



## **PURPLE DAY FOR EPILEPSY 2012 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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### **What is Purple Day for Epilepsy?**

Purple Day for Epilepsy (Purple Day) is held each year on March 26 and is a day dedicated to raising awareness about epilepsy. It was founded in 2008 by nine-year-old Cassidy Megan of Nova Scotia. Cassidy told her friends about her epilepsy after a presentation in her class given by the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia. At first, Cassidy was afraid the other children would make fun of her, but then she came up with the idea of Purple Day, where people would wear purple to show support for those living with epilepsy. Purple Day is named after the internationally recognized colour for epilepsy, lavender. The colour lavender represents isolation and solitude which is feeling held by many people with epilepsy.

### **Why is Purple Day for Epilepsy important?**

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders, affecting 300,000 people in Canada and 50 million people worldwide (more than multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and Parkinson's disease combined). Despite its prevalence, epilepsy is often misunderstood and people with epilepsy can face social stigma and discrimination.

Purple Day will help epilepsy organizations in Canada and around the world increase awareness, reduce stigma and empower individuals living with epilepsy to take action in their communities.

### **Who participates in Purple Day for Epilepsy?**

The Canadian Epilepsy Alliance coordinates Purple Day in Canada through its member agencies. In late 2008, The Anita Kaufmann Foundation became an official partner, launching Purple Day in the United States. Purple Day launched internationally in 2009, which led to the involvement of numerous organizations, schools, businesses, politicians and celebrities worldwide. The Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia and the Anita Kaufmann Foundation in the United States are the global partners for the Purple Day Campaign. UCB Canada Inc. is the exclusive Canadian biopharmaceutical partner for the 2012 Purple Day campaign.

### **What can Purple Day for Epilepsy achieve?**

Purple Day reminds everyone that people living with epilepsy need understanding and acceptance, and deserve comprehensive care and access to innovative treatment options to effectively manage their disorder. Spreading the word about epilepsy will help dispel myths and remind people affected by seizure disorders that they are not alone. On March 26, people around the world are encouraged to support epilepsy by wearing purple or by hosting a Purple Day awareness or fundraising event.

**For more information, please visit [www.purpleday.org](http://www.purpleday.org), or contact:**

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