

VASCULITIS; THE PROMISE AND THE CHALLENGE



Dr. Simon Carette.

Meet Dr. Simon Carette. As the head of the Division of Rheumatology at the University Health Network and Mount Sinai and as director of the largest Vasculitis clinic from coast-to-coast, Dr. Carette is passionate about this rare and multi-faceted disease.

“What piques my interest is that the types of vasculitis are rare and multi-systemic. They can affect any system in the human body and can vary from mild to life-threatening,” said Dr. Carette.

The clinic he manages serves as a referral centre for patients from all over Ontario as well as other provinces, suffering from various forms of Vasculitis including Wegener’s Granulomatosis, Churg-Strauss, Microscopic Polyangiitis, Polyarteritis Nodosa and Takayasu Arteritis. It’s also the home of essential research in the area. “We’ve begun asking all of our patients who are meeting the strict criteria for one of the types of Vasculitides, to accept to be followed four

times a year, for five years. We are collecting data, including blood samples with the hopes of discovering new biomarkers to help predict disease flares and disease severity,” said Dr. Carette.

Not without its challenges, “the most important thing in a study is to have numbers,” said Dr. Carette, and patients with these types of diseases are rare. From this, the Vasculitis Clinical Research Consortium was born, bringing together an integrated group of medical centres, patient support organizations and clinical research resources with a mandate to conduct research into the various forms of vasculitis, including the causes.

“Like most autoimmune diseases, there is likely a genetic component and environmental component,” said Dr. Carette.

Born and brought up in Quebec, Dr. Carette feels that the move to Toronto was in line with coming back to his first love. “Boy, was I not disappointed in coming here. This Centre is the place to be in the world. There is a group of rheumatologists here who have vision and fire in their bellies. The next step is to recruit young stars who will take over and go to the next level; and this is happening.”

What is Vasculitis?

Vasculitis is the inflammation of blood vessels in the body. In Vasculitis, the body’s immune system will attack its own blood vessels, causing them to become inflamed. Inflammation can damage the blood vessels and lead to a number of serious complications. There are over 15 types of Vasculitis. Treatment is often very successful when diagnosed early.

A NEW WAY TO SAY THANK YOU!

On April 17th, the Foundation held a very special “Foundation Friends” event in the DeGasperis Conservatory at Toronto General Hospital. It was an occasion to honour long-time donors – some of whom have been supporters of arthritis research for more than twenty years beginning with the Wellesley Hospital, young scientists and their mentors, patients who have candidly shared their stories, and board members.

Dr. Bob Bell, President and CEO of University Health Network, spoke about the importance of partnerships between donors, patients, board members, clinicians, scientists and their Fellows, and how they are all contributing to the extraordinary research at UHN. Certificates of appreciation were presented.



From left to right: Governors Circle members Brenda Yates, June McLean and board member Nancy McFadyen.



From left to right: Dr. Chris Paige, VP of Research at UHN, along with founding members of the Governors Circle – Milan and Mary Nastich.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Honey Agar, founder of Lupus Ontario and an HAARC Foundation Board member, received an Ontario Volunteer Service Award this April. She was presented with a stylized trillium pin and personalized certificate at a special ceremony in recognition of her thirty years of continuous commitment and service to Lupus Ontario. Congratulations Honey!

This April, **Drs. Claire Bombardier and Monique Gignac** were appointed co-Scientific Directors of the Canadian Arthritis Network (CAN). CAN has a ten-year history of successfully facilitating and supporting networking, partnerships and collaborations within the arthritis research community in Canada, including 181 leading Canadian arthritis researchers, 45 Canadian academic institutions, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, and government.

