



BC Epilepsy
Society

Improving lives.
Inspiring courage.

E-NEWS RELEASE

February 15, 2016



Become one of the
THE 100
Champions

**ARE YOU A
BUSINESS, PERSON, or GROUP
that can pledge \$100 a month
for 3 months towards
EPILEPSY EDUCATION in BC?**

**Visit www.bcepilepsy.com
for more info and to register**



BC Epilepsy Society is looking for 100 Champions to improve access to epilepsy education. If you are a business, person, or group that has it within your hearts and means to donate \$100 a month for 3 months, then we need you to champion epilepsy education and awareness.

As one of the 100 Champions, you will enable the BC Epilepsy Society to:

- provide an accessible education series by broadening our reach province-wide via webinars and video.
- deliver the most current content and events by increasing the capabilities of our website.
- focus on connection and engagement with our community.

We need you to make it possible.

Please click [HERE](#) to register.

Drug Shortages becoming Critical

An Open Letter from Suzanne Nurse, Chair, CEA/ACE Drug Shortages Committee

The Drug Shortages Committee has prepared a statement on drug shortages, and background summary. Please click [HERE](#) and

[HERE](#) to view the files.

Unfortunately, the divalproex sodium shortages that we've been following for the past few months have gotten significantly worse. Currently, there is a serious shortage of divalproex sodium (Epival) in Canada. It has been getting harder to find all forms of this drug, generic and brand.

There might be variability in supply from one pharmacy to another. We advise people who take divalproex sodium (Epival) to contact their pharmacist and ask about the supply of their medication.

If the drug store is out and the pharmacist is unable to order more stock from their suppliers, there may be medication available from other drug stores in their network or through other pharmacy chains. Supply becomes harder to find the longer a shortage lasts.

If the pharmacist cannot find any supply of the drug, the person should contact their healthcare provider.

There is no formal surveillance of the impact of drug shortages on patients. There are unconfirmed reports that difficulty sourcing divalproex sodium has resulted in some people being switched to a therapeutic alternative. The number of people being switched to an alternate drug is unknown. It is also unknown if there are regional differences in the severity of the current situation.

Each province has different approaches to track and communicate information on drug shortages. For example, the British Columbia Ministry of Health provides a spreadsheet with a daily list of drugs in shortage in BC community pharmacies.

There is also a national notification site where pharmaceutical companies can voluntarily provide notice of shortages and estimated return dates: drugshortages.ca

Information on drugshortages.ca estimates a resupply of Apo-Divalproex (Apotex) on April 30, and the private label products, Pro Doc and Sanis Health, on April 30 and May 1, respectively.

The other generic manufacturer, Teva Canada Limited, is expecting to have some more divalproex sodium during February. Due to the severity of the shortage, there will be restrictions on the amount of Teva-Divalproex that pharmacies can order.

Next resupply dates for Teva-Divalproex:

February 12 – 125 mg, 250 mg, 500 mg (package size: 100 tablets)

February 26 – 250 mg (package size: 500 tablets)

February 29 – 500 mg (package size: 500 tablets)

At the end of last week, we believe that there was some additional 250mg Epival (BGP Pharma ULC) released. It could be awhile before the next batches of Epival tablets (500 mg and 125 mg) are available, estimates are May and July, respectively.

The divalproex sodium shortages could potentially affect large numbers of people. However, there are other drug shortages that are also serious. Rectal diazepam gel (Diastat) for the treatment of prolonged seizures is on long-term back-order. There is no date for when this product will be available again.

Another drug we're watching is clobazam. This drug is also in shortage, however, we are not aware if this has escalated to the point where people are unable to get their medication.

Please let us know if you hear of supply problems with these or any other anti seizure medications. For media coverage please see: www.ctvnews.ca/health/health-headlines/ongoing-problem-of-drug-shortages-frustrates-patients-1.2776162

Regards,

Suzanne Nurse

Chair, CEA/ACE Drug Shortages Committee

phone: [519.317.9174](tel:519.317.9174)

email: suzanne@epilepsyontario.org

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Dravet Syndrome family education day, presented by the BCCH Neurology Department

Families came from around British Columbia to learn from the experts and connect with a larger community. Congratulations to all who organized and facilitated this great day. A job well done!



Strategic collaborations between nonprofit organizations can have great benefits. By collaborating, we can all expand our programs, gain access to in-house expertise and become more efficient in the delivery of services for our memberships.

Cindy's Walk on Purple Day

Join us for Purple Day on Saturday, March 26th. A day celebrating community and creating Epilepsy Awareness.

We will be walking in unity from the entrance of Stanley Park south east along the water and ending at the Hamilton Street Grill where we invite you to stay for a lunch social.

To join our walk please register [HERE](#).

Take steps to support people with epilepsy on

PURPLE DAY

An AWARENESS DAY for Epilepsy

Saturday March 26, 2016

Join us
on Saturday for
Cindy's Walk

9:30 AM Registration 10:00 AM Start
\$25 registration fee Children under 13 free

Starting at the beginning of Stanley Park
(Park Lane and Beach Ave)

Traveling South East along the water and

Finishing at the Hamilton Street Grill
(1009 Hamilton Street)

Walk followed by a lunch social
and celebration at the Hamilton Street Grill.



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To register call **604-875-6704**,
email info@bcepilepsy.com
or go to www.bcepilepsy.com



Correction: In the original version of the February newsletter we inadvertently misspelled Dravet. Our deepest apologies.

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BC Epilepsy Society

#2500 - 900 West 8th Avenue | Vancouver, BC | V5Z 1E5
Phone: 604.875.6704 | Fax: 604.875.0617

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*The BC Epilepsy Society is a non-profit, charitable organization,
which provides education, advocacy, and support.*