

THE TADDLER

Discontinuing Proton Pump Inhibitors

By: Joanna Peddle, Nurse Practitioner

What are Proton Pump Inhibitors?

Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) are some of the most commonly prescribed medications around the world. Examples include Nexium, Pantoloc, Prevacid, Losec, Pariet, and Dexilant. PPIs work by blocking acid production in the lining of the stomach. They are effective in the management of a variety of conditions including gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and peptic ulcer disease. They are well tolerated with few short-term side effects, but there are growing concerns with long-term use and overuse of PPIs.



What Are the Risks?

Common side effects of PPIs include:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Rash
- Itching

Long-term PPI use has been associated with the following complications, more commonly occurring in older adults:

- Vitamin B12 deficiency
- Low magnesium
- C. difficile infection
- Fractures
- Pneumonia
- Kidney disease
- Small intestine bacterial overgrowth



Studies are ongoing to help explain why complications arise with long-term PPI use. Some studies have found that people who use PPIs long-term have less diversity in their gut bacteria, with “bad” bacteria overtaking the “good” bacteria. This may be a factor leading to increased risk of infections, fractures, and vitamin and mineral deficiencies. More studies are needed to explain the link between long-term PPI use and these complications.

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There is also evidence of drug interactions between PPIs and calcium carbonate supplements, which require strong gastric acidity for absorption. If people are on PPIs and require calcium supplementation, calcium citrate is often recommended as it does not require high gastric acidity for absorption.

When PPIs are medically necessary, including for Barrett esophagus, severe esophagitis, or history of bleeding gastrointestinal ulcers, then their benefits outweigh their risks. However, once GERD or mild esophagitis symptoms have improved, an attempt to stop or reduce PPIs should be considered after four weeks of therapy. If weaning off is unsuccessful, such as with severe GERD symptoms, then PPI treatment should continue at the lowest effective dose. Attempts to stop the PPI should occur once per year.

How to Wean Off PPIs

If your primary care provider feels that weaning off a PPI is right for you, one of the following strategies may be recommended:

- Reduce the dose to once daily instead of twice daily
- Lower the dose (e.g., from 40 mg to 20 mg)
- Take it every second day for some time before stopping
- Stop daily dose and use on-demand



There is a risk of rebound symptoms when stopping PPIs, and weaning rather than stopping abruptly can help avoid this.



How to Manage Heartburn

PPIs are powerful drugs. Many studies show that more than half of people taking PPIs probably do not need them. Simple heartburn can be managed without the use of PPIs, such as with lifestyle measures including:

- Avoid meals 2 to 3 hours before bedtime
- Eat smaller meals
- Elevate head of bed by 6 to 8 inches
- Stop smoking
- Avoid tight clothing
- Lose extra weight
- Avoid dietary triggers such as: coffee, chocolate, alcohol, peppermint, fatty and spicy foods, citrus fruit, and acidic foods like tomatoes



Occasional use of medications like Antacids (TUMS, Rolaids, or Gaviscon) or H2 receptor blockers (Zantac or Pepsid AC) provide relief and are a safer option than PPIs.

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Mental Health Corner

How to Talk to Your Healthcare Providers About Mental Health

by Marlie Standen, MSW RSW



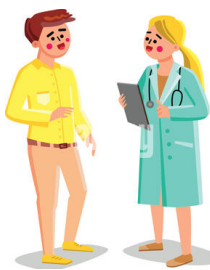
Talking about mental health concerns may feel vulnerable and challenging. Several factors influence the way we think about, talk about, and respond to our own mental health challenges: stigma, early life experiences, cultural background, and gender expectations. The impacts of these factors are valid and they can hold people back from getting help. It is important to feel empowered to speak with your primary care provider about mental health because they can be a support for you and guide you towards the help you deserve.

When Should I Talk to My Healthcare Provider about Mental Health?

Discussing mental health regularly with your healthcare provider can improve your overall care and help proactively identify changes to your wellbeing. Speak to your provider if you notice changes in how you are feeling, thinking, or behaving that concern you or your loved ones or that negatively impact your daily life. Consider speaking with your provider if you feel chronically stressed or have experienced a major life transition, loss, or traumatic experience.

Common symptoms to be aware of:

- Overwhelming emotions that feel difficult to tolerate
- Often feeling low or numb
- Frequently worrying or feeling anxious
- Irritability
- Changes to sleep or appetite
- Trouble concentrating or remembering
- Thinking negatively about yourself
- Not enjoying things you used to



Tips for Starting the Conversation

Before your appointment...

