



Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada
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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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What a Difference a Year Makes: Young Woman Faces Battle with Brain Tumours Head On

(Kitchener/Waterloo, ON, May 4) When Erin Voss celebrates her 24th birthday in May, she will be a very different person than she was on the same date last year. In the summer of 2010, the health care aide began experiencing a variety of troubling but unexplained symptoms which led to the diagnosis of a brain tumour. Understandably, Erin's school and professional life have been put on hold as she continues treatment but it has brought her closer to both her family and friends. This spring, Erin, along with her family and friends, are supporting Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's 2011 Kitchener/Waterloo Spring Sprint.

When the headaches, exhaustion, nausea and dizziness began, Erin was first told she was dehydrated. "Then I went back to the doctor and he sent me to the hospital. They gave me antibiotics for a sinus infection." A pinched nerve from work was also suspected. Then her doctor arranged a CT scan where they discovered a fluid build up on her brain. Three days later they did an MRI and found three masses. "One not so big, one medium and an aggressive one at the front of my head," explains Erin. "It was like being smacked in the face."

On September 2, 2010 the former Waterloo Wildfire player underwent surgery for a right frontal craniotomy with tumour removal. It took five hours and it induced a 20-minute seizure afterward, keeping her hospitalized for a week. Then on September 21, 2010, she was told it was cancer. "It was a Glioblastoma, Multiform Stage Four and they were able to remove 95 percent of it but they determined it was malignant," Erin adds. "With the other two, we are hoping the treatments will shrink them." Erin has completed her radiation while chemotherapy continues and will have another follow-up MRI in June.

Even in the midst of this ordeal, Erin continues to think of others. "I was going to lose my long hair so I cut it short and donated it before I lost it," says Erin. "Now my sister, me and my family are volunteering for and participating in the Kitchener-Waterloo Spring Sprint. Even though we don't have a cure right now we do have hope."

An appreciation for life is the advice Erin offers others: "Slow down and enjoy the little things in life. You can lose focus and this has grounded me to get my life together and live it to the fullest. Enjoy what you do and the people that you are with."

Erin is also quick to encourage others to reach out to Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada because of its many support programs. "I've found their website is one of the best out there. We got the children's book and I went through it with my younger brother and it was the right level of learning. I would recommend it to anybody. My family is also part of the Facebook page," explains Erin.

"It's really helped me in knowing that there are others out there and support everywhere. It's such a wonderful organization and I have definitely learned a lot, especially with the handbook. I've even given it out to circulate amongst my friends so they could know too. They're always there for you and now we can be there for Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada."

www.braintumour.ca



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Her hope for the future is, "Ultimately for a cure and advancements that can expand the survival rate. I wish it wasn't as prevalent and others could know more," implores Erin. "There are so many mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and children with brain tumours but there needs to be more help to find a cure. We need to get people involved."

Kitchener/Waterloo Spring Sprint, Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's national fundraising walkathon program, features 2.5 and 5km routes for walkers, joggers and runners at Waterloo Park on Sunday, May 15. The event is run by a dedicated group of local volunteers who are determined to improve the lives of those affected by a brain tumour.

This year the national goal is to raise \$1.5 million to fund research into the cause of and better treatments for brain tumours. This includes research being conducted across Canada including at Sunnybrook Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital and the University of Toronto as well as The University of Western Ontario and London Health Sciences Centre.

"The prospect for all of the research that will be conducted as a result of the funds raised is very exciting," says Susan Marshall, Executive Director of Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. "Our vision is to find a cure for brain tumours and to improve the quality of life for those affected and we all move closer to this reality with the efforts of Spring Sprint."

Donations also support important education, information, and support for the estimated 55,000 Canadians affected by brain tumours such as: the brain tumour support group that meets monthly in Kitchener at the Christ Lutheran Church on Anndale Road; the BrainWAVE program - support for families with a child with a brain tumour; and education opportunities across Ontario and streamed online. Patient care is also improved with health care professional in-services and workshops at local treatment centres.

Event: Kitchener-Waterloo Spring Sprint for Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada
2.5km & 5km walk and run for walkers, joggers and runners
Dates: Sunday, May 15, 2011: Check-in: 9:00 a.m. & Start: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Waterloo Park, Westmount Road Entrance
Register: www.springsprint.ca or 1-800-265-5106

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For more information, please contact:

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Event Website: www.springsprint.ca



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About Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

There are an estimated 55,000 people in this country living with a brain tumour and 10,000 new cases are diagnosed each year, many of those are children. Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada provides information through a free, comprehensive Patient Resource Handbook, live and web-based annual education events, and support through a Canada-wide, toll-free 1-800 line, website (www.braintumour.ca), and 23 support groups that meet monthly across Canada. Brain tumour research is also supported through an annual grants-in-aid program and to date \$2.75 million has been directed to brain tumour research. Please visit Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's website at www.braintumour.ca.

Mission Statement

To reach every Canadian affected by a brain tumour through support, education, information and research.

Vision

To find the cause of and cure for brain tumours while improving the quality of life for those we serve.