



October is Liver Awareness Month

by Jaime JS Freitag

The liver is a vital organ and no one can survive without it. It is the largest glandular organ in the body. This reddish brown organ weighs in at approximately 3 pounds. The liver consists of 4 lobes and each lobe is a different size and shape.



The liver has multiple tasks. It produces cholesterol and urea, regulates glucose and it breaks down fats. The liver acts as a vitamin storage unit holding A, D, K and B12. This amazing organ is also a detoxification necessity; breaking down bad substances such as alcohol, drugs and other not-so-good things from our bodies.

The liver is known as a silent organ because it can be damaged with no signs or symptoms. There are approximately 100 different known types of liver disease and many people live with liver disease for years without knowing it. Many of the liver diseases can be prevented, i.e.

fatty liver disease and alcoholic cirrhosis. Currently, more than 30 million people in the U.S. have liver disease, approximate 1 in 10 Americans! Such liver diseases as Hepatitis C, fatty liver disease, and liver cancer are on the rise. There



are already 4 million Americans infected with Hepatitis C and 1 million Americans infected with Hepatitis B. Over 15,000 children are hospitalized every year w/pediatric liver disease or disorders.

To prevent liver disease take care of your liver! The following tips could help prevent many types of liver disease:

- Maintain well balanced diet and healthy weight
- Avoid aerosol sprays (not good for the lungs either)
- Wash your hands to avoid germs and illnesses
- Drink alcohol responsibly & follow medication directions (i.e. Tylenol®)
- Get vaccinated (i.e. Hepatitis A & B shots)
- Do not share razors, toothbrushes or nail clippers
- Get tested if you think you are at risk (i.e. free and confidential Alpha-1 testing thru the Alpha Pack)
- Practice safe sex
- Learn more at www.liverfoundation.org

Alpha-1 Fast Facts

About 20% of affected people have symptoms during infancy where they developed yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes (jaundice) and an enlarged liver during the first week of life. Jaundice disappears at about 2 to 4 months. However, about 20% of these infants later develop cirrhosis, and some die before reaching adulthood.

AAT Screening Day with Melissa Biggs

by Noreen K James

On Tuesday October 6th, Melissa Biggs, former "Baywatch" star, international model, and successful women's fashion designer, spoke at Endeavor Therapy and Sleep Center in Mequon. Biggs, the National Spokesperson for Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency gave a moving presentation about her personal experience of having been diagnosed with the condition. She then took questions from the audience while Alpha-1 screenings took place through the Alpha Pack. A total of 15 people were tested. Later that evening, Biggs spoke at a physicians meeting along with pulmonologist Dr. Phillip DeTrana to further bring about awareness in the medical community. CSL Behring (Zemaira@ www.zemaira.com) hosted the event.



Upcoming Alpha-1 Screenings
Nov 5.....3-7p **Marshfield Clinic**, Marshfield, East Wing/Room4
~Free and Confidential~

CSL Behring Plant Tours

CSL Behring is offering group tours at their Kankakee, IL manufacturing plant. Alpha-1 patients (whether on any infusion therapy or not) are invited to sign up. Lunch is included. Caregivers are welcome. Scheduled dates are October 22nd, 2009, March 18 and May 20, 2010. Space is limited. Register early! Contact CSL Behring representative, Jean Kirsch at 414-477-2851 or Jean.Kirsch@cslbehring.com

Talecris Plant Tour

Every year Talecris Biotherapeutics offers a plant tour of their Clayton, NC facility to Alphas. The itinerary is as follows: fly into Raleigh-Durham on October 19, tour the facility of October 20, and depart the evening of October 20 or the morning of October 21. If you have never attended a plant tour of this facility and are interested, please contact Genevieve Paul gpaul@alpha1.org or 800.521-3025 ext. 14 at the Alpha-1 Association as soon as possible.

Pick the Pack for We Care

With the *Advantage Plus Savers Club Card*, you can designate the Alpha Pack to receive a % from your grocery bill through Pick 'n Save's **We Care** program. To select us, go to any Pick 'n Save service desk and request an update on your Club Card. Our charity code is 023225.



Awareness T-Shirts

Awareness t-shirts for children and adults are available through the Alpha Pack.

Jaime Freitag designed the children's tee (right)



Noreen James designed the adult tee (below).



