



# The ICD Support Group of Manitoba

THE ICD SUPPORT  
GROUP OF MANITOBA

Volume 3 - October 2008

## Fall 2008 Support Group Meeting Monday, October 20, 2008

Please join us for an informative session with Dr. Colette Seifer. Many of us have questions or concerns regarding the impact having an ICD can have on our driving privileges. Dr. Seifer, a Cardiologist at St. Boniface General Hospital will talk to us about the guidelines physicians are required to follow in regards to our drivers license. Representatives from Manitoba Public Insurance will be on hand to answer questions.

We will also be joined by Edward Hoffenberg, Canadian Territory Manager, Boston Scientific (formerly Guidant) Cardiac Rhythm Management Group to answer any questions you have regarding your defibrillator.

**7:00 P.M.—9:00 P.M.**

**ST. BONIFACE GENERAL HOSPITAL RESEARCH CENTRE  
G. CAMPBELL MACLEAN BUILDING  
351 TACHE AVENUE  
SAMUEL N. COHEN AUDITORIUM, MAIN FLOOR**

Refreshments and the opportunity to meet casually with other ICD recipients, family members and Clinic staff will follow the presentations. Parking is available in the South parking lot of the Hospital which is adjacent to the Research Centre at a cost of \$3.00 for the evening. The Research Centre is the large building at the south end of the Hospital. Look for the large sign at the top of the building. There is no need to confirm your attendance.

### **SPRING MEETING OVERVIEW**

A support group meeting was held on May 6, 2008 at the St. Boniface General Hospital Research Centre. Over 100 ICD patients, family members and guests came out to hear Beverly Burton-Guindon, Cardiac Rehabilitation Services Manager at The Reh-fit Centre and Nikki Makar, Individual Benefits Consultant with Manitoba Blue Cross.

The mission of the Reh-Fit Centre is to enhance the health and well being of its members and the community by providing innovative health and fitness services through assessment, education, and exercise in a supportive environment. One key program which anyone with cardiovascular disease can benefit from is the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program. This 4 month program is offered at both the Reh-Fit Centre and the Wellness Centre. It helps participants to: understand the level of activity they can handle safely, restore their health and strength, improve their diet and lifestyle, reduce cardiac symptoms, develop a sense of well being, reduce anxiety and decrease risk of subsequent heart attacks. Participants pay only a modest fee, with nearly all cost covered by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Some extended health insurance plans cover all or a part of the fee and financial assistance may be available based on individual need. The Reh-Fit Centre which recently received an extensive expansion and renovation, also provides a multitude of other programs and services that can enhance our lifestyle.

Ms. Makar provided information about travel insurance in general as well as specific information on travel insurance products provided by Manitoba Blue Cross. The benefits will vary depending on the coverage chosen. ....continued on page 3

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### **VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Larry Sherman, President
- Bob Mondy, Treasurer
- Greg Smith, Volunteer Coordinator & Director
- Lori Trapp, Director
- Jake Suderman, Director



## Meet Bob Mondy — ICD recipient & Support Group Founding Member

“ZAP” WOW

Hi, my name is Bob Mondy and I would like to share with you a history of my heart problems.

First heart attack	December 30, 1965	24 years young
Second heart attack	March 12, 1966	While in hospital
By-pass surgery	February 14, 1967	Great results
Ventricular arrhythmia	December 10, 1987	Medications worked
Cardiac arrest	April 11, 2004	Toronto airport
ICD implant	April 22, 2004	St. Michaels Hospital, Toronto
First ICD shock	July 14, 2005	Successful recovery
Second shock	December 8, 2005	Successful recovery
Third shock	January 23, 2006	Successful recovery
Fourth shock	August 29, 2008	Successful recovery



You can see that I have had a few close calls with the Grim reaper since 1965. All of these episodes have been very traumatic for me, my family and friends. For instance, on April 11, 2004 I was with my sister at Pearson International Airport in Toronto. We had just arrived and were picking up a rental car for our trip to Guelph where our 93 year young Mom lived. That trip did not happen as I suffered cardiac arrest at the rental counter and ended up on life support for five days at Trillium Hospital in Mississauga. I was transferred to St. Michaels Hospital in Toronto where my ICD was implanted. Twenty days later I flew back to Winnipeg as the “Bionic Guy” with an ICD, two stents and a very weak heart in my chest.

