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CANADIAN HUMOURIST HEADLINES DIABETES FALL FORUM

Author Susie Schwartz presents funny, inspirational talk on life with diabetes

CALGARY, AB — Nov. 5, 2008 — Diabetes may not be a laughing matter but author/humourist Susie Schwartz is coming to Calgary to offer a lighter perspective on this serious but often manageable disease.

Schwartz, a humourist, speaker and author, will be headlining the Canadian Diabetes Association's free Diabetes Fall Forum which takes place Wednesday, Nov. 12 in Calgary.

No one is better acquainted with the challenges of living with diabetes than Schwartz who has had type 1 diabetes since the tender age of nine. She is currently at work on her second book which chronicles her life with diabetes, "Hold The Sugar Please!". She is renowned for her first book of humour, "I Hate Spit! Wading Through the Slobber of My Life."

Schwartz has personally experienced complications associated with type 1 diabetes, including neuropathy, kidney disease and the prospect of losing her sight. However, her Nov. 12 presentation, "Don't let diabetes win!" is designed to inspire Calgarians impacted by the disease.

"Diabetes can be a daunting and overwhelming disease. We can choose to give in to it, or we can choose to make the most of life in spite of it. I choose to do the latter, and hope to encourage others to do the same," said Schwartz.

Schwartz admits there are perks to having the disease – such as not having to pay for the yearly eye exam – and that humour can be found in the strangest of places, including the time she visited the heart specialist to determine the damage diabetes had been done to her heart.

"In the process of putting on a paper gown while clothed in socks and glory alone, I turned around to find myself standing in front of a floor-length window, on the second floor overlooking a parking lot. Let's just say I probably shouldn't have waved to the person walking by when I decided to figure out if they could see me or not. That person waved back," said Schwartz.

But all joking aside, Schwartz believes it's important to address misconceptions about diabetes, including complications.



“In regards to complications, we all think “it will never happen to me”. We think that we can live however we want without consequence. People affected by diabetes must try to get tight control of the disease as it will make a difference in long term health.

“You can choose to give in, or you can choose to not let it win. Whatever your situation, let yourself be encouraged and even laugh. Diabetes is not a funny disease but joy can still be had while living with it,” said Schwartz.

Formerly known as the DES/Canadian Diabetes Association Fall Forum, this year’s Diabetes Fall Forum takes place Wednesday, Nov. 12, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Red & White Club at McMahon Stadium, 1817 Crowchild Trail NW. Free parking is available on the north side of the stadium. Register at www.diabetes.ca, or call 403-266-0620.

The forum is designed to answer questions about diabetes and, in addition to the appearance by Schwartz, includes the following highlights:

- Presentation on diabetes medications and insulin – all you need to know;
- Get answers to diabetes questions by leading diabetes experts;
- Trade show for one-stop access to the latest diabetes information and products;
- Onsite blood glucose testing by pharmacist;
- Onsite retinal scanner courtesy of Alberta Optometry Association.

About the Canadian Diabetes Association

The Canadian Diabetes Association works in communities across the country to promote the health of Canadians and eliminate diabetes through our strong nationwide network of volunteers, employees, healthcare professionals, researchers, partners and supporters. In the struggle against this global epidemic, our expertise is recognized around the world. The Canadian Diabetes Association: setting the world standard. To learn more, visit diabetes.ca or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464).

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