

# Newsletter

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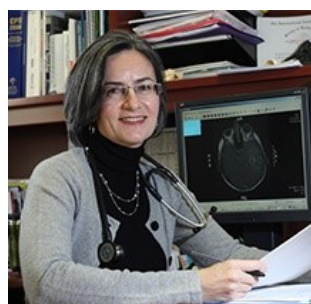
## HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE PAC LAB!!



## Lymphedema

Sometimes after surgery, radiation or an infection, our lymphatic system does not function as normal which can lead to an accumulation of fluid in tissues, better known as lymphedema. Because our lymphatic system is stimulated by the pumping action of blood vessels and muscles, resistance training is an effective way to improve circulation to move lymph fluid away from a congested area and into other areas to drain. If you are new to resistance training, ask your physician if it is safe to ease it into your routine.

## PAC Wellness Champion: Dr. Mary MacNeil



Dr. MacNeil is the Neuro-Oncologist at Nova Scotia Health and has been a champion for implementing exercise as a supplementary treatment for patients diagnosed with cancer. Dr. MacNeil enjoys cross country skiing, hiking, and biking, but because she has been so busy right now, she would pick weightlifting if she had to choose. She enjoys exercise because it is an important way to deal with stress, keep the energy up, and maintain function as you age. Over the years, she has worked with various patients diagnosed with cancer; it has been her experience that patients who frequently participated in exercise, such as runners and cyclists, coped with the side effects of the medication better. Her observation was that physical function at the time of diagnosis was a strong predictor for how well one can tolerate their treatment and maintain their energy. The decline in energy and function had unfavourable outcomes for patients, subsequently impacting their quality of life. "Since most patients end up on steroids, due to myopathy (muscle loss), two people will need to help them to get up a chair. So, it is important to improve function or delay loss of muscle mass." At first, Dr. MacNeil started referring some patients to the ACCESS program. She then wanted to know if the rate of muscle loss would decrease if patients started to exercise after surgery as they began their standard of care protocol. The exercise Dr. MacNeil finds to be the most impactful on function is strength training. With her help, The PAC Lab will begin the Impact of Resistance Exercise on muscle mass in gIloblaSToma survivors or "RESIST" program aiming to provide patients with tailored resistance training after they complete their surgery. If the study results successfully show a delay in steroid myopathy and this program is feasible, Dr. MacNeil would love to see it as part of the standard of care for patients.

## Meet our Team: Steph Kendall



Steph is in her first year of Dalhousie's MSc. Kinesiology program, and she is researching exercise strategies to prevent heart disease in young cancer survivors. Steph will be working with adolescent and young adult cancer survivors to create a program that prevents heart disease while being feasible and maintainable. Steph loves to stay active by participating in outdoor activities such as surfing, biking, camping, and skiing in her spare time. Steph hopes to help you find an exercise program that you enjoy to be physically active for life.

**For more information on any of our studies, check out our new website at [www.thepaclab.com](http://www.thepaclab.com) or contact us at [EXcancer@nshealth.ca](mailto:EXcancer@nshealth.ca)**

Tips for exercising in cold weather: 1) Be prepared! Check the forecast and dress in layers so you're ready for the both the expected and the unexpected. Bring a bag to stow the outer layer you might shed when you get warmed up. 2) Lean into it! Cold is a fact of life in Canada, so we might as well embrace it. There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing, equipment, and attitudes!

