

Tid Bits...

EXCUSE OF THE WEEK...

I left the clinic with my five carries. I placed them on the dash of my truck and when I turned a corner at high speeds, ALL 5 BOTTLES FLEW OUT OF THE WINDOW! When I went back to get them, I couldn't find any of the bottles. CAN I PLEASE HAVE 5 REPLACEMENT DRINKS?

"QUOTABLES"

"We choose our joys and sorrows long before we experience them".

Kahlil Gibran

What to do when you only have 1 Phone Call!

As unfortunate conditions would have it, some of you have been restrained or hospitalized without any advance warning. If it is after your clinic hours, and in order to ensure that you can still get your proper dose of methadone while you cannot get into the clinic, call our toll free number at 1-877-849-4630. Our after hour service can always be reached. Carry this number with you at all times.



Please respect the fact that our Doctors work very long hours to help you. They will also answer calls after the clinic is closed and on weekends. Please make sure your phone calls to them are emergencies that cannot wait until your clinic reopens. It is better to be able to speak to your own Doctor, as he or she knows you better and how to handle your situation or crisis.

Centre Coordinator

For months now, many of you have seen this person buzzing around your clinic. Many of you have wondered who she is and what she does. After hearing her name, Rhonda Daiter, many of you have speculated that she is Dr. Daiter's wife! Infact she is Dr. Daiter's sister and comes to us with many years of previous management experience. As Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres are rapidly expanding, we are looking to her to help bridge the gap between our clients and Doctors and help to make our clinics more successful for you and in turn us.

If at any time you wish to speak with her to discuss a concern, comment or a compliment, please do not hesitate to contact her. She can be reached by getting a message to any of our clinics at any time.

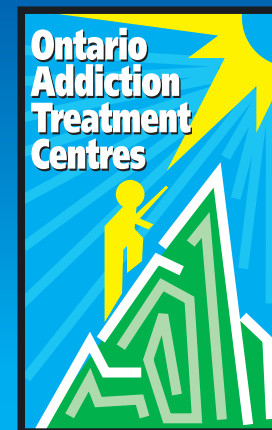
Your Info Centre

Some of you may have noticed a bulletin board entitled "Your Info Centre". There is a white comment box located next to it. This board will be filled with current information to help you be informed of changes in the clinics and information related to your program. Please use the comment box freely to express your comments or concerns that you have. The only person to read these letters is Rhonda Daiter, the Centre Coordinator. She will then decide the appropriate response and with the consent of the author, she would then publish the response. In some cases, the comments or concerns may need to be addressed with the Doctors.

How You Can Contribute

This Newsletter will become a regular feature. Please watch for it in the months to follow. We hope that it will offer a good way to communicate to everyone what is happening throughout the Clinics.

We would strongly encourage any submissions from any of our clients. If you have something interesting to share, a particular story or comment or story of achievement that you would like to submit, please submit it preferably by email or printed letter addressed to Rhonda Daiter at any of your clinics receptionist area, or in the comment box in each clinic. It can also be submitted by email to **Rhonda Daiter at info@oatc.ca**.



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20 Owen Street
Barrie, Ontario L4M 3G7
Tel: 705-730-0286/0289
Fax: 705-730-0287
Toll Free: 1-877-849-4630

KITCHENER CLINIC
509 Park Street
Kitchener, Ontario N2J 2Y9
Tel: 519-746-1919
Fax: 519-746-1563

MISSISSAUGA CLINIC
3047A Hurontario
Mississauga, Ontario L5A 2G9
Tel: 905-279-4848
Fax: 905-279-6934

NORTH YORK CLINIC
1050 Finch Ave. W. Ste. 202
North York, Ontario M3J 2E2
Tel: 416-736-6279
Fax: 416-739-1810

OAK RIDGES CLINIC
13085 Yonge Street, St. 1B
Richmond Hill, Ontario L4E 3S8
Tel: 905-773-5395
Fax: 905-773-1361

WOODBRIIDGE CLINIC
830 Rowntree Dairy Rd., Unit 14
Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 5V2
Tel: 905-264-1143
Fax: 905-264-1153

SPECIMEN COLLECTION CENTRES

Lindsay
GUARDIAN DRUGS
189 Kent Street, West
Lindsay, Ontario K9V 5G6
Tel: 1-705-328-1999 (ALI)

Orillia
DOWNTOWN DISPENSARY
25 Front Street, South
Orillia, Ontario L3V 4S1
Tel: 1-705-325-4010 (SID)

Owen Sound
PARKER PHARMACY
1050 2nd Ave. East
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 2H7
Tel: 1-519-376-0690 (PETE/MARC)
Fax: 1-519-376-6044

Beat Hepatitis C

The doctors at The Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres are pleased to announce that we have recently begun to enrol various clients into the "Rebetron Program". Rebetron is a unique combination regimen consisting of two medications, Interferon and Ribavirin.

