



# News Release

April 25, 2013

## **Bringing Meningitis Awareness to Queen's Park Supporters, volunteers and MPPs mark World Meningitis Day**

Meningitis Relief Canada was at Queen's Park on April 24<sup>th</sup> to mark World Meningitis Day and raise awareness of this potentially deadly—and preventable—disease.

In honour of World Meningitis Day, NDP MPP Jagmeet Singh (Bramalea—Gore—Malton) introduced the *Meningitis Awareness Day Act* in the Ontario Legislature. If passed, the bill will recognize April 24<sup>th</sup> of every year as World Meningitis Day in this province.

MPPs wore burgundy carnations in the Legislature to recognize World Meningitis Day. Liberal MPP Dipika Damerla (Mississauga East—Cooksville) and PC MPPs Christine Elliott (Whitby—Oshawa) and John Yakabuski (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke) spoke in support of meningitis awareness in the Legislature.

Later in the day, Meningitis Relief Canada hosted a successful reception attended by a number of MPPs and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Deb Matthews, and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Linda Jeffrey.

Meningococcal meningitis is an inflammation of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. It appears suddenly and can be fatal within 24-48 hours. Some individuals will die of the disease, and many who don't will face long-term disability, such as neurological damage, hearing loss, or limb amputation.

Meningitis Relief Canada is a registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families afflicted by meningitis by providing means to heal and rebuild. Founder Furakh Mir of Brampton, Ontario started the organization after her newborn son, was misdiagnosed by both her local hospital and walk-in clinic before being successfully diagnosed and treated at the Hospital of Sick Kids two years ago. MRC's mission is to educate and raise awareness among the public and health care professionals to prevent death and disability from meningitis, and to support affected Canadians and their families.

### **QUOTES**

"Meningitis strikes without warning, but knowing what to do can mean the difference between life and death. We are bringing our message to Queen's Park educate our elected officials and to raise awareness. No other Ontario family should have to lose a loved one to this deadly disease."

—Furakh Mir, Chair and President, Meningitis Relief Canada

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### **Meningitis Relief Canada**

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“Too many families have been devastated by meningitis infection. I introduced the *Meningitis Awareness Act* so that more Ontario families get the information and support that they need.”  
—*Jagmeet Singh, MPP Bramalea-Gore-Malton*

## QUICK FACTS

- Approximately 1,000 Canadians will contract meningitis this year, mostly children and teenagers.
- Meningitis can kill within hours, and is often mistaken for the flu in its early stages.
- Many Canadians are unaware that meningitis can be prevented through vaccination.

## LEARN MORE

- Read about the work of Meningitis Relief Canada at <http://meningitisrelief.com>
- Follow @MeningitisRC on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/MeningitisRC>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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