Dr. Robert Inman and colleagues from Toronto Western Hospital were selected to present an abstract on reactive

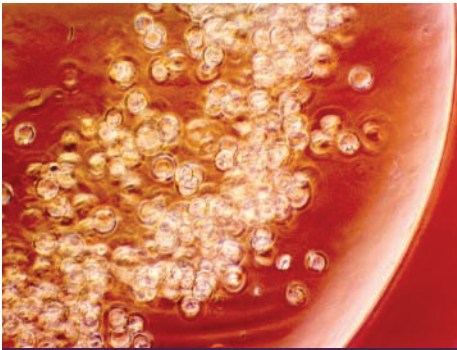
arthritis at a plenary session at the American College of Rheumatology meeting in Boston – this placed it in the top 1% of all abstracts submitted. AARC rheumatologists continued their high profile with the ankylosing spondylitis program authoring and co-authoring 22 scientific presentations. The psoriatic arthritis program as well as **Dr. Ed Keystone** and his team from Mt. Sinai also had a very high number of presentations.

Rising star **Dr. Vinod Chandran** is once again in the news! At the recent annual meeting of the Canadian Rheumatologists Association he was awarded the Phil Rosen award for the best clinical paper presentation.

Dr. Joan Wither has been awarded the 2008 Edward Dunlop Challenge Research Grant to investigate the B cell functional abnormalities leading to aberrant B cell activation in individuals with an autoimmune disorder.

SPOTLIGHT ON DEGENERATIVE DISEASES

Unlike inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis, osteoarthritis is a degenerative condition, meaning the affected joint is breaking down due to issues such as wear and tear, injury, or misalignment within the body. Osteoarthritis represents 90% of all arthritis diagnoses, and with the aging population is becoming an epidemic condition requiring serious attention.



A glimpse into Dr. Erwin's work: cells growing in an alginate sphere.

AARC Foundation friend and donor Alf Wirth joined the Foundation team for a fascinating day at Toronto Western Hospital this April to see first hand what researchers are doing to make a difference in this vastly underfunded area of research.

Dr. Mark Erwin, chiropractor and PhD researcher at Toronto Western, explained his work, that of taking a hard look at a leading cause of disability: back pain. Spinal disc degeneration occurs when the cartilage between the vertebrae begins to break down, providing



State-of-the-art operating room allowing for less invasive surgery.

poor cushioning between the joints. After working as a chiropractor with patients through his practice, Mark decided it was time to take his work to the lab with one mission in mind: find a way to re-grow human cartilage. Mark's ongoing research shows exciting promise.

Mr. Wirth then met with a different type of scientist – Dr. Simone Kaptein, population health researcher with the Arthritis Community Research and Evaluation Unit. Simone discussed her important work researching and identifying how arthritis affects people of all ages in the work place.

The next stop was a visit with Dr. Nizar Mahomed, the Director of the Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis Program at UHN, to view

a total knee replacement first hand. Dr. Mahomed explained that even though surgery wait times are significantly reduced and surgeries are far more advanced and less invasive, this is not the ideal solution. More research needs to be done to find out how the onset of joint degeneration can be prevented and to educate the public on the importance of maintaining a healthy weight as well as safely exercising.

Our researchers are doing critical, groundbreaking work into degenerative joint conditions, finding better treatments, measuring the effects on society, and even looking for cures. Numbers however show us that more needs to be done, as osteoarthritis rises is a leading cause of disability and massive strain on the economy.

RECENT EVENTS

Dance for the Cure

What started in a basement in 1994, has become an event with 800 guests in attendance at this year's **Dance for the Cure Winter Wonderland** gala. Attendees were treated to a fantastic evening of great food, high energy entertainment and exceptional silent and live auctions. The event raised an outstanding \$160,000 net for lupus research.

We are delighted that the Toronto Western Hospital Lupus Databank was presented with a \$50,000 cheque to help beat lupus. Also sharing in the proceeds were long standing recipient Lupus Ontario and new beneficiary Hospital For Sick Children in support of the Pediatric Lupus Clinic. Congratulations to Tiziana Tolfo, Tina Sarta and their amazing committee for another great success.

