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Hope For Tomorrow.

Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Contact

Winter 2007
Spring 2008

Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Alzheimer medications get coverage as part of new initiative

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For the first time, the Province of British Columbia will provide PharmaCare coverage of Alzheimer's medications for people in the early to moderate stages of the disease as part of the three-year Alzheimer's Drug Therapy Initiative (ADTI).

During the course of the ADTI, the government will invest \$70 million with an additional \$8 million contributed by the pharmaceutical industry. An estimated 25,000 people who meet the study's criteria will be eligible for coverage of Aricept, Reminyl or Exelon as prescribed by their physician. *(See page 2 for more information.)*

The ADTI is the result of a strong partnership between key stakeholders including researchers, clinicians, educators, government representatives, drug manufacturers, and the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

"It's taken a lot of collaboration to reach this point, but a common thread has always been that quality of life for people with the disease and their caregivers is paramount," explained Rosemary

Rawnsley, Executive Director of the Alzheimer Society of B.C., noting that in the past the provincial government has not approved PharmaCare coverage for these medications because of a divergence of opinion on their effectiveness.

"We're grateful for the countless individuals and families who've been a part of the journey to this point – people who've written to their MLAs, met with government or simply offered their support through this process," she added.

"It's these people who are at the heart of the initiative; the thousands of individuals and families for whom Alzheimer's disease is a daily reality."

It's critical that those with the disease have access to the right medications at the right time, Rawnsley noted. "We know these medications don't work for everyone, but when they do work, the value of those benefits is hard to overstate. This initiative will help provide solid direction to ensure the resources we have available are used effectively."

(Continued on page 2)

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Keeping your brain fit

What's good for your heart is good for your head, and taking steps to protect your brain can have long-term benefits!

Research shows there are three areas to consider when you plan to maintain and improve the health of your brain: your mind, your body, and your spirit.

Actively keeping your brain in good shape will help you stay mentally sharp as you age. Research increasingly confirms that taking these steps now may reduce your risk of developing dementia in the future.

In this issue of Contact:

- Challenge your brain by completing a sudoku or crossword puzzle *(page 4)*.
- Dr. Art Hister shares his views about the importance of planning for a healthier you *(page 4)*.

- Clip and save the healthy living activities that you can easily incorporate into your daily routine *(page 5)*.

The sooner you start thinking about brain health, the better; dementia is not just an old person's disease, and it's never too soon – or too late – to take defensive action.



(Continued from page 1)

Alzheimer medications get coverage as part of new initiative

There are three key components to this initiative: coverage of the medications, research, and physician education.

The research component of the ADTI allows researchers to evaluate the safety, effectiveness and appropriate use of these medications for treatment of the disease. The government will use this clinical data from individuals currently living with the disease to make an informed decision about funding these medications in the long term. It's anticipated the results will be of relevance not only in B.C., but to a broader, international audience as well.

"We're grateful for the countless individuals and families who've been a part of the journey to this point"

The ADTI also creates an opportunity to provide quality information to the medical community that will enhance care and support. People are increasingly being diagnosed in the early stages of dementia, and at a younger age than in the past; through this initiative, it should be easier for physicians to work more closely with the Alzheimer Society in providing support to those individuals and their families.

Alzheimer's Drug Therapy Initiative

How you can get involved

Although not all persons with Alzheimer's disease will benefit from receiving coverage of these medications, if you feel that you or a member of your family may benefit, you should arrange a visit to your family doctor. They will ask you some questions to determine whether or not you are eligible to participate in the Alzheimer's Drug Therapy Initiative (ADTI).

Under the ADTI, PharmaCare coverage of cholinesterase inhibitors is being made available through the Special Authority process. To receive coverage of these medications, individuals must be assessed by their doctor to determine if they qualify to participate in the initiative. Eligibility for coverage is established once the Special Authority request is approved. Coverage is not retroactive and is subject to the patient's PharmaCare plan rules, deductible and family maximum.

If you have already been prescribed these medications and your physician determines that you are eligible to participate in the initiative, PharmaCare will also grant Special Authority approval for coverage of these medications.

If you are able to participate and agree to take the medication, you will be asked to visit your doctor at least once every six months to have your

eligibility reassessed. It is important that these reassessment appointments be scheduled at least two weeks before your Special Authority approval ends to ensure there is no break in coverage.

Further information can be accessed at the Ministry of Health website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme/adi/.

