

Summer 2019

# The Patients' Voice

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Welcome to the *Patients' Voice* Newsletter

### Quote of the Month:

*"Live a simple life; you will own the most beautiful treasures of the world!" Mehmet Murat Ildan*

## Broccoli and Steak Stir-fry

### Ingredients:

4 Dempster's® Tortillas 100% Whole Wheat (7 inch), warmed  
1 tbsp (15 mL) canola oil  
1 1/2 cups (375 mL) small broccoli florets  
1/2 small onion, sliced  
1/2 red pepper, sliced

1 cup (250 mL) thickly sliced leftover cooked steak  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/4 cup (60 mL) prepared stir-fry sauce  
2 green onions, thinly sliced diagonally  
2 tsp (10 mL) sesame seeds

In wok or large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; stir-fry broccoli, onion and red pepper for 3 to 4 minutes or until vegetables are tender-crisp.

Add steak and garlic to skillet; stir-fry for 1 minute or until heated through. Stir in stir-fry sauce and 1 tbsp (15 mL) water; bring to boil.

Divide stir-fry among tortillas. Sprinkle green onions and sesame seeds over top; fold tortillas over.

Source: Dempster's Bakery Recipes



## Tools to Cope with Feelings of Anger

Anger can range from a fleeting annoyance to experiencing a full-fledged rage. Sometimes, people may experience anger and feel out of control. Anger is a common emotion that many people will experience.

Practically speaking, most people think that feeling anger in certain situations, is normal. If, for example, we are angry about an injustice, there is usually no wrong in it. It's really how we act upon our feelings of anger which are most important. A good action to take is one of patience.

Acknowledging that we feel angry and trying to cope with it is a good idea, because anger often affects our health and wellbeing. It can lead to heart problems, high blood pressure and even headaches.

Here are some tools to help cope with feelings of anger:

Think before you speak

Wait until you are calm, before expressing your feelings of anger

Get some exercise

Take a timeout/break

Try and find possible solutions to the problem

Don't hold a grudge

Take time to think about if the situation that made you angry, will truly matter in the "big picture"- how important is it?

Use humour to release tension

Practice relationship building skills

Talk to a friend or confidante

Seek help: if your anger is out of control, causes actions of regret, or hurts those around you.

Above all, patience always seems to be a good option in controlling our feelings of anger.

Written by Claudia Mendoza

### Sources:

[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org) (American Psychological Association)

"Anger management: 10 tips to tame your anger—Mayo Clinic"



## St. Joseph's plays a role in finding solutions to homelessness

Over 50 people brought their experiences, their knowledge and their passion to St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Building on May 28 at a special gathering that could reshape the future in London for people struggling to find a safe, permanent home. This community conversation on housing brought together patients, families, staff and volunteers at the request of the Patient and Family Advisory councils of St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program.

The City of London is updating its Homeless Prevention and Housing 5-Year Plan, and asked the community for feedback into the plan. The participants at the St. Joseph's gathering know the issues well. Many of their loved ones cannot find stable, affordable housing. Among the many barriers are gaps in support for people making the transition between institutions and shelters.

The participants rotated through eight different discussion groups, each one focusing on a different housing theme. Facilitators, some from community groups such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, wrote down all the ideas and helped identify local needs. The event generated many ideas to help guide the work of London's Homeless Prevention and Housing Services, and left participants feeling optimistic.

Janet Smiaris is actively involved in finding solutions to homelessness and took the opportunity to share her thoughts and experiences. She was surprised to learn just how many agencies are working in London. "I was pleased to find they're all getting together within this room. One of the things that's most important is that they need to get together and work as a team to coordinate everything."

Virginia Dahms was another passionate advocate who was happy to see a spirit of cooperation among the varied groups. "What has impressed me over the course of the afternoon is that there's different agencies, different approaches, and a lot of it has been, 'How can we work together?'"

Janet and Virginia point to a theme that emerged over and over – the coordination of the activities of London's health care institutions, mental health agencies, shelters and transitional housing services could prevent many patients from falling through the cracks.

Rachel Hudson, Patient Council Facilitator, views this community conversation as an important extension of the care provided to patients: "I think we have a very big role. It's very important for us to do whatever we can to help vulnerable populations."

