



Breast cancer survivor Connie Harbrink taking a moment to reflect.

The pains of chemotherapy

Cancer continued from Page 1

one's affected by breast cancer. The CCS predicts 140 Canadian men will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and 40 will die from it.

Breast cancer normally starts within the glandular tissue of the breast. There are several different types of breast cancer but invasive ductal carcinoma is the most common, accounting for approximately 80 per cent of all cases.

With invasive ductal carcinoma, cancer begins in the milk ducts of the breast and spreads to the surrounding tissues. Harbrink had this form of cancer.

Treatments vary depending on the type and severity of the cancer but Harbrink shivers when she recalls her chemotherapy sessions.

"Don't think for a second I didn't have doubts [about chemotherapy treatment]. Three days before each treatment I'd hit rock bottom because I knew that I had to go and that they were going to put drugs in me and I'd be sick."

To this day, she can't drink anything red in color. One of the tubes that fed the chemotherapy drugs into her right arm pumped red liquid. She said she could watch it

enter her system and she could taste it in the back of her throat. Everytime it made her gag.

Although many people have told Harbrink she was courageous to fight the cancer with a positive attitude, she felt it was just something she had to do.

"When you're faced with something like a life-threatening illness, what are you going to do - curl up in the corner and cry? No, you're going to keep going. You are going to do whatever it takes to get through."

Harbrink said the experience has changed her for the better.

"I think that it has made me a better person because... I appreciate things a lot more, the simple things... I have a much greater respect for everything that we take for granted. I take the time now to smell the flowers."

Taking time out of busy schedules is something Harbrink encourages everyone to do. She says life is too precious not to.

"I can't speak for the entire population but I think people take life for granted."

Harbrink stresses that young women need to take their health more seriously.

"Do the breast exams. [If my story] could help one person, that's great. I'm not saying that it's going to be an easy road because it's not, but they will make it through."

According to the CCS, the rates of people getting breast cancer have risen by 10 per cent since 1988 but deaths caused by the disease have decreased by 19 per cent.

Harbrink worries about the increase in breast cancer cases but has a theory why.

"Our generation has been exposed to environmental agents... right from gestation it's something that we build up in the body," said Harbrink.

"A lot of fruits and vegetables that you buy are coated in herbicides and pesticides," she explained. "These cause endocrine disruption."

More and more research is being done on the effects exposure to harmful chemicals have on humans and animals and how these are linked to endocrine disruption. The disruption affects the reproductive and developmental systems within the body.

STU Science and Technology professor Don Robinson has spent some time studying the issue.

"Pesticide use has been around since the 1920s," said Robinson. "In

the past 40 years, it's kind of startling to see the rise in pesticide use and the rise in health issues, including breast cancer and infertility in men."

"To be affected by pesticides and chemicals, it doesn't really matter where you live," he said.

Chemicals are being found all over the world, including in the Arctic.

Robinson said there are trace amounts of chemicals in our fatty tissue. To some degree, harmful chemicals are entering the human body but the effects are not known.

Both Robinson and Harbrink suggest eating organic fruits and vegetables.

"Now, I'm very diligent when washing my fruits and vegetables," said Harbrink. To try to eliminate the majority of harmful chemicals on the surface of the fruit or vegetable, she uses an organic wash.

Harbrink, who is beginning her quest to become an Egyptologist, wants people to realize there is hope.

"We do have choices," says Harbrink. "We choose what we eat, we choose if we smoke, we choose what we drink. I'm not saying don't drink and don't smoke, but take some time to re-evaluate your decisions because you really don't know how long you're going to live."

Flu shot 90 per cent effective

Flu continued from Page 1

There are some risks to getting the flu shot and it's not guaranteed to work. If the shot strains do not match those that your roommate may be sneezing about the room you may still get the flu. The percentage of the shot working is high if the match is close. It can be up to 90 per cent

effective.

The side effects and risks are not what one would commonly think they would be. You might think you'd get the flu if you get injected with the strains but they are already dead. They are still processed by your body to produce the antibodies that will kill the strains if they enter your body. This is what they call a hostile

environment.