1. Set reasonable goals for the appointment. This process takes time. Initial goals may include explaining your symptoms, asking about options for support, and booking a follow-up.

2. Prepare what to share. Writing down what you want to discuss can help organize your thoughts during the appointment. You may share your symptoms, the impact on your day-to-day life, and current stressors.
3. Prioritize your mental health as the primary reason for your appointment, rather than mentioning it briefly while addressing another concern.

During your appointment...

1. Remind yourself that your provider speaks directly about mental health with people every day. You are not alone.
2. Share your concerns directly, openly and honestly. “I’m hoping to talk with you about my mental health today” or “I’m concerned about [symptoms]; can we talk about that?”. Refer to any notes you made.
3. Ask questions. All questions are valid and important.

After your appointment...

1. Practice self-compassion. Everyone deserves compassion when struggling. See www.selfcompassion.org for more on this.
2. Actively participate in your care by following up with recommendations, appointments, and treatment you and your provider decided on.
3. Be patient with yourself and with the process. It can take time to find the right supports and services and to notice improvement in how you’re feeling.

For more information on mental health and how to ask for help, check out TC FHT’s Mental Health Webinar Series at this link <https://taddlecreekfht.ca/patients/healthcare-resources/> under the “Videos” tab. You may also consider booking a Single Session with one of our Social Workers by calling 416-260-1315.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TADDLE CREEK

By: Sherry Kennedy, *Executive Director*

This column lets you know about Taddle Creek Family Health Team (TC FHT) events, program updates and announcements.

COVID-19 – Resources

On January 7, 2022, we sent a letter to patients registered in Pomelo Health (our patient portal) outlining our approach to the Omicron surge. It answers key questions regarding symptoms, self-isolation, testing, exposure, treatment and when to call TC FHT versus when to seek urgent medical attention. The letter is available on our website [homepage](#). We also have two other resources on our [homepage](#): *Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions* (updated January 24, 2022) and a link to 'Confused about COVID?' from the Family & Community Medicine Department at the University of Toronto (January 21, 2022). This resource addresses the following questions:

- I'm not feeling well. How do I know if I have COVID? What should I do?
- I think I have COVID. When should I call my doctor?
- Do I need a COVID PCR test?
- When should I use a Rapid Antigen Test?
- I've been exposed to someone with COVID. What should I do?
- I'm worried about the new variant. How do I keep safe during Omicron?
- My child has COVID. What should I know?



<https://dfcm.utoronto.ca/confused-about-covid>

Please take a moment to review these resources.

COVID-19 - Accessing Care

To book an appointment at TC FHT, options include calling your provider's office or electronically booking a phone appointment through Pomelo Health (only available for some offices). If you do not have a Pomelo Health account, contact your provider's office and ask them to send you a Pomelo Health invitation.

We also have virtual after hours clinics Monday to Thursday evenings and an on-site clinic on Saturday mornings. Information about our after hours clinics and contact information for all providers is posted on our [website](#).

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Mental Health Webinars

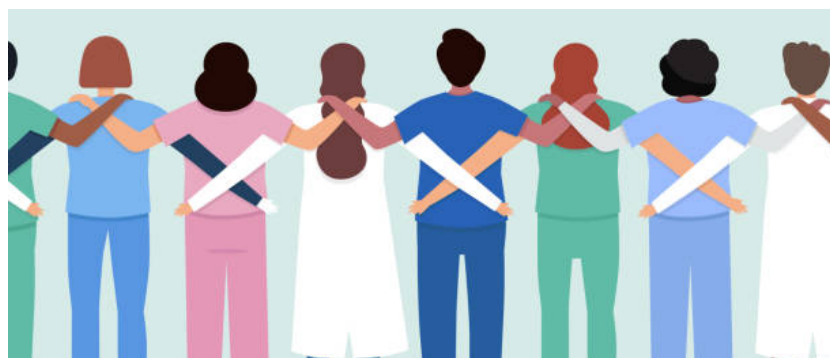
Our Mental Health Program and our Patient & Family Advisory Committee worked together to offer four [Mental Health Webinars](#) in November 2021. Topics included: balancing your emotions, improving your sleep, practicing mindfulness and self-compassion, and how to ask for help. Over 500 patients attended these webinars. See below results from the webinar satisfaction survey. Webinar recordings and resources are available on our [website](#). Go to <https://taddlecreekfht.ca/patients/healthcare-resources/> then click on the 'Videos' tab.