All of the ideas were gathered into a written submission made to the city well ahead of the June 30 deadline. St. Joseph's Patient Council and Family Advisory Council have asked the city to provide an update on how the feedback generated here will be included in the plan.



### The Joy of Being Present

If you are able to give something your undivided attention, you will be able to finish it more efficiently and quicker. Multitasking actually prevents you from completing things faster and better. We fool ourselves with the belief that multiple task lists leave us better.

#### Take a Technology Break or "Fast"

In reality, bringing our mind into the present and concentrating on one task at a time brings us more joy. There are even those who say that one of the greatest ways to find joy is on a technology fast. That means no screen time. Spending time in nature is suggested.

#### How to Bring Your Mind into the Present

When you notice that your mind is wandering bring it back to the present by changing your thoughts. This will have to be done repeatedly. Try reorienting your attention on what is happening. Avoid screen time.

#### Be Consciously Present

Start with a small project and give it your full attention. If your mind wanders, consciously return to it. Follow "How to Bring Your Mind Into the Present". Take time to do things like cooking and walking in nature.

#### Try Meditation

Meditation quiets the mind and makes you grounded in the present. Concentration and contemplation bring you joy. Other activities such as yoga-based breathing, tai chi or simply walking quietly in nature can settle your thoughts.

#### Focus on your Breath

This is just one way of focusing your breath to let go of your thoughts. When you notice your thoughts wandering, take a deep breath in. As you let out your breath, let go of your thoughts. Repeat.

#### Enjoy the Joy You Have

When you feel pleasure, close your eyes and be present for it. Savor the sensation and experience it completely.

Condensed by Susan Salo from Secrets of a Happier Life from Times "The Science of Happiness", pp. 10-17



## The Model of Clinical Practice Review

St. Joseph's professional practice team supports the regulated health professionals who work within all program areas across St. Joseph's (such as nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, recreational therapists, registered dietitians, speech language pathologists and other disciplines), in providing exceptional patient care. The team does this by helping to develop care standards, guidelines, policies and quality improvement initiatives that directly impact front line care, across St. Joseph's. In addition, we provide coaching and support in order to enhance professional development and lifelong learning for our health care professionals.

In an effort to improve the efficiency of the care we provide, we must ensure an ongoing process is in place to review and evaluate our models of care.

As such, we are writing today to share information with our patient, resident and family councils, about a model of clinical practice review that will be taking place across St. Joseph's. The review is being done to evaluate and assess how we provide care within the many varied programs across our organization. The outcomes of this review are expected to improve the consistency of care across St. Joseph's.

Another outcome of the process will be to ensure an ongoing review process is in place moving forward. This is an important step in ensuring we continue to earn the complete confidence of the patients, residents and families we serve.

The model of clinical practice review will formally begin in the fall of 2019. The voices of our patients and families are an important step in this review project. Throughout the process, we will be engaging patients, residents and family members for input and feedback on the care they or their love one, has received at St. Joseph's. The project is still in the planning phases but we will be reaching out to connect and share more information in the near future.

If you would like to participate or have any questions, please connect with either of us at any time;

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## Radical new approach to schizophrenia treatment begins trial

**Exclusive: as evidence emerges that schizophrenia could be an immune system disease, two-year trial will use antibody drug currently used for MS.**

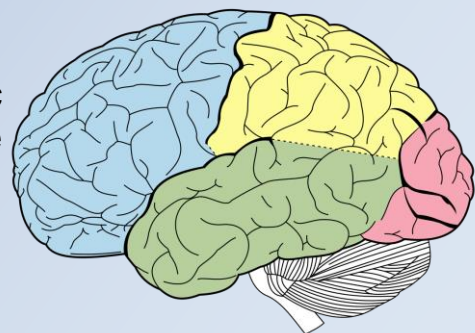
British scientists have begun testing a radically new approach to treating schizophrenia based on emerging evidence that it could be a disease of the immune system. During the next two years, 30 patients will receive monthly infusions of an antibody drug currently used to treat multiple sclerosis (MS), which the team hopes will target the root causes of schizophrenia in a far more fundamental way than current therapies.