Taken together for periods of between six months and one year, Rebetron can offer response rates of between 25% and 47%.

While side effects can be significant, they are also highly variable.

Nevertheless, it offers one of the few opportunities to undo some of the potential damage that your liver has suffered as a result of your Hepatitis C infection.

While potentially expensive, almost everyone in our Centres will be afforded the medication free of charge.

Should this program interest you, please contact

one of the nurses at your Clinic and they will put you in contact with Diana Doherty, one of our nurses who will be helping you with this effort.

Should you have any other specific questions related to this, please

speaking to your doctor and we will try and answer you.



Psychologist and Psychotherapist Join the Team

Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres offers a number of options for persons seeking drug counseling and psychotherapy. As you are well aware, such aftercare is an important part of recovery from alcohol and drugs. Both individual and group counseling are available to patients of all clinics. There are a number of options for patients. Services are provided by Dr. David Teplin, Clinical Psychologist, Ms. Terry McQuaid, a Master's level

psychotherapist, as well as Master's level residents under the supervision of Dr. Teplin. If you are interested in drug counseling and psychotherapy for yourself, please feel free to discuss this further with your doctor so that appropriate arrangements for a referral can be made. In some instances, your doctor may also request that you undergo a psychiatric consult in order to gain an understanding of what issues you are facing.

Get Informed. Get Tested. Get Treated.



The “Clinic” Corner

Over the last while, many of you have seen a number of changes throughout the clinics. For those who have been with us for more than a few years, you have witnessed an expansion of our clinics. There are now over 15 doctors who have joined our team to service a growing number of patients throughout Ontario. We have added specimen collection centres in three pharmacies hoping to put full clinics in place as soon as the client population warrants it and more good doctors are able to join us. Our objective is to allow more accessibility for our patients, making it easier to stay successful on our program.

The clinic most of you are familiar with is our Oak Ridges Clinic. Dr. Jeff Daiter, Dr. Michael Varenbut, Dr. Paul Perlon, Dr. Martha Richardson and Dr. Melissa Adler all work from this clinic.

As you may have noticed, we have undergone some extensive renovations in the clinic. This new design is aimed at having the nurses and receptionists interact better with the clients for better

service. We appreciate your patience in this matter.

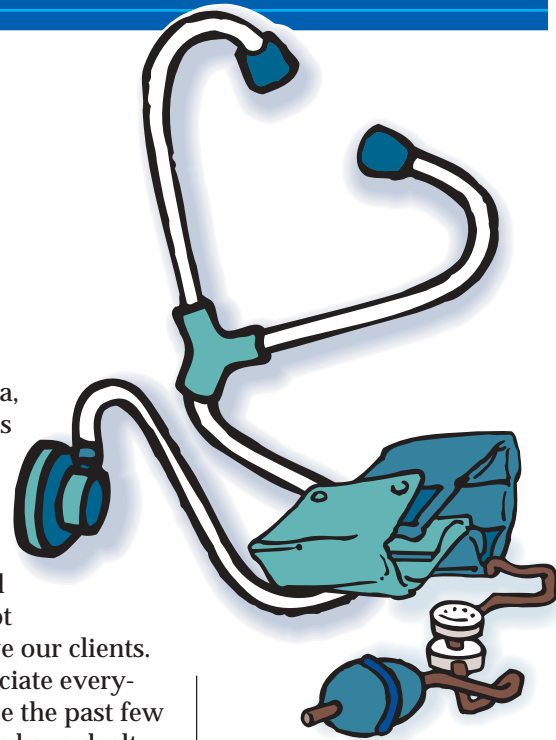
Dr. Perlon also works at the Woodbridge Clinic, as does Dr. Trevor Gillmore. We are pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Iris Greenwald to Woodbridge, who is available to see new patients, on Wednesday evenings between 4:00 and 7:00 pm.