*Winter
Wonderland*



Dr. Paul Fortin and Julie Kane, President of Lupus Ontario.

Spring Fling

The inaugural **Spring Fling Dinner and Dance**, held this past April at Le Dome Banquet Hall in Oakville, was a resounding success. Expertly organized by Lisa Cherry and Connie Samson and their team of volunteers, the gala resulted in much needed funds for lupus research.

It was an emotional evening as well, when a special presentation was made to the family of Marie Margareth Serrano. Marie passed away in March from complications arising from her lupus, and it was announced that Spring Fling would be dedicated to her memory.

A special thanks to the Wave 94.7 and the Investors Group for their generous sponsorship, silent auction donors and to the Master of Ceremonies Bob Farrow. The committee is already planning for next year's Spring Fling. Volunteers and new friends are always welcome!



From left to right: Lupus Spring Fling committee members Ling Leng, Joanne Versteegen, Suzanne Hague, event chair Lisa Cherry and Gitric Kelton.



FACT

By 2026, it's estimated that 6 million Canadians aged 15 years and older will have arthritis or related conditions.

Q&A WITH DR. MURRAY UROWITZ

A major focus for Toronto Western Hospital rheumatologist Dr. Murray Urowitz, has been research in the area of coronary artery disease (CAD) in women with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). He was the first to identify that women with SLE are at risk for early CAD. We recently sat down with Dr. Urowitz to discuss his work:

Q | What was the reason for pursuing this area of research?

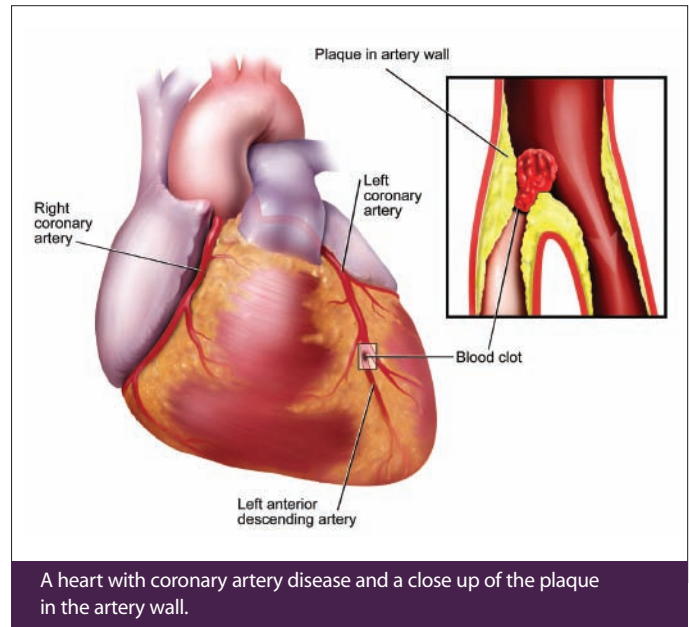
A | “We’ve been following lupus patients for over 30 years. Because of a number of different things over the years – maybe the disease is a little milder or we’re treating it better – people are living longer and as people are living longer, new issues have begun to emerge and the most dramatic issue was that these young women were showing signs of coronary artery disease. They were having the same illnesses that you would expect of a 60 or 70 year-old man and these women were having it in their thirties.”

Q | What are the noteworthy points emerging from the study?

A | “If you take non-lupus patients who have a heart attack and you take lupus patients who have a heart attack and you look at all of the risk factors like cholesterol, high blood pressure, etc. the lupus patients have one less risk factor than everyone else. In other words, when most people get a heart attack, you have one or two or three factors – lupus patients need to have fewer factors than non-lupus patients. We also took lupus patients who never had a symptom and we did some sub-clinical tests. Those tests showed us some interesting things – 35 per cent of those women had abnormal scans related to vascular disease.”

Q | Do these tests indicate you might be able to predict premature CAD in lupus patients?

A | “What these tests showed us was that this is a group of people that has to be watched very carefully.”



