



IN THIS NEWSLETTER

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Tips on keeping your brain healthy

Shingles: how we might be able to help

Have you seen our Info Centre's new home?

Don't miss Bay Expo - as we showcase the best of the bay

Mark your calendar for May 12 – you won't want to miss the 5th Annual Bay Expo, at the Estabrooks Community Hall in Hubley.

This event, sponsored and hosted by the Seniors Association, showcases the best of the Bay's businesses and organizations, and there is always something for everyone.

The attractions this year will include:

- silent auction
- flea market
- book and jewelry sale
- games and activities for kids.

New this year is a petting pen from Hatfield Farm.

You can come for the day and not worry about getting hungry:



Join us at the Bay Expo
May 12 11:00-3:00pm
Estabrooks Community Hall

Delish Fine Foods will be there with treats. The event is free, but you may wish to bring some cash to purchase items from our exhibitors, or enjoy a snack while you browse. Be sure to join us between 11 am - 3 pm on May 12. Visit www.bayseniors.ca/bayexpo for more information.

Bay Expo volunteers are accepting donations of good-condition items for the book sale, jewelry sale and flea market table (table top items only). New this year – we are looking for CDs, DVDs and VHS tapes. Donations can be delivered to the Community Enterprise Centre (5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road) Mon - Fri between 8.30 am - 4.30 pm.

The Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to provide housing and accommodation options and assistance for seniors, to represent interests of seniors in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area, and to share in development of wellness living for seniors in the area.

Record attendance suggests seniors are eager for information about brain health

It's clear that seniors in the St Margaret's Bay area have brain health on their minds.

Our April meeting featured Dr Tara Perrot, Chair of the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Dalhousie University.

And she drew a record crowd.

Because of the public interest, we're giving more space than usual to our coverage of the meeting.

Dementia in its various forms is a concern for many seniors and their loved ones.

Dr Perrot said dementia is not a part of normal aging, but many factors outside of our control can increase our susceptibility to dementia.

Risk factors of cognitive decline include obesity, diabetes, hypertension and smoking.

How can we reduce the risk of dementia?

There is no magic pill, but (generally) a healthy body = a healthy brain, and 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.'

Dr Perrot also spoke about the impact of other parts of the body on brain health.

She points out that the brain requires a lot of oxygen, which is

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The president of the Seniors Association of St Margaret's Bay, Becky Wickert (left) introduces guest speaker Dr. Tara Perrot, from the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Dalhousie University

Dr. Perrot's top tips for a healthy brain

- Eat a healthy diet – diets high in healthy fats (olive oil, fish, nuts, whole grains)
- Engage in moderate physical activity – regular activity is associated with positive brain changes and it is never too late to start.
- Be social – loneliness can have a negative impact on our brains, similar to smoking.
- Get outside – exposure to nature reduces stress hormones. Gardening is a way to reduce stress and positively impact your brain.
- Consider yoga and/or meditation – improves attention, memory and decision making and reduces cardiovascular risk. Many types of yoga are accessible to all – consider chair yoga.
- Be curious and creative. Exploring things you are curious about reduces the risk of cognitive decline.

For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website www.bayseniors.ca or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email centre@bayseniors.ca telephone 902-820-3334. The centre is located at Unit 1 – 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon, NS, B3Z 4R9. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Dr Perrot takes our questions on brain health

Q: *Are there cultures who have healthier brains?*

A: Folks in the Mediterranean have lower levels of cognitive decline and a high proportion of healthy seniors. A study of people who have reached 100 found a number of commonalities among respondents, one being that they do not overeat, and only eat until they are 80 per cent full.

Q: *Does snoring affect the brain?*

A: Only if there is a constriction, such as sleep apnea, which basically prevents oxygen from reaching the brain.

Q: *What supplements do you recommend:*

A: Probiotics are a great way to support gut health, which has an impact on your brain health. Vitamin D is also important for people in our climate, as we can't make it on our own. And a diet rich in antioxidants is helpful.

