

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Pruitt
Chairman

Jamie Harwell
Vice Chair

Kim Everett
Treasurer

Beth Siegelbaum
Secretary

Susan Anderson

Karen Avrick

Pat Bronos

Deborah Couture

Diane Joseph

Dirk Leasure

MEDICAL ADVISORS

James Bussel, MD

Douglas Cines, MD

Amy Geddis, MD

Terry Gernsheimer, MD

Andra James, MD

Craig Kessler, MD

David Kuter, MD

Howard Liebman, MD

Robert McMillan, MD
Emeritus

Drew Provan, MD

John Semple, PhD

Michael Tarantino, MD

133 Rollins Avenue
Suite 5
Rockville MD 20852

tel 877 528 3538

301 770 6636

fax 301 770 6638

May 20, 2011

Platelet Disorder Support Association Announces

The Inclusion of *National ITP Awareness Month* and *Sport Purple For Platelets Day* in the 2011 National Health Observances Calendar

Rockville, MD - May 20, 2011 - The Platelet Disorder Support Association (PDSA) is pleased to announce the inclusion of *National ITP Awareness Month* and *Sport Purple For Platelets Day* in the 2011 National Health Observances Calendar. PDSA requested the *National ITP Awareness Month* designation in 2010 to increase the public's understanding of ITP and other platelet disorders, let patients and their families know that there are resources and support available to help them have the best possible outcomes and that they are not alone.

Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), is an autoimmune disease in which the body mounts an immune attack toward platelets. They are marked as foreign by the immune system and eliminated in the spleen and sometimes, the liver. In addition to increased platelet destruction, some people with ITP also have impaired platelet production. Platelets are relatively small, irregularly shaped components of our blood. They are required to maintain the integrity of our blood vessel walls and for blood to clot. Without a sufficient number of platelets, a person with ITP is subject to spontaneous bleeding or bruising.

People with ITP often have bruises or small purple spots on their skin (petechiae) where their blood has escaped from their veins or capillaries. Spontaneous bleeding can also occur in the mucus membranes on the inside of the mouth or in the gastrointestinal tract. It is possible, with a decreased number of platelets, to have a spontaneous cerebral hemorrhage. ITP is often accompanied by fatigue and sometimes depression.

Chronic ITP and platelet function disorders are perhaps the most common bleeding disorder. It affects both sexes and all ages and races. The prevalence of ITP in the US has been grossly underestimated from payer databases but likely totals more than 120,000 persons. That's more than 10 times the number with Hemophilia.

Planned Awareness Events

PDSA is currently coordinating and promoting ITP Awareness Month initiatives, including *Sport Purple For Platelets Day* on September 30, 2011, PDSA's National Walk/Run: *Pump It Up For Platelets!* ~ for a world free of ITP, and other awareness events. PDSA, the largest ITP patient support organization in the United States, has the support of its membership to promote awareness of ITP.



For more information about *National ITP Awareness Month*, *Sport Purple For Platelets Day*, and *Pump It Up For Platelets!*, visit our Web site at www.pdsa.org. Please help us raise awareness of this widespread but still largely unknown disease.

Quick Links:

[National ITP Awareness Month](#)

[Sport Purple For Platelets Day](#)

[Pump It Up For Platelets! ~ for a world free of ITP](#)

[2011 National Health Observances Calendar](#)

About Platelet Disorder Support Association

The Platelet Disorder Support Association, located in Rockville, MD was established in 1998. PDSA is the nation's foremost non-profit corporation to provide information and support and to encourage research about ITP and other platelet disorders. Our organization is devoted to offering the most timely, accurate, and comprehensive information about platelet disorders. PDSA is a 501 (c) 3 corporation. As a tax-exempt organization, PDSA is eligible to receive donors' tax deductible charitable contributions.

About the National Health Observances Calendar

The National Health Observances Calendar is a service provided by the National Health Information Center in Washington, DC. The calendar is a tool for health professionals, teachers, and community groups to educate the public about health risks, organize successful health promotion events and campaigns, and get new ideas, information, and resources on health topics of interest.

Platelet Disorder Support Association

133 Rollins Ave., Suite 5
Rockville, MD 20852

1-87-PLATELET (877-528-3538) (toll free)

(PH) 301-770-6636 (FAX) 301-770-6638

e-mail: pdsa@pdsa.org

www.pdsa.org

For more information contact: Nancy Potthast, Marketing Director, at npotthast@pdsa.org.

The Platelet Disorder Support Association is dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with immune thrombocytopenia (ITP) and other platelet disorders through education, advocacy, and research.