Interviews with individuals, families and caregivers affected by Alzheimer's disease are an important component of this research. We encourage you to contact the Centre on Aging at the University of Victoria at 1-866-511-2594 to participate in follow-up studies.

— From the Ministry of Health



Moving research forward on the West Coast

Dr. Howard Feldman has been awarded the *Ralph Fisher and Alzheimer Society of B.C. Professorship in Alzheimer Research* at the University of British Columbia, a position that will significantly enhance the capacity to diagnose, treat and prevent Alzheimer's disease here in B.C.

"We need to focus on turning research into tools for doctors to help those affected by dementia," explained Rosemary Rawnsley, Executive Director of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. "Our involvement in this partnership is a reflection of our commitment to the importance of research, and to building the research infrastructure here in B.C."

Funding for the professorship came through a partnership between the Alzheimer Society of B.C., the Fisher Foundation, and the UBC Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Feldman has accepted the award in name only; the accompanying funds will support the research of young clinician scientists at the UBC Alzheimer Clinic. In keeping with the original goal for the endowment, the money will help translate research knowledge into clinical practice that directly benefits the community.

Dr. Howard Feldman is Director of the UBC Clinic for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders, and Head of the Division of Neurology at UBC. He is

internationally recognized for his studies related to Alzheimer's disease and mild cognitive impairment.



On hand to announce the Professorship were (L-R) Dennett Bryson and Peter Young, Ralph Fisher Foundation; Dr. Howard Feldman; Rosemary Rawnsley; Dr. Gavin Stuart, Dean of Medicine, UBC; and Dr. Max Cynader, Director of the Brain Research Centre, UBC.

A triumph for Alzheimer's

There's something indescribable – utterly beyond words – about standing 19,340 feet up looking out over the world, a mountain beneath your feet and nothing but sky above.

Indescribable...but the members of the 2007 *Ascent for Alzheimer's* team will each have their own way of defining their triumph.

"All those months of training, the endless evenings on the treadmill angled at full tilt, weekends hiking to get the muscles trained, the constant mental push – it all dissolved into that one moment," reflected Ariela Friedmann, a member of this year's team.

"Everybody on the team has been touched by dementia one way or another," she added. "What made this really special is that everything we went through to reach that summit was for a cause far greater than us – the Alzheimer's cause."

More than an incredible personal accomplishment, *Ascent* is a heartfelt tribute to people whose lives have been changed by dementia. This year's team alone fundraised more than \$190,000. "I know how important it is to support the Alzheimer Society because I know what a difference the funds raised make in the

lives of people impacted by this disease," said Friedmann.

Since the fall of 1998, more than 114 Canadians have literally climbed mountains in the fight against Alzheimer's. These individuals, aged 14 to over 65, have chosen *Ascent* as the way to experience this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, in part because we have a more than 90% rate for a successful summit of Mount Kilimanjaro – and a 100% success rate for safety.

Someone in B.C. develops dementia every 40 minutes. Each dollar raised through *Ascent* goes to support British Columbians impacted by dementia through research, education, information, and support.

If you're interested in joining the 2008 team, contact Sandra Girard at 604-742-4920, toll-free 1-800-667-3742, or email sgirard@alzheimercbc.org.

Thank you to the generous sponsors of the 2007 Ascent for Alzheimer's team, including presenting sponsor Webber Naturals, BC Medical Association, Canada Wide Media, Concert Properties, Glentel, Leon Judah Blackmore Foundation, Mark's Work Warehouse, and Scotiabank.

Ascent 
for Alzheimer's
ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF B.C.
Presented by Webber Naturals

*September 17, 2007
...I am standing on the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The sun is kissing my forehead, momentarily pushing aside the only hours-old memories of blowing snow...In front of me is a wooden sign I have seen in countless pictures, other people's realities. This time, it is my reality. "Congratulations. You are now at Uhuru Peak Tanzania 5898m. Africa's highest point, the world's highest free-standing mountain. Welcome."*

I touch the board and realize I am crying.

- Ariela Friedmann



Start your year on the right foot and step out for Alzheimer's

On Sunday, Jan. 27, thousands of British Columbians will 'step out' to support people living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia as part of the 6th annual *Investors Group Walk for Memories*.

The *Walk* is a fundraiser that supports programs and services delivered by the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Events will be held in communities around the province, including Chilliwack, Courtenay, Dawson Creek, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Penticton, Prince George, Vancouver, Vernon, Victoria, and White Rock. The *Walk* in Nelson will take place on Sunday, Feb. 3.

