

Faculty Profile: Dr. Daniel Grushka

When Dr. Daniel Grushka was completing a surgical rotation as a clinical clerk, he remembers seeing a quote of Mark Twain's posted outside one of the operating rooms that stayed with him, "It is better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid, than to open it and remove all doubt." While this may seem like common sense to many inexperienced and unsure medical students, he disagreed with the novelist's advice, "I always opened my mouth and have encouraged all my students to do the same. We learn from talking through our clinical dilemmas and through our mistakes."

Born and raised in Montreal, Dr. Grushka attended McGill University and worked toward both a BSc. and MSc. in Microbiology and Immunology before moving to London and earning his MD from the (now) Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry. When it came time to choose a specialty, his previous education made him initially consider Infectious Diseases, but he ultimately decided upon Family and Emergency Medicine because "it was intellectually stimulating, fairly all encompassing and [allowed him] to experience a wide variety of medical problems and procedures while still developing strong relationships with patients both in the clinic and the ER department."



Dr. Grushka examining a young patient

Dr. Grushka completed his residency in the Department of Family Medicine and opted for an additional year of training in emergency medicine through the Department's Enhanced Skills Program, for which he is now the Director. Currently, he practices family medicine at the Victoria Family Medical Centre and Emergency Medicine at the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital. In addition to his clinical responsibilities, he is the Deputy Registrar of the Medical College of Canada for the University of Western Ontario and heavily engaged in teaching both by supervising residents and medical students for the Department.

While he was growing up, Dr. Grushka was able to witness firsthand the impact an educator can make as his mother taught English and special needs children. First instructing as a graduate student at

McGill, he found he greatly enjoys teaching and now actively seeks out new opportunities. Teaching as a physician is especially rewarding to him because he loves "being able to help students and residents reach their potential. It gives me great satisfaction to not only teach them standards of care and guidelines, but to show them how it relates to the patient as a whole . . . not just a clinical dilemma." He describes his teaching philosophy as a simple one, "To provide a nurturing and stimulating environment, to impart knowledge and skills and to ensure that students are able to become lifelong learners." Additionally, he admits it has not been long since he was in the "student's shoes" and sees benefit in sharing his own unique experiences with the students to reassure them that "the arduous journey they are pursuing has been navigated by numerous physicians before them."

As a native Montrealer, one of Dr. Gushka's favourite hobbies is cheering on the Montreal Canadiens on TV or live whenever he has the chance, proudly declaring that he owns more Canadiens shirts than he does neckties. He has been married to his wife for nine years, and they have three young children, a daughter and two sons. When he has time to read for pleasure, he prefers gripping "page-turners", such as Harry Potter. He also enjoys a wide range of TV shows including old classics like ER and Star Trek to new favourites such as Game of Thrones and Boardwalk Empire.



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