Our third clinic, the Barrie Clinic, is rapidly growing. Dr. Daiter and Varenbut still visit there weekly, and Dr. Mitch Whyne and Dr. Gus Zachos also work there. We are happy to have Dr. Stephen Onlock now working with us. We look forward to Dr. Paul Wilson joining us in the near future.

Our Waterloo Clinic, the 4th of our group, is receiving a new name. Since we are now located in Kitchener, we will now be called the Kitchener Clinic. We have designed a larger

reception area, more doctor’s offices, a large group room and an in-house pharmacy, all in the attempt to better serve our clients.

We appreciate everyone’s patience the past few months as we have dealt with small quarters and a shortness of staff. We do hear you and we are trying to make it better. Please note a few of the other changes made at our Waterloo Clinic. Dr. Nathan Frank will now be available all day Mondays and is taking over for Dr. Varenbut’s patients. He is no longer there on Wednesday. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Yasmin Keshavjee is joining us on Tuesdays, from 9:00 – 12:00 and will be happy to take new patients.



Our newest additions are the Mississauga Clinic and the North York Clinic. Dr. Sheldon Hirshkop and Dr. Michael Kirzner are currently very experienced Methadone prescribers and share the same philosophies that all our clinics have. We are pleased to have them working as Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres.

We are looking forward to the 3 other sites joining us. They are in Lindsay, Owen Sound and Orillia.

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What is Harm Reduction?

Methadone maintenance treatment programs (MMT) all have the same goal, and that is to free patients of an addiction to opioid, or narcotic, drugs. These medicines include heroin, morphine, dilaudid, percocet/percodan, codeine, etc. Methadone acts as a substitute for these more harmful drugs, while lessening and eventually eliminating withdrawal symptoms as the patient’s opioid of choice is discontinued. As well, methadone will block the “high” that one gets from other narcotics. MMT programs follow the principals of either full abstinence or of “harm reduction”. Full abstinence, as the name implies, recommends that all potentially addictive substances must be discontinued completely and at the same time to improve the opiate-addicted patient’s odds of kicking his/her drug habit. There have been studies that show that patients who attempt to quit alcohol, smoking, cocaine, opioids etc. all at once stand a better chance at sobriety than if they try to quit each habit separately, but different choices must be available for different people. The “harm reduction” model allows for more tolerance of human frailties and the acceptance that a reduction of drug use and dangerous behaviour is better than no change at all. The term “harm reduction” evolves

from the findings that patients using methadone instead of heroin, for example, are at lower risk of dying from overdose, are at much lower risk of contracting infections as a result of needle use (such as hepatitis B and C, H.I.V. infection, local abscesses from needle pokes etc.), and are less likely to meet with violence from activities surrounding the funding of their habit. Society also benefits from “harm reduction” in the diminished crime that an expensive drug habit often creates, and from the limit in spread of lethal diseases. Whereas “harm reduction” MMT programs still have the same final goal, and that is total disuse of all illicit drugs, patients in one of these programs are less likely to feel “punished” for occasional lapses in judgement, and positive life changes are emphasized rather than dwelling on the negatives. As with many situations in which an individual contemplates change, it is preferable to have a choice; those individuals wishing to enter a methadone program

have the choice of an abstinence or “harm reduction” model, and will

hopefully find the program to which they are best suited.

Buprenorphine

Now Available

As many of you know, it can often be difficult to wean off methadone, especially at doses below 20 mg. For those who have tried, you know how frustrating it is to realize that your only course of action is to increase your dose again.

Now, there is hope. Buprenorphine is a new drug, not yet commercially available in Canada, that makes the taper much more tolerable. As a “partial agonist”, it is less tightly bound to the brain’s receptors than methadone and so is easier to taper.

At the present time, we have had to access the Special Access Program of the Health Protection Branch to get the special release of the medication through Schering Canada.

To date, we have only a handful of people on it. However, it appears to be working quite well!

Probably, the biggest challenge for treatment with Buprenorphine is successfully converting to it from methadone. Ideally, you should be at a dose of under 30 mg of methadone.

Once committed to making the change over, you will need to skip one or two doses of methadone. The idea is to be in withdrawal prior to taking the first dose of Buprenorphine. Otherwise, the transition to it will likely make you feel worse! Talk to your doctor for a more thorough explanation.

Remember, this medication represents just one more ‘tool’ that we can use to conquer this disease. It is not for everyone but for some, it will offer a new ray of hope.

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