Q: *Are there particular activities we could/should be doing to maintain or improve brain health?*

A: You don't need to spend money on programs to support brain health. Improve brain health by using it everyday. Do a crossword puzzle, learn a new hobby, exercise, or read with your grandchildren.



Give your brain a boost

Dr Perrot (above) says challenging the brain with activities you enjoy is the best way to improve your brain health.

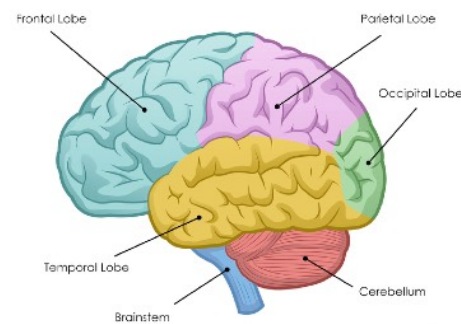
Brain Health

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supplied by the heart. It's not a surprise, then, that cardiovascular disease is a major risk factor of brain decline.

More research is being done on the link between the brain and the gut – the bacteria living in your gut can impact your brain.

The brain is also constantly communicating with your immune system, which changes as we age.

Fast facts about your brain



- Your brain weighs about 3 lb
- That's 2% of body weight
- The brain weighs less than the liver
- The 4 lobes of the cortex each has a different function
- The folds in the cortex enable more executive functions

We're listening

Is there something you would like to share with SASMB members? Send your submission to chantal@bayseniors.ca and we'll do our best to include it in our newsletter.

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Upcoming Events

Tales of the Titanic

May meeting – Thursday, May 17 at 2 pm at Shining Waters Marina.

Deanne Ryan-Meister, President of the Titanic Society of the Atlantic, will join us for a discussion and screening of a documentary on Halifax and it's connection to the ill-fated ship. We'll be serving a Titanic Tea – you won't want to miss it.

Annual pot-luck and BBQ – Thursday, June 21 at Shining Waters Marina.

Our Annual pot-luck and BBQ will be held on Thursday, June 21. Mark your calendar and watch our June newsletter for more information.

News from our partners

The Chebucto Community Health Team is hosting two free programs.

Scheduling Physical Activity into your Work Day will provide practical ideas to improve your health and find time to be active. Monday, May 7, 6 - 8 pm at the St. Margaret's Centre.

Discover Your Best Weight is a 4-week program at Tantallon Library offering strategies to achieve your best weight, while living a healthy lifestyle you can enjoy. Tuesdays, May 8 to May 29, 10 am - noon.

Register for these free sessions by calling 902-460-4560 ext. 2 or check online at www.communityhealthteams.ca.



The new St Margaret's Bay Community Enterprise Centre is now open in Tantallon. If you've looked at the old Mariposa store location at the Crossroads, you may have seen the sign. It's the new home of the Seniors Information Centre. You can drop off donations there for Bay Expo.

Legion flea market and breakfast

The St. Margaret's Bay Legion is hosting a flea market and pancake breakfast on Sunday, June 3 (9 am - 1 pm). Contact Lynn Mclearn 902-823-2893 for information on being a vendor.

Arts and crafts show

The 18th Annual Aspotogan Arts and Crafts Show will be held on Saturday and Sunday, May 12/13 from 10 am - 5 pm at the Blandford Community Centre, 30 Firehall Road in Blandford. For more information visit www.aaandc.org.

Shingles: we may be able to help you

The nerve pain associated with shingles can last for months and, in some cases, years. The Seniors Association encourages its members to discuss the shingles vaccine with their doctor.

The Association may be able to provide financial assistance to members who

- receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or The Allowance
- have never had a shingles vaccination
- do not have a prescription drug plan that will cover the cost of the vaccine.

The number of vaccinations available is limited. Call the Seniors Information Centre at 902-820-3334 or email centre@bayseniors.ca to find more information or apply.

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