| | | | |
|---|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Q1 - How helpful was this mental health webinar for you? | Very helpful | Somewhat helpful | Not at all helpful |
| | 70% | 29% | 1% |
| Q2 - How satisfied were you with this mental health webinar experience? | Very satisfied | Satisfied | Not satisfied |
| | 67% | 31% | 2% |
| Q3 - How likely are you to recommend this webinar to someone else? | Very likely | Somewhat likely | Not likely |
| | 74% | 24% | 2% |
| Q4 - Would you attend another seminar focused on your mental health? | Yes | | No |
| | 97% | | 3% |

Personnel Announcements

Sasha Adler, a Social Worker in our Home Visiting Program, resigned in December 2021. Sasha had been with TC FHT for 4.5 years providing compassionate care to both community and TC FHT homebound patients. Sasha has accepted a full time position with Elder Care Inc., a role she believes is more suited to her strengths and will build on her skill set.

Sharon Nwamadi, Registered Nurse (RN), joined TC FHT in November 2021 (contract, full time) and will be working in Suite 522. Sharon comes to us with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and 2 years of primary care nursing experience. Welcome aboard, Sharon!



Taddle Creek

DIABETES
DIGEST

Diabetes and Brain Health

By: Karen Finch, RN CDE

Did you know that there is a mounting body of research indicating a possible association between type 2 diabetes and various types of cognitive (mental) impairment in older adults? Although more research is needed, several studies have indicated that type 2 diabetes, particularly when it is left unmanaged, could significantly increase your risk for mild cognitive impairment, vascular dementia, or Alzheimer's disease. Fluctuating blood

sugars (from very high to very low) have also been shown to increase dementia risk in older adults living with type 1 diabetes⁵.

There are different theories as to why diabetes could be harmful to the brain, including:

- Poor blood sugar control can damage the blood vessels, reducing the delivery of oxygen to the brain (increased risk for vascular dementia)
- Elevated blood sugars lead to chronic inflammation in the body which can damage brain cells over time¹
- Type 2 diabetes is associated with other comorbidities and/or risk factors such as hypertension, depression, sedentary lifestyle, smoking and obesity which can also increase risk for dementia
- Decreased insulin levels in the brain and insulin resistance could result in a problem with how the brain cells communicate²
- Elevated blood sugar increases a protein called beta-amyloid that is toxic to the brain cells at high levels (people with Alzheimer's disease have high levels of beta- amyloid in their brain)⁴
- Prolonged high blood sugar in the body degrades the protective layer around neurons (nerve cells) which can affect how nerves communicate with each other and eventually cause cell death

The Good News

If you are living with diabetes there are steps that you can take to improve your diabetes management and potentially lower your risk for cognitive impairment, such as:

- Take control of your blood sugar levels by aiming for a HbA1C less than 6.5-7% and home blood sugar readings between 3.9-10 mmol/L at least 70% of the time (referred to as "Time in Range"

for people using continuous glucose monitoring with the Freestyle Libre or Dexcom meters)

- If you smoke or have a nicotine addiction, talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to quit or cut down. Taddle Creek FHT offers a smoking cessation program which includes free nicotine replacement therapy
- Aim for your blood pressure to be equal to 130/80 mmHg or less by exercising regularly, eating a diet low in sodium (less than 2,300 mg each day) and taking medications if recommended by your primary care provider
- Take your diabetes medications as prescribed. There are some early animal studies that suggest certain diabetes drugs, like GLP-1 receptor agonists, may be beneficial for brain health³
- Have an active and socially rich lifestyle as much as possible (a large body of evidence has shown that this reduces your risk for dementia and/or cognitive decline)

For more information on Alzheimer's disease, dementia and/or diabetes management you can visit these websites:

Alzheimer's Association

<https://www.alz.org/professionals/health-systems-clinicians/cognitive-assessment>

Diabetes Canada

<https://www.diabetes.ca>

If you are living with prediabetes or diabetes and would like support with managing your blood sugar and overall health, please contact the Taddle Creek Diabetes Education Program at 416-204-1256.



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Adult Immunizations; Are You Up-to-date?

By: Andrea Filip, CCPA

Many of us recall having to receive many pokes as children, but do you know that we still need immunizations in adulthood too? In fact, immunity acquired from childhood immunizations can decrease over time. Immunization provides the most effective protection against disease across the lifespan. Many factors are considered to determine which vaccines you need as an adult, including age, lifestyle, health conditions, and past vaccination history ⁶.



