

“We hope for a cure. For Mike, his life has completely changed.”

Family walks together to celebrate the strength of incredible brain tumour survivor

Hamilton-Niagara Region, ON, May 25, 2016 – In a few short days, the Jackowitz family will take part in the annual Hamilton-Niagara Brain Tumour Walk benefitting Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. It’s the first time the family can do this all together, as in 2015, son and brain tumour survivor Michael wasn’t able to participate due to radiation treatments. As team *Jacko’s Journey*, the family walks in tribute to Michael, 37, and the immense journey he’s been on since 2010. This is his story.

What started for Michael as headaches and vision trouble was soon uncovered as a serious medical issue that changed his life forever. Today, Michael is legally blind, has seizures and can no longer work or drive due to a brain tumour. He has a 16-month old daughter he loves tremendously, but struggles with the new dependence he has on other people to help him with his daily life.

For the past six years, Michael has undergone countless surgeries, procedures and treatment for what was once thought to be a non-cancerous tumour on his brain. A routine scan in January 2016 showed the tumour had changed yet again, now spreading into open spaces in Michael’s brain. Today Michael awaits his next scan – booked, perhaps serendipitously, the day after the 2016 Hamilton-Niagara Brain Tumour Walk. Cathy, Michael’s mom and caregiver, who had to retire early to care for her son, says she does the Brain Tumour Walk after finding it valuable to read about other success stories on the Foundation’s website. “It helps to know that others are going through the same thing and that there are success stories of people beating brain tumours.”

Michael and his loved ones stay strong in the face of the overwhelming obstacles, choosing to never give up hope and to find comfort in the promise of brain tumour research. For mom Cathy, it’s especially significant that there be advancements related to repairing the blindness Michael acquired due to his brain tumour: “Our biggest dream for Michael is that he will see his daughter grow up.”

This weekend, team *Jacko’s Journey* will take part in the 2016 Hamilton-Niagara Brain Tumour Walk on Sunday, May 29th at Dofasco Park. Opening Ceremonies and Brain Tumour Survivor Recognition begin at 10:45am. Online registration is encouraged; there is no entry fee to participate. The Brain Tumour Walk is family-friendly and non-competitive, and features 2.5km and 5km routes.

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Media Release, cont'd

About the Brain Tumour Walks

Every day in Canada, 27 people are diagnosed with a brain tumour. That's 10,000 new diagnoses each year. By signing up and fundraising as part of a Brain Tumour Walk, patients, survivors, family and friends join the nationwide movement to end brain tumours. Their efforts support Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's specialized resources that empower patients to be their own best health care advocates and fund the ground-breaking research that will find a cure for the disease. For more than two decades, Brain Tumour Walks (formerly Spring Sprints) have been the community event to bring together thousands of Canadians in tribute to and in memory of people affected by a brain tumour. **For more information about the 20+ Brain Tumour Walks taking place across Canada in 2016, visit www.BrainTumourWalk.ca.**

About Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is the only national charity that offers information and support to patients affected by any kind of brain tumour – be it cancerous, non-malignant or metastases. The organization also funds research across North America and, since 1982, has dedicated more than \$4 million to finding a cure for the disease and improving treatment for brain tumour survivors. **Learn more at Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's website: www.BrainTumour.ca.**

To interview Michael and his family or for further information about the Hamilton-Niagara Brain Tumour Walk, please contact:

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