

THE WILLIAM DENNIS MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT AND THE IWK



Over the past 11 years, the William Dennis Memorial Golf Tournament has raised more than \$260,000 in support of the William Dennis Fund and epilepsy research. Your generosity has helped fund research that has been effectively translated into patient treatment and care.

In 2005, the William Dennis Chair in Pediatric Epilepsy Research was established by the Dennis family in honour of William Dennis, who died of complications relating to an epileptic seizure in August 2002. The chair is the first of its kind in Canada. In the nine years since its creation, pioneering approaches to epilepsy research have established the IWK and Dalhousie University as major centres for epilepsy innovation, education and patient care.

The William Dennis Chair has increased new knowledge and understanding of pediatric epilepsy through the recruitment of internationally recognized candidates. To date, two world-class researchers have held the William Dennis Chair. As of July 1, 2014, Dr. Alon Friedman holds the William Dennis Chair, building on the achievements of his predecessor, Dr. Michael Esser.

The ground-breaking work undertaken by Dr. Esser and Dr. Friedman is a testament to the support and promotion of epilepsy research by donors like by donors like the William Dennis Memorial Golf Tournament.





Dr. Alon Friedman



DR. ALON FRIEDMAN, WILLIAM DENNIS CHAIR (2014—PRESENT)

Dr. Alon Friedman is on the forefront of world efforts to prevent brain diseases such as epilepsy by detecting and treating damaged blood vessels in the brain.

A new recruit to Dalhousie Medical School and the IWK Health Centre, Dr. Alon Friedman arrived in Halifax from Israel's Ben-Gurion University in July 2014 to accept his new role as William Dennis Chair in Epilepsy Research.

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“I was impressed by the collaboration between scientists and clinicians, and the facilities for brain research - I knew it would be a positive environment for translating my findings to the patient,” says Dr. Friedman. “It was also appealing to me that the Dennis family cares so much about epilepsy research, they would fund a research chair. It’s important to me that people in the community are promoting and supporting research.”

Dr. Friedman has found that damage to blood vessels in the brain - from brain injury, stroke, high blood pressure or other reasons - is associated with epileptic seizures. “When these vessels are damaged, substances in the blood cross the blood-brain barrier into the nerve tissues, where they can have toxic effects,” he explains. “My aim is to develop new technologies and treatments for detecting and repairing vascular damage and early brain changes before disease develops.”

In addition to epilepsy, vascular damage in the brain can lead to emotional and psychological problems, cognitive impairment, and neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s.

Dr. Friedman is collaborating with researchers in the Biomedical Translational Imaging Lab (BIOTIC) at the IWK and QEII to advance new technologies for early detection of blood-vessel damage in the brain. He hopes such technologies will be used in the future to screen for blood-vessel damage in anyone at risk - due to concussion, high blood pressure, family history, and other possible factors - so they can be treated early and effectively to avoid brain disease.

THANK YOU

Thank you for supporting the advancement of epilepsy research. While epilepsy is a common disorder, and while there are effective treatments for many people with epilepsy, medical researchers continue to seek better treatments capable of helping even greater numbers of people. Your generosity is an investment into brighter and healthier futures for the one per cent of the population that lives with epilepsy every day.



IWK Foundation