

Hello and welcome to our e-newsletter - we hope you find it interesting. Click on the links for more info:

Petition to the Prime Minister

On 11 March 2009, a petition of almost 3200 names was submitted to the Prime Minister asking him to ensure all women are offered the chance to be tested for group B Strep during pregnancy. On 4 June 2009, the Government confirmed they would not offer routine screening for GBS to all pregnant women - so disappointing, but no surprises there. See <http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page19472>

Win a car!

We are delighted to announce we're taking part in the very first Small Charity Car Draw and we are asking our supporters (and their friends!) to buy tickets online at www.everyclick.com/groupbstrepsupport.

The Small Charity Car Draw gives small charities like us the chance to sell tickets to raise their local profile and raise all important funds. Tickets are just £2 each, and you can win a Fiat 500 car. The eco-friendly, efficient Fiat 500 was kindly donated by Zurich. It's the car that got Jeremy Clarkson raving, "... you come away from an experience behind the wheel absolutely loving it. It's cheeky and non-threatening without being pathetic. It's practical without being boring." **For your chance to win a new car and raise money for GBSS go to www.everyclick.com/groupbstrepsupport**

On-line Survey - Raising Awareness in an Informative non-scary way

We want to get the message of GBS awareness to everyone but don't want to scare pregnant mums (and we hear sometimes from health professionals that our materials may be scary, though we're rarely told that by the families who contact us directly). We are currently updating our printed materials – would you please help us improve them so we give information in a helpful, supportive, reassuring and not scary way. After all, the message is a good one – if pregnant women are aware of GBS, they can make an informed decision about what action (if any) to be taken about preventing GBS infection in their baby. Visit http://www.gbss.org.uk/survey.php?section_id=11§ion=surveys#survey_10 for a short questionnaire to give your views.

The Prime Minister's Commission on the future of nursing & midwifery in England - your views are sought

10 August 2009 is the closing date for comments to the Prime Minister's Commission on the future of nursing & midwifery, which wants a "robust dialogue to identify challenges and opportunities for nurses and midwives." They'd like to hear your views about nursing and midwifery in England at <http://cnm.independent.gov.uk/2009/05/the-commission-has-met/>

Research shows how quickly GBS testing for pregnant women can be implemented

A recent paper has shown just how quickly testing for GBS has been adopted in the USA. Researchers from the CDC collected information about strep B screening practices among women who gave birth in 2003-04 and compared it with that of a similar study conducted on women who gave birth in 1998-99.

Overall, the proportion of women screened for strep B jumped from 48% in 1998-99 to 85% in 2003-04. In 2003-04, the overall incidence of strep B infection among newborns was low: about 3/10,000 live births – this was almost a halving of the incidence in 1998. Infants born preterm were more likely to contract the disease, and mothers who gave birth to preterm infants were less likely to be screened.

See a video at <http://tinyurl.com/m8bz87> or read the paper's abstract at <http://tinyurl.com/lp3ax6>.

Cayden's Autumn Ball

Adrian and Caroline Grove are organising a Dinner Dance and Auction in memory of their son, Cayden, who died in April 2008 aged 22 days from late onset GBS infection. Adrian and Caroline want to raise money for GBSS to help stop other parents from going through such an awful experience

The Ball is on Friday, 25 September 2009 at Ufford Park, Woodbridge, Suffolk. The evening starts with a welcome drink on arrival, a three course dinner including half a bottle of wine per person, followed by the charity auction including celebrity and sporting memorabilia, signed artwork and various other items, then live music from The Ed Zackary Band. There will also be online auction to run alongside the event.

Adrian and Caroline have worked hard to make this an event not to be missed. For more information and tickets please visit <http://www.caydensautumnball.co.uk/index.html>.

Twitter & Facebook

You can now follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/GBSSupport where we'll keep you up to date with what's happening at the charity, published articles and fundraising news. And we now have a Facebook page too, www.facebook.com/pages/Group-B-Strep-Support/98947320307. It's early days and we're still learning about Twitter and Facebook, but we'd love you to join and help us!

Join us!

Did you know that you could become a member of GBSS? Joining the charity and committing to us financially would help us enormously with our planning for the future. Membership of the charity entitles you to receive our twice-yearly newsletter, GBSS News, regular updates on our activities and invitations to any events the charity is organising. Annual membership rates are £15 individual/family membership, £9 student/unwaged (evidence may be required) and £24 overseas.

Join online at www.gbss.org.uk, phone us during office hours (weekdays 9.30 am to 3.00 pm) with your credit/debit card details, or we'll happily send you a membership form to complete and return by post.

By becoming a member you can help us move forward, step by step, to achieve the goal of us all - families being free from the trauma of babies suffering GBS infections. We look forward to welcoming you!

That's all for now – we'll be in touch again later in the summer. With best wishes from all of us here,

The GBSS Team

If you'd prefer not to receive e-mails such as this from us, please let us know by replying to this email with REMOVE in the subject heading.

If you would like leaflets or posters to help raise awareness of GBS, please let us know and we'll happily send them to you.

Please raise money for GBSS (at no cost to you) by using this search engine:

<http://www.everyclick.com/groupbstrepsupportblocked::blocked::http://www.everyclick.com/uk/gbss>.

Group B Strep Support

preventing life-threatening group B Strep infection in newborn babies

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