There is no doubt that the past 43 years have had some not so good times for me, but I have survived and had great success in business and in life. The skilled medical professionals, my family, close friends, the people I work with, and my strong belief in God have kept me here.

After returning from Toronto, I was suffering from stress and a certain amount of anxiety about what was in my chest and how it would react if confronted with arrhythmia. I voiced my concerns to Kerry and Dianne on my first visit to the Winnipeg ICD unit. They were very helpful and suggested that I participate in forming an ICD support group. I hate to say it but we failed the first time around. The second attempt worked because of the hard work of our current board of directors, the ICD staff and the people who come to the meetings. I am proud to say we have produced a first class newsletter and the “Patients Guide to the Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator” booklet. The latter is being handed out to all new ICD patients.

I have experienced four shocks from my defibrillator and my life has continued because of them. They have not been something I enjoy, but breathing and walking are a wonderful aftermath that I truly do enjoy and remain thankful for. I am close to my 67th birthday and happy to be here. I have experienced the good, bad and wonderful parts of life with the help of the ICD in my chest. I wish you all similar success, good health and happiness. Thanks a lot for reading this.

### Staff changes at the ICD Clinic

Dr. Sach Sinha will be retiring from implanting devices but will continue his office practice in Cardiology. We thank him for his many contributions and untiring support of patients and the Pacemaker/Defibrillator Clinic.

Dr. Michael Platonov and Dr. Alex Tischenko, both Electrophysiologists have joined the existing team of Dr. Wolfe, Dr. Seifer and Dr. Khadem.

Nurses Roxanne and Esther are now seeing ICD patients. Here are a few words of greeting from them.

Hi, My name is Roxanne Spagrud and I have been working in the pacemaker clinic for almost 2 years now. My background in nursing began 12 years ago here at St. Boniface and then on to the Health Sciences Centre. I have spent 7 years in the ICU and more recently 3 years in the Pacemaker/ICD implant operating room. ....continued on page 3



## Did you know.....??

### **What is EMI (Electromagnetic field) - information taken from Boston Scientific web site**

EMI is the term used to describe the effect of an electromagnetic field on the operation of an implanted heart rhythm device. Electromagnetic fields are invisible lines of force due to a combination of electrical fields (produced by voltage) and magnetic fields (produced by current flow) that an object emits. EMI occurs when the signals from an electromagnetic field temporarily interfere with the intended operation of the implanted device. Some items we use in our everyday lives create electromagnetic fields and could affect a defibrillator. In some cases, an implanted device may sense the electromagnetic signals produced by some objects and misinterpret them as a rapid signal coming from your heart. The effects of EMI are temporary. The closer your ICD is to the item the stronger the effect will be. EMI effects do not usually harm your device. For a detailed list of sources of EMI and how they may affect your ICD, refer to the manufacturers handbook or web site. (see below)

### **What items are safe to use around my ICD? - information taken from Boston Scientific web site.**

Your ICD is designed to work properly around most appliances and equipment. Most things you handle or work near every day will not cause a problem. However, people with all types of implanted devices do need to be aware that their device can be affected by EMI. For a detailed list of items that are safe, which to use with precaution and which items you should not use - refer to the web site for the manufacturer of your device. (see below). Talk to the ICD Clinic staff if you have questions about a specific appliance, tool, medical procedure or piece of equipment. Be sure to ask if you should follow any special instructions not listed on the web site.

#### Manufacturer web sites:

[www.bostonscientific.com](http://www.bostonscientific.com)

[www.medtronic.com](http://www.medtronic.com)

[www.sjm.com](http://www.sjm.com)

[www.sorin.com](http://www.sorin.com)

### **How can a magnet affect my device? - information taken from Boston Scientific web site**

A magnet can cause your ICD to respond differently if your device gets within six inches of the magnet. Your defibrillator will respond to a magnet based on how your doctor has programmed the device to respond. With a defibrillator, some strong magnetic fields may cause your device to make beeping tones. If you hear beeping tones from your device, you should:

- immediately move away from the object that may be causing the beeping.
- Call the clinic to report the beeping.

