

**LEAFLET**

## What's new with APrON?



**WINTER 2015**

APrON's new Team Lead Dr. Nicole Letourneau was recently inducted into the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, whose objective is to provide assessments and advice on key issues relevant to the health of Canadians.

Individuals are elected to the academy after peer nomination and a review procedure. The review places considerable emphasis on internationally recognized leadership and the nomination recognizes those who have advanced the health sciences in a meaningful way.

Nicole, who is a mother herself, is passionate about helping other moms, and her research has had important implications for health practice and policy. In New Brunswick, she spearheaded the Mothers Offering Mentorship & Support Link, a telephone-based peer support program for mothers with postpartum depression. Any mother in the province of New Brunswick with postpartum depression could access free and timely support with this program. Conducted in partnership with New Brunswick's Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial support, it was hugely successful in helping mothers recover from depression.

In addition to her academic work, Dr. Letourneau is equally committed to advancing medical education through training and inspiring the next generation of student nurses and researchers. She continues to regularly teach graduate seminars at the University of Calgary, for which she has received much praise from her students.

This isn't the first major recognition Dr. Letourneau has received. Named to Canada's Top 40 Under 40 and to "Who's Who in Canada" in 2008, she has been praised widely in a variety of prestigious circles.

Despite her many accolades, Dr. Letourneau's commitment to society extends beyond her professional life. She has spent time doing ordinary mom responsibilities such as being the playground supervisor at her children's elementary school and acting as a reading mentor.

Children and society stand to gain from reducing the problems associated with the damaging effects of stress, which APrON seeks to better understand, and Dr. Letourneau is committed to conducting quality science to achieve this.

### Send Us Your Feedback!

If you have any comments or questions about the *APrON Leaflet*, we want to hear them! We would also like to hear your ideas for future newsletters. For anything "Leaflet-related", please contact us at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca). We truly value your feedback!

## HELP DEVELOP A WEBSITE FOR DADS!!!

### ABOUT OUR STUDY

We are developing a new website to provide dads-to-be and new dads with information and strategies to help adjust to the changes of parenthood, enhance emotional wellness and engage in healthy behaviours.

### WHY PARTICIPATE?

By participating in this research study, the information you provide will help us tailor the website to the needs of new dads and dads-to-be.

We will ask you to complete an on-line survey asking you questions related to your mood, stress, sleep, pregnancy and parenting concerns, physical activity and eating habits. You will also receive a \$10 gift card to Amazon by participating!

### WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Men whose partners are expecting a baby (does not have to be your first child) or have recently had a baby (within 6 months).

Please send us an email at [healthydads@clinepi.mcgill.ca](mailto:healthydads@clinepi.mcgill.ca) so we can help you enroll in the study.

**We hope you will participate!**

## RESULTS

**Study Title: Maternal perspectives on the use of probiotics in infants: a cross sectional survey. Author: Sarah Bridgman**



### What did we want to know?

Probiotics are products that can modify the tiny organisms in our digestive system, and they may be beneficial for some people. Many scientists are studying probiotics, so we wondered how much our APrON mothers knew about probiotics and their uses for themselves and their babies. Dr. Anita Kozyrskyj and her team of scientists at the University of Alberta in Edmonton asked if they could study this question with APrON.

### What did we find?

APrON mothers with a child aged two years or younger were invited to complete a 29 item questionnaire, and 413 mothers did so. The majority (99.3%) of them had heard of probiotics and were aware that they contained live bacteria (87.0%); 89.3% had used a product containing probiotics themselves but only 50.3% had given one to their infant. Most mothers said they believed that probiotics were beneficial (73.1%) and none thought they were harmful. Over a third of mothers did not feel informed enough to make a decision on whether probiotics were safe to use in infants (36.6%).

**Take home message:** The study demonstrated that awareness and understanding of probiotics is high among mothers in Alberta. However, there is still uncertainty regarding the benefit and safety of probiotics in infants. Further studies that demonstrate beneficial effects and safety of probiotics in healthy infants should help to answer their questions.

**Authors:** Bridgman SL, Azad MB, Field CJ, Letourneau N, Johnston DW, Kaplan BJ, Kozyrskyj AL (2014). *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine* 14:366.

HELP KEEP OUR FILES UP TO DATE

Staying in touch with our participants is a key part of our work. When we lose touch with people we lose some of our ability to answer important health questions. If you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address, please take a moment to let us know of these changes. Keep in mind that we can send you surveys and keep you up-to-date with the *APrON Leaflet* no matter where you live, even if you are outside of Alberta or Canada.



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