

Canadian Hemochromatosis Society: The yin and yang of hemochromatosis



(Left) Patrick Haney, President of the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society | Société canadienne de l'hémochromatose and Bob Rogers, CEO of the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society | Société canadienne de l'hémochromatose

If there's a silver lining to having hemochromatosis, it's that with treatment, healthy patients can maintain an acceptable iron level while helping another patient who needs blood.

People suffering from hemochromatosis absorb and store too much iron in their body. Early diagnosis, and treatment through regular phlebotomies, can help prevent serious health problems. And as long as diagnosed hemochromatosis patients have reached the maintenance phase of their treatment, and all other eligibility requirements are met, they can safely donate blood for others.

Patrick Haney of Vancouver says this is a positive thing. Patrick was diagnosed with hemochromatosis in 2010. The 36-year-old married father, who was recently named a Top 40 under 40 by Business in Vancouver, is president of the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society. His diagnosis came as a surprise following a routine test he took when applying for insurance benefits at work.

"Hereditary hemochromatosis is not a blood disorder. It's just that our genetics are a little screwed up. If you get an early diagnosis you can totally manage the iron in your body through blood donations."

Patrick sees "a hand in glove relationship" between people with hereditary hemochromatosis and the needs of blood banks across Canada.

Understanding the constant need for blood and the potential source for new donors, The Canadian Hemochromatosis Society has become a national Partner For Life in 2013. Their pledge is 200 units for this year. The society encourages eligible members from across the country to donate on behalf of their team. For more information, please go to www.toomuchiron.ca



