

Spreading Awareness:

Von Willebrand D I S E A S E



Von Willebrand disease is the most common inherited bleeding disorder and affects men and women.

Symptoms may include:

- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Significant bruising without the presence of notable trauma
- Excessive or prolonged bleeding - particularly after dental work, childbirth or surgery
- Nosebleeds
- Joint bleeds

The key to preserving a high quality of life for patients with von Willebrand disease is identifying the presence of the disease. Though it's estimated 1 in 1,000 Canadians may have von Willebrand disease, patients can often go undiagnosed – the symptoms may not be obvious for mild cases and the clinical definition of abnormal bleeding may not always be clear.

According to Paula James of Queen's University, a diagnosis can be a positive thing, and recognition of the disease is often accompanied with optimism. "I'm always pleased when I make a new diagnosis of von Willebrand disease because we have so many effective treatments to offer patients."

Amongst James' primary goals as a hematologist, she emphasizes the importance of spreading awareness. It's encouraged that both men & women be open to discussing their symptoms with their doctors, listen to their bodies, and evaluate their quality of life on a daily basis.

Reiterating her optimism in the current state of treatment for von Willebrand disease, James adds, "I know that we can take somebody who's really struggling with day-to-day bleeding and convert that individual into a happy, healthy, functional person."

For more information on the signs, symptoms, and diagnosis of von Willebrand disease, visit the links below:

www.HealthandFamily.ca/VonWillebrand | www.LetsTalkPeriod.ca | www.CodeRougeWomen.ca | www.Hemophilia.ca



**Paula James,
MD FRCP**
Professor, Department of
Medicine, Queen's University
Medical Director, Women
& Bleeding Disorder Clinic,
Kingston General Hospital