



Yaron Butterfield, recovering from brain cancer, will be running a marathon in Iceland on Aug. 20. He hopes to rejoin his hockey team, too.

One foot after the other, they're fighting diabetes

RUNNING STRONG!
Joggers sign up to raise money for a common disease

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Yaron Butterfield runs the race of his life in the Reykjavik Marathon next weekend.

The 31-year-old B.C. Cancer Agency researcher undertakes the 42.2-kilometre run in Iceland less than 18 months after collapsing with a brain seizure caused by a Grade IV astrocytoma — a serious form of brain cancer.

"Completing this marathon will be a tremendous personal achievement and ... get me ready to hit the ice again with my hockey team!" he enthuses.

Indeed, his scrappy fight with cancer inspired his Duffers League Sasquatch teammates to win their division championship that winter. The speedy left-winger even shared the glory by hauling himself from his sick bed to play for the last 17 seconds of the victory.

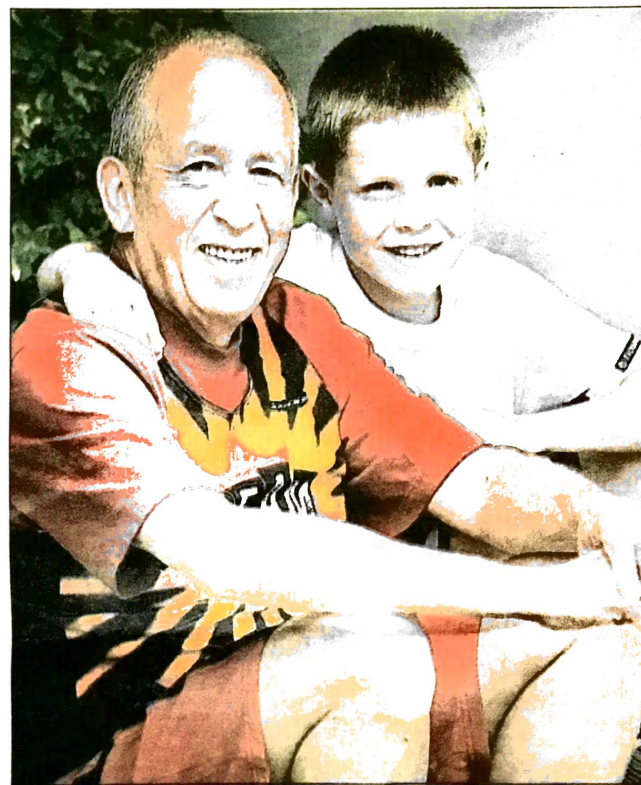
Finishing the run will be a remarkable feat, but the bigger motivation for the North Vancouver man is more altruistic.

"It's really important to give back as willingly as people gave support to me during my [chemotherapy and radiation] treatment, so I'm doing it to raise cash and awareness for diabetes," he says.

"Two of my grandparents died [owing] to complications from diabetes, my mom Yaffa has it, and during my treatment last year my 26-year-old sister Kinnie was also diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes.

"In addition, many friends and colleagues are among the more than two million Canadians with diabetes. There is also evidence that the disease can lead to an increased risk of cancer. I just had to do this."

Diabetes occurs when the body can't properly store and use fuel for



Cliff Monteith will be walking the course of a half-marathon for his grandson Zachary who, like him, is a diabetic. RIC ERNST — THE PROVINCE

energy. There are three types: Type 1, Type 2 and gestational diabetes.

Type 1's cause is unknown and it can't be prevented or cured, but Type 2 adult-onset diabetes can be delayed, managed and, in some cases, prevented through proper diet and exercise. Ninety per cent of diabetics are Type 2.

More than 210,000 British Columbians suffer from diabetes — it could be 325,000 by 2010 — and it costs B.C.'s health-care system more than \$2 million daily. It is a leading cause of death by disease and contributes to amputations, kidney disease, heart attacks, strokes and adult blindness.

When Butterfield strides out next Saturday, he will be one of 220 Canadians — 85 from B.C. — running for the Canadian Diabetes Association in a race that attracts more than 1,000 competitors from around the world.

Another will be Cliff Monteith, 67, of Abbotsford, who has Type 2. He will stroll briskly in the 10-kilometre walk.

"I'm doing this for my nine-year-old diabetic grandson, Zachary," says Monteith, who says lifestyle adjustments can really help.

"I shed 50 pounds and now I'm off medication," he grins.

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