

# Delivering the Best of Health to British Columbians

## New ways to treat debilitating kidney stone disease



The multidisciplinary experts at VGH who provide kidney stone disease care and perform research related to the condition believe that teamwork is the key to ensuring their patients achieve the healthiest possible outcomes. Pictured here: Dr. Ben Chew, Director of Research for the Stone Centre Research Programs (left) confers in the lab with Olga Arsovska, Research Coordinator and Dr. Dirk Lange, Director of Basic Science Research.

If you know anyone who's had kidney stones, you know that they can lead to excruciating pain. The disease affects approximately 10 per cent of the population. In some cases, its progression is relatively slow and silent. In acute cases, patients arrive in hospitals in crisis and must be treated immediately. It's estimated the disease costs the North American economy up to \$2 billion per year in health care costs and time lost from work.

Are there better ways to treat patients? That is the question West Vancouver residents Ray and Ruth Wesenberg asked about the multi-step process that patients experiencing debilitating kidney stone-related pain had to go through when seeking treatment.

The answer was yes. The result: the creation of the Acute Kidney Stone Treatment Centre at VGH.

The Stone Centre was funded exclusively by Ray and Ruth Wesenberg. It's a dedicated, state-of-the-art facility consisting of a treatment room with specialized equipment for the full breadth of kidney stone surgeries, a recovery suite, and a short-stay unit for Emergency Department patients in need of kidney stone care.

Medical experts here ensure patients receive coordinated, efficient, one-stop, often same-day care. This Centre has an international reputation for care and treatment, and is an important hub for research.

The project was spearheaded by Dr. Jamie Wright; the multidisciplinary care and research team includes his colleagues Drs. Ben Chew, Ryan Paterson, Mark Nigro, Chris Nguan, Dirk Lange, Roger Sutton, William Taylor, Allan Rowley, Chuck Zwirewich, Jean Buckley, and research coordinator Olga Arsovska.

"This team is made up of the best in the world, when it comes to kidney stone treatment and science. With the right support behind them, they will continue to do great things which will only help kidney stone sufferers," says Dr. Larry Goldenberg, Head of the Department of Urologic Sciences at UBC, Director of Clinical Research at the Vancouver Prostate Centre located at VGH. He is proud of the Stone Centre team, which falls under his purview.

Their current fundraising efforts are research-focused. Five areas being pursued:

- How can certain bacteria affect the compound that kidney stones are made of;
- What are the causes of kidney stone formation;
- Identification of links between certain urinary compounds and kidney stone formation;
- Investigation of medical devices for use in the urinary system; and
- Evaluation of new devices to break up kidney stones.

To move forward with this research – ultimately leading to better ways to treat kidney stone patients – philanthropic donations are needed.

To make a donation in support of kidney stone research at VGH, contact Jim O'Hara at [jim.ohara@worldclasshealthcare.ca](mailto:jim.ohara@worldclasshealthcare.ca) or 604.875.5100.

## My doctors helped me; now I want to help them



It's all smiles for Helen Wilden and her three great-nieces. Three things that are important to this past-patient at VGH: health, family and helping others.

Helen Wilden of Port Coquitlam believes it's the expert and compassionate care she received from doctors and nurses at VGH, support of family and friends, and her own determination that saw her through her battle with multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer.

She's one of the many people from all over the province who come to VGH for the most progressive treatment for blood diseases. While treatments for multiple myeloma have come a long way since Helen was diagnosed in 1993, there is no cure yet. Helen wants to do everything she can to help research progress, not for herself, but for other people who will face the same diagnosis in the future."

"I decided to leave a gift in my will for this kind of research. I was inspired by the hard work and dedication of the doctors and nurses I met at VGH,"

she says. "I remember talking to one doctor whose own mother didn't survive multiple myeloma. The doctor told me her mission was to find a cure. She said clinical research was key."

She continued, "My doctors helped me. Now I want to help them do the same for other blood cancer patients. It brings me peace of mind, knowing that I'll be supporting others along the path. I'm hopeful that my gift will have a real impact on someone's life one day, maybe many lives! I also hope other people will think about what VGH has done for them, or someone they love, and think about giving back through their own actions."

If you're considering leaving a gift in your will to our hospitals, contact Charlene Taylor at [charlene.taylor@worldclasshealthcare.ca](mailto:charlene.taylor@worldclasshealthcare.ca) or 604.875.4917.

## Hope on the horizon

### Early detection and screening of ovarian cancer within grasp



Early detection and screening tools or techniques for ovarian cancer can help change the future for generations of women in Canada and around the world. This BC-based research is an initiative that Virginia Greene and her family feel strongly about.

