



Local Athlete Leads Thrilling Expedition to the Top of Mount Rainier Two Years After Being Diagnosed with Rare Autoimmune Disease

All Funds Raised to Benefit The Arthritis Society, BC & Yukon Division

(Vancouver, B.C. – June 12, 2013) In 2010, North Vancouver athlete Peter Marshall was diagnosed with Wegener’s Granulomatosis (WG), a rare autoimmune disease with no cure. A former nationally-ranked swimmer and Ironman Canada competitor, Peter suffered severe blood vessel damage in his upper airways and lungs. After two years of intense medical treatment, including advanced biologic therapy, Peter is now in remission although it is difficult for him to continue his athletic pursuits as he was left with 60% normal lung function.

Refusing to give up on a lifelong love of adventure, Peter – an avalanche forecaster – is about to cycle, climb, and ski in a challenging fundraising expedition to the volcanic peak of Mount Rainier in Washington. The mountain features 26 major glaciers and a greater topographical prominence than K2 in the Himalaya. All funds raised on this trip will support *The Arthritis Society* and research into the prevention and treatment of diseases such as WG. The goal is to raise \$14,411, which is equal to the summit of Mount Rainier in feet.

The trip begins on Wednesday, July 3, 2013. Peter, along with a team of family and friends, will cycle 500 kilometres from Vancouver to the base of Mount Rainier. A small group will climb about 10,000 vertical feet to the summit of the mountain. The team will then ski back to their bicycles, and pedal their tired legs on the return journey to Vancouver.

“I want to prove to myself, and to others who suffer from diseases such as WG, that it is possible to be active after diagnosis – to not only enjoy adventures in life but to thrive,” explains Peter. “I am grateful to be in remission after two years of treatment. I’m now ready to take on my next major challenge, and to make a difference in the lives of others at the same time. It’s going to be a tough journey, but it will be an exhilarating one that I hope will inspire others.”

Peter was treated for WG by Dr. Jason Kur, medical director of *Artus Health Centre* in Vancouver. Dr. Kur will be supporting Peter’s journey by joining him on the first cycling segment of his trip departing from Vancouver.



“This is a remarkable undertaking for someone who has been diagnosed with WG,” says Dr. Kur, whose rheumatology practice focuses on inflammatory arthritis and autoimmune diseases. “Peter is extremely determined to raise awareness of autoimmune diseases such as this, which, if left untreated, can cause permanent damage and may even be life-threatening. Peter underwent intense treatment based on the latest drug research, including corticosteroids, chemotherapy and biologic medications. The funds that he raises will help further this research and allow for better treatment and prevention of WG and related diseases.”

A launch party will take place on Wednesday, June 26 at the *Showcase Snowboard Surf & Skate Shop* in Kitsilano (1766 West 4th Avenue) to celebrate this incredible expedition and to wish Peter and his team members a successful journey.

For more information about the expedition or to donate, please visit:

Donation Link: <http://www.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1064560%20%20>

Peter Marshall’s blog: <http://theaiexpedition.wordpress.com/>

Facebook Page: www.Facebook.com/TheAutoImmuneExpedition

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOcm4nx6Hs8>

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About Dr. Jason Kur and Artus Health Centre: Dr. Jason Kur is a medical director of the Artus Health Centre in Vancouver, Western Canada’s largest group of rheumatologists, and also sees outreach patients in Terrace, B.C. His general rheumatology practice focuses on inflammatory arthritis and autoimmune diseases. He is a member of the clinical staff of Vancouver General Hospital, a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia and President of the B.C. Society of Rheumatologists.

About The Arthritis Society:

The Arthritis Society is dedicated to a vision of living well while creating a future without arthritis. It is Canada’s principal health charity providing education, programs and support to the over 4.6 million Canadians living with arthritis and their loved ones. Since its founding in 1948, The Society has been the largest non-government funder of arthritis research in Canada by investing more than \$180 million in projects that have led to breakthroughs in the diagnosis, treatment and care of people with arthritis. For more information, visit www.arthritis.ca.



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