



PoliO'Canada

National Polio Survivors Network

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Polio Canada Makes History Canada Post and Polio Canada join to commemorate a milestone in polio history

Canada Post and Polio Canada[®] came together to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Canada's program of universal polio vaccination with a new 50¢ stamp. The stamp was unveiled September 2, 2005 during a special ceremony in Toronto at sanofi pasteur's historic Connaught Campus.

Special guests at the event included: The Honourable Ken Dryden, then Minister of Social Development, Ms. Andria Spindel, President and CEO of March of Dimes Canada, Ms. Elizabeth Lounsbury, polio survivor and Chair of Polio Canada, and Mr. Gordon Feeney, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Canada Post.

The stamp features a celebratory message with colour silhouettes of six children jumping and playing with an image of an old pair of leg braces used by children who were affected by polio years ago. The leg braces were lent to Canada Post for the stamp creation by Polio Canada volunteer Barbara Dowds, who had



Canada Post's 50¢ stamp commemorating the 50th anniversary of the polio vaccine

polio in 1949.

"It (the stamp) illustrates in a positive way that, as a result of polio vaccine, children are free from the fear of contracting this debilitating disease," said Debbie Adams, the Toronto graphic designer who designed the image and

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Members of Polio Canada pose in front of the stamp. From left to right: **Elizabeth Lounsbury** (Chair, Polio Canada), **Andria Spindel** (President & CEO, MODC), **The Honourable Ken Dryden** (MP), **Gord Feeney** (Chairman of the Board of Directors, Canada Post), and **Mark Lievonon** (President, sanofi pasteur).

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Recent Studies

New Research into Post-Polio

Non-invasive assessment of respiratory muscle strength in patients with previous poliomyelitis

Mohamed Gouda Soliman, Sean E. Higgins, Desirie R. Elkabir, Arthur C. Davidson, Adrian J. Williams and Robin S. Howard, Guy's, King's and St. Thomas' School of Medicine, St. Thomas Hospital, Lane-Fox Unit, London, UK
Respiratory Medicine, October, 2005, 99(10):1217-22.

Conclusions

Post-polio patients who are currently on nocturnal ventilation have significantly lower forced vital capacity (FVC), maximum inspiratory pressure (MIP) and sniff nasal inspiratory pressure (SNIP) compared to currently non-ventilated patients. **Non-ventilated patients who were ventilated during the acute episode of poliomyelitis have significantly weaker respiratory muscle strength than patients who were never ventilated.** This study indicates that SNIP is more sensitive to post-polio respiratory muscle weakness than other non-invasive tests. **Thus measurement of SNIP is a valuable tool for monitoring the progression of respiratory muscle weakness due to previous poliomyelitis and this can be applied to other neuromuscular disorders.**

Cognitive functioning in post-polio patients with and without general fatigue.

Ostlund G, Borg K, Wahlin A, Department

of Public Health Science, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*, May, 2005; 37(3):147-51.

Objective and Design: This study examined 2 main hypotheses. First, whether patients with post-polio suffering from general fatigue (n=10) demonstrate cognitive deficits compared with patients with post-polio without general fatigue (n=10). Secondly, by systematically varied test order administration we examined whether such differences varied as a function of increasing cognitive load during cognitive testing.

Subjects: Twenty patients diagnosed with post-polio syndrome, 10 with general fatigue and 10 without fatigue.

Results: Neither of the 2 hypotheses were confirmed. **The group with general fatigue reported elevated levels of depression. However, no systematic association between level of depression and cognitive performance could be detected.**

Conclusion: The results of this study provide no evidence that general fatigue or cognitive load affects cognitive functioning in post-polio.

Effects of lamotrigine on the symptoms and life qualities of patients with post polio syndrome: A randomized, controlled study.

On AY, Oncu J, Uludag B, Ertekin C. Ege University Medical School, Bornova,

Izmir, Turkey. *NeuroRehabilitation*. 2005;20(4):245-5.

The aim of this study is to find out if lamotrigine gives symptomatic relief and enhances quality of life in patients with post-polio syndrome. Thirty patients were randomly assigned to receive or not to receive lamotrigine treatment. Lamotrigine at a daily dose of 50-100 mg was given to the fifteen patients, and fifteen patients were used as the control group. Interventional advice and home exercises were given to all of the patients. Clinical assessments were made at baseline and repeated at the second and fourth weeks by the physician who was unaware of medication. The severity of pain, fatigue and muscle cramps were rated on a visual analogue scale (VAS). Health-related quality of life was measured using the Nottingham Health Profile (NHP). The patient's perceived level of fatigue was assessed using Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS). Comparing to the baseline values, statistically significant improvements were obtained in the mean scores of VAS, NHP and FSS at two weeks and four weeks in the patients on lamotrigine. No significant improvements were reported in the control group. **These preliminary results indicate that lamotrigine relieves the symptoms and improves the life qualities of patients with post polio syndrome.**

Editor's note: This was a small study with a small number of individuals. A larger scale study is needed to confirm these initial findings.

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attended the unveiling.

At its peak, polio was one of the most feared and studied diseases of the first half of the 20th century. But even after Dr. Jonas Salk's discovery of a miracle vaccine in 1955, the polio battle

is prevalent today in a new form.

"Canada played a big role in the development of the Salk vaccine and the eradication efforts in North America," said Kimberley Dowds, Associate Director, Polio Canada. "We still have

more to achieve to help the over 125,000 Canadians living today who have survived polio and are now facing a new foe, post-polio syndrome."

