

**Welcome
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The School
GeriJournal**

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Dementia Dinner Event

We are very fortunate to have an exceptional speaker, Dr. Nathan Herrmann, with us on the evening of October 5th, to give a presentation on dementia management. Dr. Herrmann is the Head of Geriatric Psychiatry at Sunnybrook Hospital as well as the University of Toronto. He has authored scores of articles on dementia and other neurological illnesses of the elderly and is a highly sought-after speaker.

The lecture will take place at the David Duncan House, near Highway 401 and Leslie Street in Toronto, and will include a wonderful dinner. Space is limited, so please respond early (to randy@geriatrx.com). Registration will begin at 6:45 and the presentation will start at 7:15. Please let us know of any dietary restrictions you may have. We would like to thank Pfizer Pharmaceuticals for co-sponsoring this event.

Stroke Recovery

Depression is quite common in the post-stroke period and antidepressant therapy is

frequently employed. In addition to improving depressive symptoms, cognition and movement benefits relative to placebo, have also been shown.

These benefits have been evaluated at a cellular and chemical level. Rats and gerbils have had blood flow to their brains interrupted, to mimic the effects of a stroke. Different antidepressants were introduced before and afterward, and the response was compared to placebo. In one study, citalopram (Celexa®), given five minutes before flow interruption, reduced the loss of neurons by 70%. Fluoxetine (Prozac®), reduced the infarct area (area of cell death) by 80%. Antidepressants from other classes were beneficial, and significant improvements were also seen with brain cell development and repair.

Gait improved in one fluoxetine study, and independence measures and executive function improved in others. In a study of 104 patients, nortriptyline and fluoxetine reduced mortality, beginning two years post-stroke. The benefit was more pronounced as time passed.

Antidepressants are often an important part of post-stroke care. Potential gains in mental and physical function may be an important bonus.

It's That Time of Year

After the wonderful summer season we've just experienced, it's difficult to imagine that soon, sniffles and sneezes will be all around us. It is once again time to prepare for the arrival of Influenza.

Please send current serum creatinine levels and resident weights to GeriatRx, so we can update our renal function data and assist with antiviral drug dosing. So far this year, all identified strains of the Influenza virus have been sensitive to Tamiflu®. There has been some resistance to Tamiflu® in the past, raising concerns that less desirable agents, such as amantadine and Relenza® might be required.

This year's vaccine contains antigen to both seasonal Influenza and H1N1. As a result, a single inoculation of both staff and residents will suffice this time around. Please contact us if you would like MAR and chart labels for the administration of flu vaccine. The labels are a significant time saver.

We will also be offering our "Flu Shot Challenge" again this year. Many facilities have taken advantage of this offer as an incentive to get their staff members vaccinated. We will send a cheque for \$75 to one freshly vaccinated staff member chosen in a draw in each facility. Good luck!