Below is a link to Ontario's Adult Immunization Schedule ¹:

[https://www.immunize.ca/sites/default/files/Resource%20and%20Product%20Uploads%20\(PDFs\)/Products%20and%20Resources/Adult%20Immunization/What%20vaccines%20do%20you%20need%20poster/whatvaccines_adult_2019_web_e.pdf](https://www.immunize.ca/sites/default/files/Resource%20and%20Product%20Uploads%20(PDFs)/Products%20and%20Resources/Adult%20Immunization/What%20vaccines%20do%20you%20need%20poster/whatvaccines_adult_2019_web_e.pdf)

For more information about how vaccines work, who they protect, their safety, how they're made, common side effects and more, check out the following website ³:

https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/just-kids-adult-guide-vaccination.html?_ga=1.36947808.1763250279.1483457231



For detailed information on specific vaccines, please refer to previous Taddler articles by visiting:

<https://taddlecreekfht.ca/patients/newsletters/>

- Mumps (Spring 2017)
- Flu shot (Fall 2019)
- Travel Vaccines (Spring 2019)
- Measles (Spring 2019)

A Few Important Updates:

Shingles Vaccine ⁴

- People who have not received the government funded Zostavax and are between the ages 65 and 70 are now eligible to receive the more efficacious Shingrix, which has only been covered by OHIP since November 2020
- You should NOT get a shingles shot if you have had shingles within the past year, but it is recommended you do so thereafter

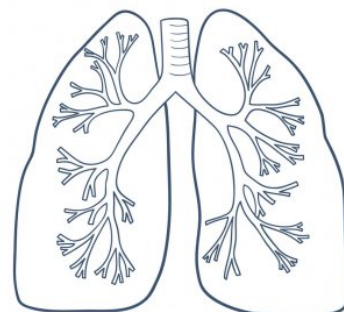
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- Shingrix requires two shots; the second shot must be done within 2 to 6 months of the first shot
- If you have had Zostavax covered by the government, you can still get the Shingrix Vaccine; however, you need a prescription from your primary care provider and it has to be paid out of pocket or by private insurance
 - ✦ You cannot receive Shingrix unless it has been over one year since you had Zostavax
- The Shingrix (Herpes Zoster [HZ] vaccine) monograph was updated on Nov 24, 2021. There is a new indication for:
 - ✦ Adults 18 years of age or older who are or will be at increased risk of Shingles due to immunodeficiency or immunosuppression caused by known disease or therapy ⁵
 - ✦ For individuals who are or will be immunodeficient or immunosuppressed and who would benefit from a shorter vaccination schedule, the second dose can be given 1 to 2 months after the initial dose ⁵

Pneumococcal ⁷

- All people age 65 and over should have one dose of Pneumovax 23, and those who have a chronic illness such as heart disease, diabetes, COPD, splenectomy, or who smoke should also consider getting Prevnar 13 after review with your primary care provider
- Prevnar 13 is not covered for most adults. Speak with your care provider if you are interested in receiving this immunization
 - ✦ If you are going to get this shot it must be at least one year after the Pneumovax 23 shot has been given, however if you receive Prevnar 13 first, you may receive Pneumovax 23 as soon as 8 weeks thereafter
- Pneumovax 23 should be given twice when over 65 years of age for select populations and the second shot should be at least five years after the initial shot



Coadministration of Vaccines:

- NACI has updated their recommendations to allow COVID-19 vaccines to be co-administered with any other vaccines; therefore if you are over 18 years of age and are planning to, or have already received one or more COVID-19 vaccines, you no longer have to observe a waiting period between receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines with one exception:
 - ✦ Those over 65 years of age should avoid getting the flu shot named Fludax® and the shingles vaccine, Shingrix, at the same appointment because the safety and efficacy of receiving them together has yet to be studied.

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Attention Asthma Patients!

Taddle Creek Family Health Team (TC FHT) has teamed up with eAMS (electronic Asthma Management System). If you have asthma, prior to your next appointment with your physician/nurse practitioner, you will receive an appointment reminder via email requesting you register with eAMS. Registering with eAMS can increase the efficiency and productivity of your asthma appointment (you can also register on your own at anytime). Once you register, and complete a simple asthma questionnaire, information from your questionnaire is securely sent to your MD/NP with tailored recommendations to improve your asthma management. These recommendations are in line with the latest asthma research and guidelines. By registering you will also be able to view your personalized self-management asthma action plan and benefit from asthma educational material.