Each *Walk* event is organized by local volunteers and honours people in the community whose lives have been touched by the disease. Last year's event raised more than \$372,000!

It's easy to get started as an individual participant, or to start your own team. Go to www.walkformemories.com and sign-up online, or register in person through your nearest Alzheimer Resource Centre.

Once you've registered, use the online fundraising system to create your personal *Walk* webpage. Include your fundraising goal, a photo and your own message, and send emails to your friends asking for support – or encourage them to join you!

Starting your own team is simple. Get your friends and family to join you – or recruit people you volunteer with, play sports with, or form a team with people at work! Add some friendly competition between group members – or with another team. Challenge other departments in your office, other community groups, or even family members participating in other

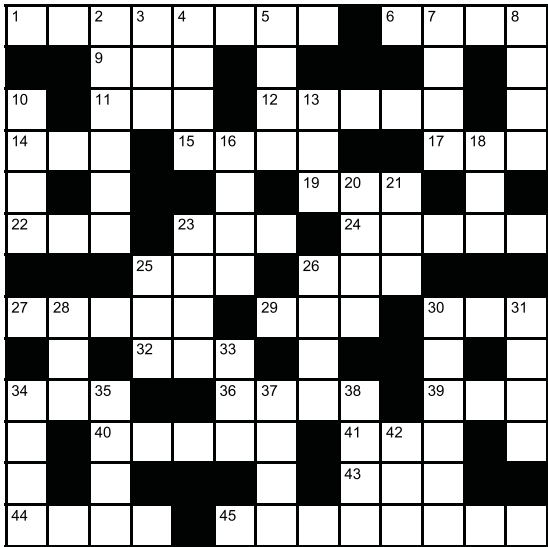

Walk 
for Memories
ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF B.C.

communities. The top fundraising team in the province \$250 towards a night out for the team.

Start 2008 on the right foot – or your left – and support the thousands of people impacted by dementia in our province by taking part in the *Investors Group Walk for Memories*. For more information or to register, go to www.walkformemories.com or call (250) 382-2033, toll-free 1-800-667-3742.



Crossword



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Across

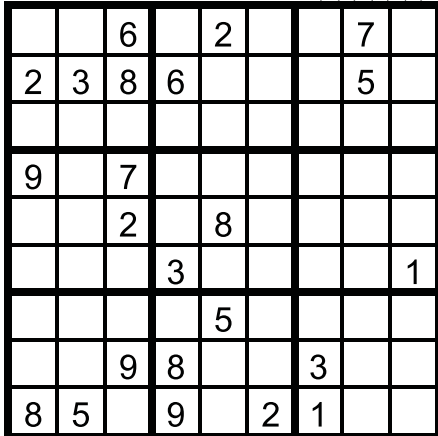
- 1. Real estate game
- 6. Nicholas II, for one
- 9. "___ Maria"
- 11. Dance step
- 12. Nickel, e.g.
- 14. Moo goo gai pan pan
- 15. Woodwind instrument
- 17. Acorns come from this
- 19. Digital display
- 22. Chess pieces
- 23. Shoot for
- 24. Get up
- 25. In poor health
- 26. Shed tears
- 27. Capture the King in this game
- 29. Entirely
- 30. A long way
- 32. Wipe up
- 34. Floral necklace
- 36. Newspaper page
- 39. Mature
- 40. Pace
- 41. Roadhouse
- 43. Relax
- 44. Souvlaki meat
- 45. Capture the flag in this board game

Down

- 2. Serviette
- 3. Egg cell
- 4. Mexican currency
- 5. Airport pickup
- 7. Launch site
- 8. Capture territories with this board game
- 10. Did laps, say
- 13. Moray, e.g.
- 16. Get-out-of-jail money
- 18. Pack animal
- 20. British nobleman
- 21. Free from moisture
- 23. In addition
- 25. Doctrine
- 26. Who did it board game
- 28. Chromaticity
- 30. Rim
- 31. Atoll protector
- 33. Music genre
- 34. Loaf around
- 35. Part of a list
- 37. Display of sulkiness
- 38. Prima donna
- 42. Web

Sudoku

Level Medium ★★☆☆☆



Solutions page 6

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To solve a Sudoku Puzzle, every number from 1 to 9 must appear in:

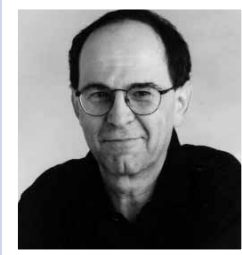
- Each of the nine vertical columns
- Each of the nine 3x3 boxes
- Each of the nine horizontal rows

Remember - No number can occur more than once in any row, column or box

Dr. Hister's Corner

Healthy Choices for a Healthier You

It's nice to know that sometimes I get things right.