Ten years ago early detection of ovarian cancer was thought to be impossible. Based on what's been learned and the discoveries made by the Ovarian Cancer Research (OvCaRe) team at VGH and the BC Cancer Agency, that notion has been turned on its ear.

For decades, medical communities around the world made little progress in the prevention and treatment of what they thought was one disease: ovarian cancer. Then, the BC-based OvCaRe group established that ovarian cancer is actually a number of distinct diseases, rather than one single condition. By tailoring their research and treatment efforts to each subtype, progress is being made in stopping ovarian cancer in its tracks.

Right now, VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation is focusing fundraising efforts on OvCaRe's "Precursors to Prevention: an Approach to the Early Detection of Ovarian Cancers." This research project focuses on early detection and screening tools for three distinct types of ovarian cancer: early tubal carcinomas, clear cell carcinomas, and endometrioid carcinomas. The team will develop new tools to identify and screen these ovarian cancer subtypes. Within three years, researchers expect to understand which early detection method will do this best.

What this kind of progress means is immeasurable to someone like Virginia Greene and her family. Virginia, a VGH &

UBC Hospital Foundation Board Member, and former President of the BC Business Council, was recently diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and is now battling a relapse.

Because ovarian cancer is usually found at a late stage of development, the current five-year survival rate is a mere 20 per cent; yet when caught early, the five-year survival rate is up to 90 per cent. Early detection is the key to winning this war. That's why Virginia and her family are rallying to raise support for this important research to find early detection and screening tools.

A campaign to raise \$3.5 million for this initiative is under way. There are two groups of partners who have been and will continue to be responsible for the successes of the OvCaRe team: the researchers who conduct the scientific studies, and the donors who invest in their research.

"This is a tipping point, a time of change. Not just for women of BC, but for women around the world," said Virginia's daughter Justine Greene, referring to the successes and the importance of the work of the OvCaRe team.

The outcomes of this research initiative could be added to the significant successes already achieved by the OvCaRe team.

The sooner funding is in place, the sooner this potentially life-saving research can begin.

With early detection and screening tools within grasp, hope is on the horizon.

We, along with Virginia and her family invite you to be part of the solution. To make a donation to the Precursors to Prevention Project, contact Barb McInnis at [barb.mcinnis@worldclasshealthcare.ca](mailto:barb.mcinnis@worldclasshealthcare.ca) or 604.875.5193.

## The calibre of care...



Welcome to the first of VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation's 2010 Community Report series. It's a glimpse at the expertise available to all of us at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH), UBC Hospital, GF Strong Rehab Centre, and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute.

These important institutions serve the entire province, providing highly specialized care for adults in the most serious and complex medical conditions. Patients are referred to VGH for the highest level of care in the province.

If and when our health is compromised by disease or serious accident, we want the best possible outcome. The best of health; and that's exactly what our specialists are trained to deliver. We are home to some of the world's best medical minds.

Our health care teams are able to deliver the complex services they do because of funding from governments, and also – importantly – significant extras made possible by generous donors.

In the last two years, to create a seamless continuum of care, our Foundation has also begun to fundraise for our hospitals' partner – Community Health Services in Vancouver, a network of community and home-based health care across the city.

Providing every patient with the right care in the right place at the right time is the goal of an effective health care system. This ensures acute care beds are available for patients who are severely ill, while community care supports those who are better served outside a hospital setting.

Please read these stories. Then, think about what it means to you and your family to have world-class health care available right here.

The Foundation fundraises on behalf of these medical treatment and research teams. These hospitals and services are here for all of us; they deserve our support. We ask for your serious consideration.

*Michael Phelps*

Michael Phelps  
Chair, Board of Directors  
VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation

## Please consider a donation to VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation

One of the best ways you can show your gratitude for the exceptional care you or a loved one received at Vancouver General Hospital, UBC Hospital, GF Strong Rehab Centre or Community Health Services across Vancouver is by making a gift. To make a donation, please visit [www.worldclasshealthcare.ca](http://www.worldclasshealthcare.ca)

VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation is a registered charity that raises funds for medical equipment, world-class research and improvements to patient care for the many specialized areas of care at VGH, UBC Hospital, GF Strong Rehab Centre, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute and Community Health Services across Vancouver.

Consistent with Board Policy, a contribution from all designated donations goes to the Best of Health Fund to support the hospitals' most urgent priorities and the work of VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation.

This edition of VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation's Community Report is part one of a three-part series. Once published, all three editions will be available at [www.worldclasshealthcare.ca](http://www.worldclasshealthcare.ca).