### **SPRING MEETING OVERVIEW - continued from page 1.**

We were reminded that travel insurance can be needed not only for trips outside of Canada but also in other Canadian provinces. Travel insurance coverage must be purchased prior to departure and it must be for the entire duration of the trip. The definition of "pre existing condition" and "stable & controlled" may vary between insurance providers and needs to be carefully investigated prior to purchase. For example, a slight change in medication dosage or switching from a brand name drug to its generic equivalent could negatively impact coverage. Ms. Makar stressed that it is critical to be upfront and honest with your insurance agent to ensure they fully understand your needs and medical situation. Don't be afraid to ask questions and if necessary call the insurance carrier directly. The final decision to purchase a particular plan is up to you, so it is important to fully understand what you are buying.

### **STAFF CHANGES - continued from page 2**

Over the past few months I have had the opportunity to start following the ICD population and have met many new faces and look forward to meeting you all.

Hi, my name is Esther McGimpsey. I have been working at the clinic since July 2007. I am one of the newer faces seen in the clinic but not new to nursing. My experience includes 1 1/2 years on a medical floor, 18 years in Intensive Care and 4 years in the Pacemaker/ICD implant operating room. This fall I will be following ICD patients and look forward to meeting and working with you all.



**THE ICD SUPPORT GROUP OF  
MANITOBA**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

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**WEB SITES TO CHECK OUT:**

- This U.S. company offers two products that may be of interest to individuals with an ICD. One is a seat belt pad and the other is a bra strap pad. At the time of writing the cost of each product is \$19.95. The company have confirmed that they will ship these products to Manitoba at a cost of approximately \$17.00. All prices are in US dollars.
  - [www.aboutsofttouch.com](http://www.aboutsofttouch.com)
- The Public Health Agency of Canada website contains extensive information on many health issues. Check out the "Healthy Heart Kit" which can be found by clicking on "Chronic Diseases" followed by "Cardiovascular Disease". It is under the section titled "Knowledge Development & Exchange".
  - [www.publichealth.gc.ca](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca)

**SURVEY RESULTS**

At the spring 2008 meeting a survey was handed out to attendees. The purpose of the survey was to better understand how the ICD Support Group is meeting members needs and what changes should be made going forward. The questions were designed to solicit feedback on the two large meetings to date, the newsletter, and suggestions for the future direction of the support group. A total of 55 surveys were handed out and 14 or 25% were completed and returned. In the world of surveys this is quite a strong response rate and we thank those who took the time to participate. The vast majority of responses came from ICD patients with a couple completed by spouses and/or guests. Positive comments were received regarding the information provided by the meeting presenters. As a reminder, the presenters to date include: Dr. Wolfe, Dr. Kaoukis, Beverly-Burton-Guindon from the Reh-fit Centre and Nikki Makar from Manitoba Blue Cross. The majority of survey participants found benefit in staying for the informal social networking portion of the evening. All survey respondents felt the location for the meetings at the St. Boniface Re

search Centre was very good and future meetings should continue to be held there. Suggestions for future meeting topics included: nutrition information and driving restrictions. We've taken both suggestions to heart - driving will be covered off at the fall meeting and we will pursue a presentation on nutrition in the new year. We also heard about a couple of potential improvements. Some folks had trouble hearing all aspects of the presentations. We also heard from one out of town attendee that not all presentations were necessarily applicable to them i.e. the Reh-fit Centre. We will do our best to improve on the hearing situation and will bear in mind the concerns of those attending from outside Winnipeg. Turning now to the newsletter, 100% of respondents felt the newsletter was informative and should be continued.

Feedback is very important to us as we want to ensure that we deliver value to each of you. While we do intend to solicit your input from time to time we encourage you to contact us at any time with suggestions. Again our thanks to those who participated in this survey.