

# MedicAlert connects

A newsletter for members and supporters of the Canadian MedicAlert® Foundation

## Members speak up

*"When I first made the decision to join MedicAlert, I thought that life has a way of handing you things you never thought would come along. All I know is that I am glad to have my MedicAlert friend with me all the time, and so is my wife! Thank you for just being."*

Bernard C., ON

*"My roommate drove me to the hospital as a rash began spreading all over my body. The doctor requested a penicillin and steroid treatment for allergic reactions. He then noticed my MedicAlert bracelet. My treatment was immediately altered. I suffer from Stevens-Johnson's Syndrome and the penicillin treatment would have taken my life. Thanks to my MedicAlert bracelet, I am here today to tell people about my experience."*

Lucie P., QC

*"In May 2001, I was rushed to the hospital in the middle of the night as I was in epileptic shock. I now wear a bracelet 24 hrs a day. It has saved my life several times. I have been in an accident were it assisted the paramedics and the ER staff. It is difficult to explain the confidence that this little bracelet has allowed me to regain, but I want to say thank you."*

Christina S., AB

## She's a Believer

***After two frightening incidents when MedicAlert spoke for Diane Hudon, she is convinced that membership saves lives***

When Diane Hudon, 57, first started receiving newsletters from MedicAlert with stories about people whose lives had been saved by their bracelet or card, she was a little skeptical.

*"I thought maybe the stories were made up," she laughs.*

Diane is no longer a skeptic. When she fell seriously ill last fall and could not speak for herself, MedicAlert spoke for her. *"If the paramedics hadn't seen my bracelet and read my card, it might have cost me my life."*

Diane has faced many health issues throughout her life. She is hydrocephalic, and has a shunt to drain fluid from her brain. She also has epilepsy, impaired vision and several drug allergies. She purchased her MedicAlert membership after she suffered a grand mal seizure on a city bus 20 years ago.

After two decades of good control, her epilepsy flared up unexpectedly last September. Diane remembers talking to her sister on the evening of August 30<sup>th</sup>. She woke up in hospital five days later. Friends had found her, sitting alone in her apartment, completely unresponsive, on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. While they waited for the ambulance to arrive, she lost consciousness. Later she was told that she probably had three grand mal seizures in a row.



Diane Hudon

*"The Emergency Room doctor told my sister that if I had been alone for one more day, my friends would probably have found a corpse."*

Diane recovered and was released from hospital. On September 21<sup>st</sup> she had a mini-stroke. A home care worker called for an ambulance and she was rushed to hospital again. She was conscious but the paramedics couldn't understand her because her speech had become slurred. Again, MedicAlert spoke for her when she couldn't speak for herself.

Happily, Diane recovered quickly and has been home since late September. She has no doubt about the role of MedicAlert in her miraculous survival story. *"You don't think it can happen to you," she says. "I never imagined that MedicAlert would come to my rescue not once but twice. If my story helps save even one life, that would be wonderful."*



## A Message from the President

Robert Ridge

Around fifty years ago, seatbelts became a common fixture in new cars. Safety conscious citizens pioneered the everyday use of seatbelts to protect their families and themselves. Widespread adoption took decades but today we use them without conscious effort.

Fifty years ago, MedicAlert was formed to link health professionals with critical information needed in an emergency. MedicAlert members were the first Canadians to embrace the concept of managing ones' own health information, and MedicAlert members were the first to manage their own electronic health record. You may not realize it, but you are a pioneer too.

You will hear a lot about Electronic Health Records in the years to come. The development of better systems to share your personal health records promises to increase patient safety and convenience and to lower health system costs. Yet the challenges, primarily around privacy, security and compatibility are ones we still need to overcome.

Rest assured that you have already achieved many of these benefits by being a pioneer yourself, and that your MedicAlert record will continue to be a trusted source of critical information needed in an emergency.

I hope you find the following stories both inspiring and uplifting. It is these stories that validate our mission to help save lives in a medical emergency, in years past and years to come.

I look forward to sharing my views on health related topics with you through my blog and invite you to join me in this open dialogue.

<http://blog.medicalert.ca/robert>

## With Your Help, MedicAlert Saves Lives

*How often do you have the chance to save a life?*

Throughout this newsletter, you have read about people like Diane, Bernard, Lucie and Christina whose lives have been touched and in some cases saved by MedicAlert. When they were unable to speak for themselves, MedicAlert was there for them. Their stories of courage bring to life the important work our organization does day after day.

