

Reaching her potential



Linda Houle has completed ten marathons

Rising at 6am, Linda Houle-Robert runs eight kilometres to ensure a healthy start to her day. As a wife and a busy mother of two young daughters, Linda then assists her family with a healthy breakfast and spends the remainder of the day focused on a multitude of activities.

Linda is passionate about health and wellness. She is a person who lives, eats, and breathes health while living with the challenges of MS. With a sudden onset of numbness in her face and difficulties with her speech, Linda arrived at a hospital emergency ward ten years ago, where she quickly learned of her MS diagnosis. From that moment forward, Linda became an advocate for healthy living and proactive health care.

The impact of Linda's wellness activities reaches far beyond herself and her family, it also reaches deep into her local community. Linda volunteers with the Ottawa Chapter of the MS Society as a fitness

“Our generation – we have to be the ones to get out there to do something about MS.”

Julia Daniluck, diagnosed with MS at age 19

instructor for a weekly chair fitness class, writes a column for their newsletter and occasionally speaks at their events. Linda also runs marathons, completing ten in as many years; volunteers with a local skating club, swim club, coaches her daughter's soccer team and offers nutritional sessions to students at a local high school on how to eat properly to improve their athletic performance.

MS has impacted the way Linda looks at life. She savours all of life's little pleasures, especially the time spent with her children and her family. Linda particularly enjoys the opportunities to enhance the well-being of others through her nutritional and fitness programs. In essence, she is finding a balance between body, mind and spirit in a way that enables her to be her best each and every day. ■

How to prepare for a healthy MS Walk

By Linda Houle-Robert, B.Sc(Kin), M.A., B.Ed., PTS, RHN

1. Make sure you have a good pair of running shoes.
2. Start your walk training slowly. Gradually build yourself up starting with 5 or 10 minutes at a time.
3. Avoid drastic increases in time on your feet. Increase by 5 minute increments weekly until you reach 30 minutes of walking, 3 times a week.
4. Don't forget your water. Bring a stainless steel water bottle with you to the walk and try to drink continuously throughout the walk.
5. Eat a good healthy breakfast before the walk. A bowl of porridge with milk, a bit of maple syrup for some sweetness and slices of apples is a good choice. Sprinkle with some yummy cinnamon.