There are also slight chances of having an allergic reaction to the flu shot or it causing serious harm. The most common side effects are soreness, swelling or redness where you received the shot, a non-serious fever, and some aches. Even if you get these effects they are usually gone in a day or two.

The people who should skip out on a flu shot are people who are allergic to eggs, because that's how the scientists grow the viruses used in the vaccine, and also those people who have had a serious problem with the shot in the past.

The shot is available for \$10 for students, \$20 for faculty and staff and free for those over 65.

You don't even need an appointment. They suggest stopping by during the morning walk-in hours of 9:30 - 11:00 am.

A pinch and \$10 is all you need to bump up your chances of not getting the flu. You can get the shot either in your arm or in your hip, whatever best suits you.

NBCC students relieved

CUPE continued from Page 1

Brunswick Community Colleges, leaving 6000 students worried about their school year. Sunday marked the end of the strike.

Now that classes are back on, Clark said students are relieved.

"It's wonderful. Everybody seems to be excited to sit down and learn again," she explained.

She said instructors are eager to get back on track.

"The instructors have said 'we're going to start back where we left off'

- they're making it easy for us to catch up."

"[The school] is very aware how this could stress us out too much, so they're handling it as well as possible," she continued.

Peter McGill, principal at the Saint John NBCC, said teachers are going to assess courses on a case-by-case basis to make sure students are ready to continue.

"We do anticipate being able to catch up, and we'll do what it takes to make sure students are well-served in this," he said.

The compromise between the union and the province came at a crucial time - school officials had said the semester would have been jeopardized had the strike dragged on any longer.

Negotiations began last Wednesday, when Premier Bernard Lord ordered his government to go back to the table to end the strike. A tentative agreement was reached over the weekend, with 62 per cent of the local union voting in favour of a 14 to 15 per cent pay raise over the next four and a half years.

Conservation saves money

Heating continued from Page 1

more expensive to heat.

There are ways you can prepare for winter and substantially reduce your energy consumption, and your electric bill, without spending thousands of dollars on insulation, solar panels and high-efficiency furnaces.

First of all, fix your leaky taps! One drip per second is equivalent to 16 bathtubs per month of wasted water. If it's hot water, that's an entire tank every couple days, and about \$40 per year on your electric bill.

Keep a jug of water in your fridge instead of running the tap until it's cold.

Use weather-stripping, caulking, and stuffed socks or blankets to block drafts from windows and doors. Pick up some clear plastic sheets and shrink them over your windows using a hair dryer.

Use cold water to soak dishes if

you aren't planning to wash them right away. Avoid using the "dry" cycle on your dishwasher, as it uses far more energy than the wash itself.

Keeping your windows and curtains closed, especially at night, will help hold the heat inside. Closing doors to rooms that are not being used and turning the thermostat down will save you money, as will turning the thermostat back a few degrees at night. If you have a programmable thermostat, set it to start heating up about an hour before you wake up in the morning.

If you leave the plug in the bathtub for 20 minutes after your bath or shower, the water will cool and the heat will be transferred into the air, providing warmth and humidity on a cold, dry winter morning.

Shut down your computer and other appliances when they are not in use. They are still consuming energy in their "stand-by" modes.

Your computer alone uses almost \$6 per month in electricity at NB Power's current rates if you leave it on all the time.

Microwave and toaster ovens use far less energy than full-size ovens, so use them whenever possible.

According to NB Power, you can make 280 bags of popcorn in your microwave oven for just \$1. If you do use your oven, try cooking several dishes at once to maximize use of the heat, and don't open the oven door unless you want to lose 20 per cent of your heat! On the stove-top, you can turn your burners down or even off early. The element and the pot will hold enough heat to finish cooking your food.

For more information on saving energy or equalized billing, contact NB Power at 1-800-663-6272 www.nbpower.com, or Enbridge Gas at 1-866-3-GET-GAS.



Meg Folkins/The Brunswickan

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