You see, a few years ago, I wrote an article about Alzheimer's disease (AD) in which I boldly predicted that the risk factors for AD would turn out to be pretty similar (if not identical) to the risk factors for coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, and many types of cancer.

It's not that I'm a genius or even particularly prescient (although I wouldn't argue too vehemently if you were to say that I am either or both – no one in my family ever does). It's just that back then, the more studies I read about AD, the more convinced I became that we can reduce our risk of getting AD, and that it's largely caused by many of the same poor lifestyle choices that underlie heart disease and the other conditions I mentioned earlier.

And happily, I'm thrilled to say that that's the direction much of our new research findings are taking us: AD is often an end-product of an unhealthy lifestyle, which consists of the "same-old, same-old". To that end, several recent studies have come to the conclusion that the more you smoke, the less exercise you do, the more overweight you are, the more alcohol you drink above that hard-to-define-exactly "moderate" intake level, and the poorer your diet, the higher your risk of cognitive decline in your senior years – and eventually the higher your risk of AD.

So can you always prevent AD? Pretty clearly, the answer is "no".

First, some cases of AD are obviously due to a genetic predisposition to get AD – and you just can't outrun your genes, I'm afraid, much as some of us might want to.

Second, and most important: we certainly don't know all the risk factors for AD and, as I always underline when discussing any condition, sometimes, "bad things happen to good people".

Even if you live a totally pristine life, do vigorous exercise twice a day, never gain a pound from the time you become an adult, drink no more or less than the commonly agreed on "moderate" level of 1-2 glasses of wine a day, are a lifelong vegetarian, and even if you continually challenge your brain by doing endless crosswords and learning new languages every three weeks, you might still develop AD. "Bad things happen to good people."

That aside, it's also pretty clear that you can significantly lower your risk of AD by following those healthy lifestyle practices mentioned earlier. And the great big bonus is that by doing those things, you also lower your risks of all those other nasty conditions you really don't want to develop.

Sorry, got to go now. I just realized that I didn't finish that New York Times crossword puzzle from the weekend. Hey, I actually practice what I preach.

Cut out these guides and place them somewhere handy.

Mind

Healthy brains need protection and stimulation

Challenge and stimulate your brain: keep learning new ideas and make a conscious effort to train your brain.

Keep your sense of humour and be positive.

Manage your mood: combat depression and anxiety, and control stress, because these all have negative effects on memory and brain health in the short and long term.

Expand your horizons, and try new healthy experiences.

Try to understand the perspective of people with different viewpoints.

Spirit

Healthy brains need purpose, perspective, and social connections

Stay active by working or volunteering; productive people tend to live longer, be more content, and reduce their risk of developing dementia.

Hobbies: community and congregational groups are excellent ways to stay active and engaged.

Develop a spiritual perspective: meditate, pray, or spend time in nature.

Maintain good social connections: many activities like dancing, chess, playing cards, and scrabble combine brain stimulus with socializing.

Body

Healthy brains need healthy bodies

Maintain a healthy heart and good circulation by exercising regularly – a minimum of half an hour of walking daily. Swimming, cycling, aerobics, weight training, jogging, and dancing are also excellent.

Monitor your blood pressure, body weight, and waistline.

Check your cholesterol, homocysteine, B12, and folate levels. Eat fresh, whole foods, B vitamins and a varied diet rich in antioxidants, which can be found in strongly coloured fruits and (especially) vegetables.

Eat at least two servings of fish each week, especially oily cold-water fish.

