therefore we ask that you do not wear strong perfumes or colognes to the meetings.

We welcome any ideas, suggestions, etc. at any time. Please pass them on to any of the board contact members listed on page 4.

Buhler Art Gallery

The Buhler Gallery in St. Boniface General Hospital is the first of its kind in Canada, a public gallery which displays work of professional artists in curated exhibitions with accompanying public programs including music, readings, talks and panel discussions. It is located on the main floor of St. Boniface General Hospital in the hospital's historic former entrance. It is accessible through the Atrium, just beyond Shoppers Drug Mart. Open to all patients, visitors and staff since September 2007, its goal is to provide an oasis of contemplation and vision engaging people in high visual arts programming, music, readings and performances. It is a very calming spot. Admission is free.

Items to avoid if you have a defibrillator

According to Medtronic's website individuals with implanted defibrillators should avoid using abdominal stimulators, electronic body fat scales and magnetic mattress pads or pillows. If in doubt contact the Clinic or device manufacturer.

Traveling with your ICD

Most people with an implanted defibrillator can travel freely unless they are restricted by their underlying medical condition. The key to travelling with confidence is to plan ahead. You should talk to your doctor and/or the ICD clinic about specific care or activity recommendations and what to do if you experience problems while away. You can also find out where medical support is available for your ICD should the need arise by visiting the manufacturer's web site. You will find a list of medical facilities around the globe where their defibrillators are supported. If you don't have access to the internet you can obtain this information by calling the following toll free numbers: Medtronic: 1-800-268-5346 (this is the number on your wallet sized ICD registration card); Boston Scientific: 1-866-484-3268.

Farewell from Kerry Liebrecht

It is now time for my last submission in the Support Group newsletter. I will be retiring May 31st. I have been involved with device clinics for 25 years and it has been amazing, both challenging and rewarding. It has been a privilege to have shared a part of your lives, the tears, hugs and laughter. Your optimism and resilience in the face of many challenges is an inspiration and I have learned so much from all of you. I leave the clinic in great hands, you will be well looked after.



THE ICD SUPPORT GROUP OF
MANITOBA

CONTACT INFORMATION

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WEB SITES OF INTEREST:

- St. Jude Medical - this site contains a selection of video's that show how various arrhythmia conditions affect the hearts function.
 - www.sjm.com At the top of the page click on "Patients" then go into "view arrhythmia animations". From there select the video you want to view.
- Looking for why and how to dispose of medication that is no longer needed?
 - www.medicationsreturn.ca
- This site contains a list of resources for patients and visitors to the Cardiac Sciences program at St. Boniface General Hospital.
 - www.saintboniface.ca Go to: Hospital / Patient Care / Clinical Programs / Cardiac Sciences / Cardiac Sciences Program / for the public. There are several links on this page. One of interest (Patient Information Guidelines) provides information on various cardiac related tests.

IN APPRECIATION

- We would like to thank the following ICD manufacturers for their ongoing financial support.
 - Medtronic
 - St. Jude Medical
- Also a very special Thank You to Mr. Paul Albrecht-sen for his generous financial support of our group.

SUPPORT GROUP VOLUNTEERS

We'd like to extend a big welcome to Bob Mawson from Brandon who is our newest board member.

It's never too late to lend a helping hand. We are always looking for new people to join our volunteer board of directors. Let us know if you can help.