



AAMAC
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Aplastic Anemia & Myelodysplasia
Association of Canada
Association canadienne de l'anémie
aplasique et de la myélodysplasie

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Reflections on a remarkable life: Bob's story

A former business owner, athlete, and the quintessential family man, 84-year-old Bob Markovich is a natural conversationalist and storyteller with a larger-than-life personality. He and his wife, Ann, have lived in Brantford, Ont. for nearly their entire lives and will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary in May. Together, they have built several successful businesses along with a lifetime of memories, passports enviably full of stamps, and a loving family.



Despite Bob's youthful energy and healthy lifestyle, he started to experience health problems around the age of 80. First, he was diagnosed with, and treated for, prostate cancer. Then, in 2019, routine blood tests showed that his red and white blood cell counts were very low. An appointment was set with Dr. Dina Khalaf, a hematologist at the HHSC Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton, and Bob was soon diagnosed with myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS).

The resulting low blood and platelet counts puts MDS patients at serious risk of infection, anemia, and bleeding. The treatment required for Bob initially involved frequent injections. Seven days per month, for five cycles, Ann would drive Bob to Hamilton for treatment. This was at the height of COVID, and Ann was forced to wait outside the hospital for hours.

In 2021, Dr. Khalaf switched Bob to an innovative therapy, which put an end to his and Ann's regular hospital visits. Most of Bob's monitoring was also replaced by virtual visits with Dr. Khalaf.

With Ann and his daughter, Candace, by his side and under the excellent care of Dr. Khalaf, Bob has been doing very well. "As of right now he's in complete remission," says Dr. Khalaf.

Visit macleans.ca to read their full story.

AAMAC's online and in-person knowledge-sharing communities have been an invaluable source of information and support for Candace, and she credits AAMAC for playing an important role in ensuring that all Canadian patients and caregivers living with MDS, PNH or AA receive the support they need.

Please help us continue our work if you are able by making a donation by cheque or online. We thank everyone who supports us so generously.

Yours sincerely,

Cindy Anthony *Executive Director*