These are limited editions so quantities will not last. Adult sizes are Small to XX-Large. Children sizes are 2T to XL18/20. They are available through our main office with a donation of \$15.00 (for adult) and \$12.00 (for children) plus \$2 shipping and handling.

Southern Shores Region Mtg Minutes

Southern Shores Region (SSR) September meeting welcomed Scott Weir who answered questions on SSDI/SSI and financial topics. Need additional help? Scott offers his experience and knowledge for the Alpha-1 patient. Contact **Weir Financial** at (262) 677-7660 and reference the Alpha Pack. Baxter (manufacturer for Aralast@ www.alpha1health.com) hosted food and refreshments. The next meeting (weather permitting) will be on Thursday, November 12th on Benefit Programs in Wisconsin. For details, contact Jaime Freitag (262) 797-0620 southernshores@thealphapack.org

Green Bay Region Mtg Minutes

Green Bay Region (GBR) for September was a screening day at that offered free and confidential testing for Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency. The public also took the opportunity to ask questions, meet with members, and gather literature. Talecris (manufacturer for Prolastin@ www.prolastin.com) hosted bakery and refreshments. The next meeting (weather permitting) will be on Tuesday, November 17th at Aurora BayCare Hospital in the Arbor Room from 6:30-8:30pm. Topic to be announced. For details, contact Chelsea Krueger at (920) 265-3058 or greenbay@thealphapack.org

Northern Lights Region Mtg Minutes

The next meeting (weather permitting) will be a HOLIDAY BASH held at the Lodge at Crooked Lake (in the Bear Den) on Friday, November 6th. So get your holiday wear ready! For details, contact Judy Parker at (715) 653-2666 or northernlights@thealphapack.org

Central Fields Region Mtg Minutes

A screening day (weather permitting) will be held at Marshfield Clinic on Thursday, November 5th from 3-7pm in the East Wing, Room 4. For details, contact Dawn Smith at (715) 536-8145 or centralfields@thealphapack.org

A 1000 Miles Apart *by Jaime JS Freitag*

My mom and I went to the National Alpha-1 Conference in June 2008 for the first time. As an excited first time attendee, I went with the intentions of hearing great speakers, compiling notes about Alpha-1 and bringing home a bag full of Alpha-1 pamphlets, pens and goodies for myself and our 5 children. But above and beyond a bag full of Alpha-1 souvenirs I also brought home something much more meaningful – a friendship. While visiting booths I met Jaime and her beautiful daughter, Jaidan. Jaime briefly explained her story- Jaidan was a ZZ liver-affected Alpha and her doctors knew nothing about Alpha-1. Jaidan's doctors told her to go to the conference and gather as much information she could for them. I told her that 2 of our 5 children, Hunter & Mia are ZZ-affected and that I am the Liver Aide and Fundraising Assistant for The Alpha Pack. We began chatting about our Alpha children and it was amazing how many of the same experiences we shared. Jaime went onto say that shortly after Jaidan was born her husband left her along with a world of emotions to deal with by herself. Luckily, Jaime has her family and friends to help her get through it all. On the last day we knew our good-bye was a beginning of a new friendship.

Shortly after the conference Jaime and I continued sharing our Alpha stories, speaking many times each week. There were days after Jaidan was listed for a liver transplant that Jaime was very emotional and I wished I was there to lend her a shoulder to cry on. But we'd get through that phone call and the next call would be full of laughter. We've shared stories about our childhood, life experiences, becoming the people we are today and we have a lot in common, especially when it comes to our Alpha girls. Not only do we spell our names the same (a bit of a rarity!), we're the same age and our Alpha girls Jaidan and Mia are the same age too (only a week apart) and that makes for a lot of Mommy & Baby stories. We have learned SO much from each other; I was able to help Jaime understand some Alpha-1 facts, along with our experiences and Jaime taught me about transplant. I know that if Hunter and Mia ever need that gift I will be prepared. Jaime and I have kept in close contact and I feel so blessed to have met her. Going to the conference was worth more than I can explain.



Jaidan finally received her gift of life on June 1, 2009, after patiently awaiting 259 days. She is an extraordinary child who is a fighter, just like her mom. Our children, especially Mia know all about her. Mia loves to see Jaidan's pictures. We look forward to having our Alpha girls- Jaidan and Mia, meet for the first time at the 2010 Alpha-1 National Conference in Orlando, FL. We may be 1000 miles apart but our friendship will always remain close in our hearts.