IF YOU HAVE ASTHMA PLEASE CONSIDER REGISTERING TODAY.

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT REGISTERING
CALL 416-260-1315
AND REQUEST THE eAMS

REGISTRATION GUIDE -
[HTTPS://WWW.EASTHMA.CA/PATIENTS.HTML](https://www.easthma.ca/patients.html)

THE TADDLER

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790 Bay Street, Suite 306
Toronto ON M5G 1N8
416-260-1315

Editor: Marlie Standen

Editorial Team: Sherry Kennedy,
Margarita Tkalenko and Sarah Shaw

DISCLAIMER

The information presented in The Taddler is for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for the professional advice, treatment or diagnosis from your health care provider. Contact your physician, nurse practitioner or other qualified health care professional if you have any questions or concerns about your health.

**The purpose of the TC FHT Newsletter,
“The Taddler” is to provide:**

Education on varied health-related topics
Regular communication about what is happening at TC FHT
Information on issues that impact TC FHT and its patients
A means for patients to get acquainted with TC FHT team members
We hope you enjoy reading it!

**The Taddler is not for private marketing purposes*

Taddle Creek Family Health Team

Mar 1 - Jun 1 Groups/Workshops/Drop-In Offerings

Groups/Clinics are open to Taddle Creek Family Health Team patients
 Additional information is available on the Programs and Services drop down menu,
 see website: <https://taddlecreekfht.ca/>
 Dates are subject to change

| Event | Date(s) | Time | Learn About/Assistance With |
|---|--|---|--|
| Mindful Nutrition Group Virtual Call 416-260-1315 Note: MD referral required | Jan 12 - Jul 13, 2022 10 group sessions to complete | Wednesdays 5:00 - 7:00 pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching and maintaining a healthy balance between eating, physical activity and emotional eating Essentials of nutrition and exercise Recognizing and managing emotional eating |
| Intuitive Eating with Diabetes Group Virtual Call 416-204-1256 Note: Only available to patients with prediabetes or diabetes | Apr 20 - Jun 1, 2022 7 group sessions to complete | Wednesdays 5:00 - 7:00 pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a healthy relationship with food, mind and body Getting in touch with your body's signals of hunger, fullness and satisfaction Mindful meditation and relaxation exercises Strategies to cope with anxiety, depression, stress, fear and guilt around managing diabetes |
| Blood Sugar Management Workshop Virtual Call 416-204-1256 | Mar 2, 2022 (Part 1) Nov 9, 2022 (Part 2) Mar 24 2022 (Part 1) Mar 31, 2022 (Part 2) Apr 6, 2022 (Part 1) Apr 13, 2022 (Part 2) Apr 21, 2022 (Part 1) Apr 28, 2022 (Part 2) May 4, 2022 (Part 1) May 11, 2022 (Part 2) May 19, 2022 (Part 1) May 26, 2022 (Part 2) | Wednesdays 9:00 - 11:00 am 9:00 - 11:00 am Thursdays 5:00 - 7:00 pm 5:00 - 7:00 pm Wednesdays 9:00 - 11:00 am 9:00 - 11:00 am Thursdays 5:00 - 7:00 pm 5:00 - 7:00 pm Wednesdays 9:00 - 11:00 am 9:00 - 11:00 am Thursdays 5:00 - 7:00 pm 5:00 - 7:00 pm | An introductory two-part series designed to help individuals living with prediabetes or diabetes. Workshops will be held over Zoom. Part 1: Getting Started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is diabetes? What causes diabetes? How is prediabetes/diabetes diagnosed? How do I prevent long term complications related to diabetes? Is diabetes reversible? Part 2: Taking Charge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I manage my blood sugars? What can I eat when I have prediabetes/diabetes? Can exercise help with prediabetes/diabetes? How does stress impact my prediabetes/diabetes? |
| CBT for Insomnia Group Virtual Call 416-260-1315 Note: MD referral required | May 24 - Jun 21, 2022 5 group sessions to complete | Tuesdays 1:30 - 4:00 pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How cognitive behavioural therapy is used when treating insomnia How our minds and thoughts contribute to insomnia Practical techniques to help you get quality sleep that will promote good physical and mental health Practicing mindfulness to reduce stress and help you get to sleep |