The trial builds on more than a decade's work by Oliver Howes, a professor of molecular psychiatry at the MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences and a consultant psychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital in south London. Howe's team is one of several worldwide to have uncovered evidence that abnormalities in immune activity in the brain may lie at the heart of the illness – for some patients at least.

Recent work by Howes and colleagues found that in the earliest stages of schizophrenia, people experience a surge in the number and activity of immune cells in the brain. As well as fighting infection, these cells, called microglia, have a "gardening" role, pruning unwanted connections between neurons. But in schizophrenia patients, the pruning appears to become more aggressive, leading to vital connections being lost.

The most extensive pruning appears to occur in the frontal cortex, the brain's master control center, and also the auditory regions, which could explain why patients often hear voices. The frontal cortex indirectly controls the brain's levels of dopamine – a surge in this brain chemical is thought to explain the delusions and paranoia experienced by those with schizophrenia.

Nearly all existing medications work by blocking dopamine, which can bring psychotic symptoms under control, but fail to protect the brain's basic architecture from damage.



There is a growing appreciation that other, perhaps less well-known, symptoms associated with schizophrenia – memory, cognitive problems, and lack of motivation – can have an equally profound impact on patients, and existing drugs do little to help this side of the disease.

The latest trial, collaboration between MRC scientists and King's College London, involves treating patients with a monoclonal antibody drug, called Natalizumab, that is already licensed for MS. In MS, the brain's immune cells go awry by attacking a different aspect of the brain's wiring. And although the diseases manifest in very different ways, apparent parallels in the underlying biology raise the possibility that the MS drug might help schizophrenia patients.

The drug works by targeting restricting microglia and restricting their movement around the brain, which scientists hope could prevent the over-pruning of vital connections. In doing so, it could potentially address the disease's full spectrum of symptoms.

Belinda Lennox, senior lecturer in psychiatry at the University of Oxford, said the concept behind the latest study was exciting – although at a very experimental stage.

This article illustrates that the mind-body connection should not be forgotten. This research discovery may help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. Who knows what new exciting connections like this will also be made in the future?

Source: Hannah Devlin-Science correspondent;  
<https://www.theguardian.com/sciety/2017/nov/03>



### Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a mental health disorder which can affect people of all genres, ages and walks of life. It occurs when a person gets caught up in a cycle of obsessions and compulsions.

Obsessions are thoughts, images or impulses that occur over and over again and feel outside of the person's control. Common obsessions in OCD are:

- Contamination (e.g. body fluids, germs, etc.)
- Losing Control (e.g. fear of impulse to hurt oneself or others)
- Harm (e.g. fear of responsibility for a terrible happening/occurrence)
- Obsessions Related to Perfectionism
- Unwanted Sexual Thoughts
- Religious Obsessions
- Other Obsessions

The second part of OCD is Compulsions. Compulsions are repetitive behaviors or thoughts used by the person with the intention to neutralize, counteract or make their obsessions go away. Common Compulsions in OCD include:

- Washing and Cleaning
- Checking/Confirming
- Repeating
- Mental Compulsions (e.g. mentally reviewing events, in order to prevent harm)
- Other Compulsions

Most people will have obsessive thoughts and/or compulsive behaviors at some point in their lives—this does not mean we all have “some OCD”. If a diagnosis of OCD is to be made, it would mean that this cycle of obsessions and compulsions becomes so extreme that it consumes an inordinate amount of time and interferes with the important activities a person values.

Source: <https://iocdf.org/about-ocd/>  
Article by Roy Paglione





## Stonehenge

Grey stone  
Wind slapped  
And rain pelted  
Brought from afar  
To this place  
Placed in the ground  
With purpose  
And meaning  
Making a ring  
With some stones  
On top.  
Built by a culture  
but no written records  
I stand before it  
This Stonehenge  
Circular it sits  
Placed by reasons unknown  
A place of worship  
A meeting place perhaps  
I stand before it  
I feel relaxed  
There's something spiritual  
About this place  
I felt it in my spine



These ancient people  
Believed in  
something  
And created  
This Stonehenge

By David Heddington