Proud member Sue Weekes sums it up nicely, *"MedicAlert is a gentle hand in an otherwise overwhelming situation. The bracelet validates that I have this rare disease and need immediate attention in an overwhelmed medical emergency system. I don't look like someone with a bad heart and without the bracelet I'd have a much harder time.... It's so logical, so fundamental and so easy to get the point across."*

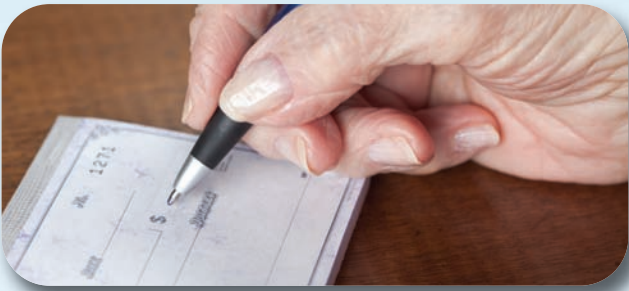


As a registered charity, we rely on the support from people like William, Ethel and other MedicAlert members who donate generously to our organization. They do so because they know that MedicAlert is ready to speak for them if they cannot, and since MedicAlert does not receive any other funding, they want to be sure that others have the same protection. Their stories of generosity inspire us all.

Every contribution made to MedicAlert by members like you, makes a difference and we would like to thank you for your support.

By giving to MedicAlert, you are working with us to continue our charitable mission . . . and save lives.

## Why I Donate



*"I was born with only one kidney, so for me MedicAlert started early in life. I can't remember a time that I didn't have a membership, and my father had one before me. I wanted to make sure that if I got in an accident, the doctors would know that I had one kidney. Then I developed diabetes, had surgeries, and had a heart attack and a stroke. I've made donations to MedicAlert over the past 10 years or more because there are other people who can't afford this service. This is one of the ways I can give back . . . I can help save a life."*

William F., ON

*"At the age of 70, I found out that I was allergic to penicillin. A neighbour of mine heard someone making a presentation about MedicAlert and brought me some information. It seemed like a great idea to belong. I wear the bracelet all the time. I think it's important that anyone who has an allergy to something, and especially children, should have the protection of MedicAlert. That's why I donate."*

Ethel Mc., ON

*"I got my MedicAlert membership in 1974, when I was first diagnosed with diabetes. It was a way of giving my wife some assurance that if she wasn't with me when I had a problem, she would hear about it! It gives us both peace of mind."*

*We were born in the 30s and we both know what it's like to go without. Today, we're in a lot better position than we were then, so we try to help out anybody who would otherwise do without. I know there are a lot of people who need MedicAlert but can't afford it. That's why we help."*

Evan A., AB

*"I found out I had an allergy to wasp stings when I got stung several times and passed out. Fortunately my wife was there to help me. The paramedics said they didn't know how I survived that time! I've been a MedicAlert member ever since. Why do I support MedicAlert? Because there are some people who need MedicAlert but can't afford it, and I can afford to help."*

John T., AB

## Be twice prepared!

Purchase a Twinject® or Twinject® Twinpack™ and get a **FREE\*** one-year MedicAlert membership renewal



## Twinject® Twinpack™

### Two Twinject® epinephrine auto-injectors

Store Twinject® auto-injectors in multiple locations to ensure protection is always within reach:

- at school • at home • at work
- at camp • and on the go

### One Twinject® auto-injector demonstrator

Practice with the Twinject® demonstrator to feel more confident in an emergency anaphylactic situation.



### FREE MedicAlert membership renewal

Receive a FREE\* one-year MedicAlert membership renewal when you purchase a Twinject® or Twinject® Twinpack™.

**For more details on this Twinject/MedicAlert offer, please visit [www.medicalert.ca/twinject](http://www.medicalert.ca/twinject)**

Twinject® 0.3 mg Auto-Injector (0.3 mL Epinephrine Injection, USP, 1:1000) and Twinject® 0.15 mg Auto-Injector (0.15 mL Epinephrine Injection, USP, 1:1000) are indicated for emergency treatment of severe allergic reactions including anaphylaxis. Epinephrine injections are designed as emergency supportive therapy only and are not a replacement or substitute for immediate medical care. **More than two sequential doses of epinephrine should only be administered under direct medical supervision.**

Please consult the Consumer Information leaflet contained in your product package for important safety information prior to the use of Twinject®.

\*FREE one-year MedicAlert membership renewal for existing members.



## Give the Gift of MedicAlert

Show others that you care about their health and give them \$25 off a new membership! Two gift certificates are included with this newsletter.

## Our New Look

If you haven't visited our website lately, browse [www.medicalert.ca](http://www.medicalert.ca) and see how we've changed. We've heard your feedback and have worked to make it easier for members like you to navigate through the website.



We have trimmed things down to provide you with only valuable and relevant information pertaining to your MedicAlert membership benefits and helpful resources. Our website is updated regularly with special programs, product and offer announcements, so make sure you visit us on a regular basis.

If you have any feedback on ways which we can improve your web experience with MedicAlert, please visit [www.medicalert.ca/contactus](http://www.medicalert.ca/contactus)

## Annual Report Available Online

The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation is now posting the Annual Report online.

Visit [www.medicalert.ca/annualreport](http://www.medicalert.ca/annualreport)



## NEW Catalogue

The enclosed *NEW* catalogue features our complete line of bracelets, necklaces and watches available to MedicAlert members.

More new products will be added over the next year so watch for product flyers enclosed in upcoming newsletters.



[www.medicalert.ca](http://www.medicalert.ca)

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