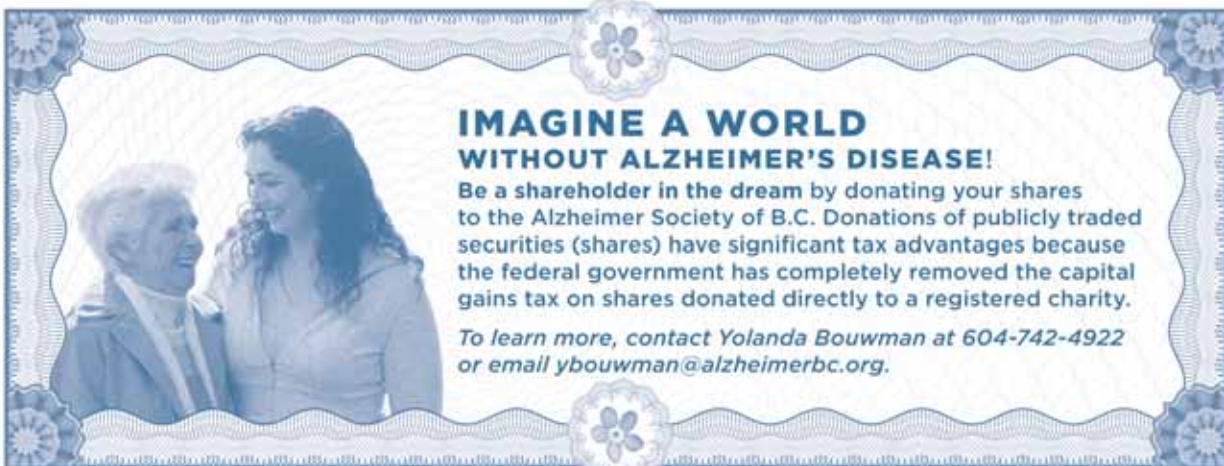
Drink lots of water and green tea: if you drink wine, have no more than one glass a day.

Maintain your blood sugar. Snack on almonds, walnuts, vegetables, and fruit, instead of muffins and chips.

Avoid processed foods.

Ensure you get sufficient refreshing sleep, which is essential to learning and mental fitness.

Protect your brain from injury and toxins by wearing a helmet and avoiding pollutants and drugs.



IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE!

Be a shareholder in the dream by donating your shares to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Donations of publicly traded securities (shares) have significant tax advantages because the federal government has completely removed the capital gains tax on shares donated directly to a registered charity.

To learn more, contact Yolanda Bouwman at 604-742-4922 or email ybouwman@alzheimercbc.org.

Dementia Helpline volunteer



Beryl Cole is one of many volunteers who provides telephone-based support through the Dementia Helpline.

"I learn so much by being here, and I can really connect with people on the front lines," said Beryl Cole, a retired social worker who's been a Dementia Helpline volunteer for just over a year.

Available through a toll-free, province-wide number, the Dementia Helpline is staffed by trained volunteers and Alzheimer Society staff who can provide information on:

- Understanding Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
- Getting a diagnosis
- Maintaining independence and planning for the future
- Caregiving
- Support groups
- Information about upcoming workshops and seminars
- Resources in your community.

Call toll-free 1-800-936-6033 (Lower Mainland 604-681-8651), Tuesday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Dementia Helpline is supported in part through generous donations by the London Drugs Foundation, and the Province of British Columbia.

Coming to a phone near you

Starting in January 2008, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. will offer free teleworkshops, over a period of three months, as we evaluate a new way of delivering programs.

Delivered via the telephone, these one-hour workshops will focus on specific topics. Sessions will be supplemented simultaneously with online presentations – however, Internet access is optional.

Registration and participation will be easy. Once you've registered, a representative will contact you before the scheduled workshop to explain how to connect using your telephone. On the day of the workshop, it will be as simple as calling the phone number, entering an access code, and joining in!

More information about course topics and registration details will be posted before the end of December on our website, www.alzheimerbc.org.



Thank you to all of the generous supporters who help fund the programs and services of the Alzheimer Society of B.C., including:

Shaping the Journey

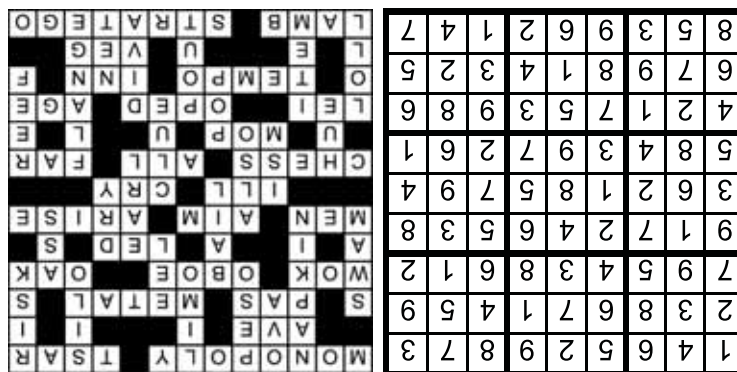


Family Caregiver Series



Shoppers Drug Mart
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Puzzle solutions



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