Q | How important is collaboration in this research effort?

A | “Very. When you are trying to understand an uncommon outcome in a rare disease you really need a collaborative effort. A group formed called SLICC (Systemic Lupus International Collaborative Clinics), which is a group of researchers from eleven different countries. We started a registry and took patients who were in their first year of illness and we all agreed on the things we would follow. We are now up to over 1,000 patients being monitored. SLICC is now looking at getting an intervention study to look at which of the people we are following need to be put on additional medication to address premature CAD. We’re thinking about this all the time and working to identify the best possible answer.”

COMMEMORATIVE GIVING

September is Arthritis Month and making a donation in its honour is also a great way to recognize a special friend, family member, caregiver and, at this time of year, a teacher or graduate. It is a meaningful way to celebrate a special occasion such as a birthday, marriage, wedding anniversary or Bar/Bat Mitzvah. And, honouring the memory of a loved one with a gift to the Foundation is always sincerely appreciated by family. Since November 1, 2007 the Foundation has received over \$38,000 in commemorative gifts. On behalf of everyone you so generously paid tribute to, thank you!



We are also grateful when our donors ask their friends to make donations to the Foundation in lieu of giving presents when they reach a personal milestone in their lives. One such individual is Joel Matlin, President of Alarmforce Industries, who recently celebrated his 60th birthday. Rather than gifts, Joel asked everyone invited to his party to make donations to the Foundation. Joel chose the AARC Foundation in appreciation of the wonderful care one of his family members receives from an AARC rheumatologist.

The Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre Foundation acknowledges gifts made **in honour** of the following individuals between November 1, 2007 and April 30, 2008:

Dr. Lori Albert	Jane Currie	Dr. Robert Inman	Gary Norton
Bill Alcock	Jo Devraj	Silvia Kesenberg	Dr. Jack Reynolds
Dr. Joanne Bargman	Alan D'Silva	Dr. Ed Keystone	Kerry and Barbara Ritz
Jackie & Jeffrey Budning	Audrey Enright	Dan Kingwell	Marilyn and Morton Ritz
Kevin Howard Budning	Vicki Galet	Shirley Kofman	Sally and Norm Roper
Robert Budning	Sabiha Gardezi	Barbara MacGowan	Danielle Treacy
Dr. Simon Carette	Dr. Dafna Gladman	Joel Matlin	Dr. Murray Urowitz
Lisa Cherry & <i>Spring Fling</i>	Dr. Duncan Gordon	Norma Niece	Stephanie Zeoli

The Foundation also thanks those who made gifts in **fond memory** of:

Thomas David John Evans	Gerhard Kander	Penelope D. McKenzie	Doreen Wherrett
George D. Finlayson	Louis Kozlovic	Robert Nekerius	George Winchester
David Goldberg	Linda Lewis	Ruth J. Norton	
Bill Hosso			

The Foundation extends a sincere thanks to our **monthly donors** for helping us beat arthritis year-round!

Liz Attfield	Gerri H. Grant	Barbara McCulloch	W.T. Duncan Shaddick
Wilma Baker	Cynthia Groves	Sam Nastamagos	Pirkko Shalden
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Dimitra Economou	Phyllis Madiuk	Jean Scott	William E. Wilson
Sonja Goesseringer	Frances Mandell-Arad	Pippa Shaddick	

Tribute giving is easy, as is joining the monthly giving program. Please contact Pippa Shaddick at 416-340-4989 or pippa.shaddick@aarcf-uhn.ca. You may also go on-line at your convenience by visiting www.beatarthritis.ca

POWER OF MOVEMENT - THANK YOU!

It was not a surprise that the 2nd annual **Power of Movement Hot Yoga Challenge to Beat Arthritis** was a steamy success again this year. With over 220 participants at the Wellesley Community Centre and classes held simultaneously at Moksha studios in Montreal, Winnipeg and Edmonton, it was truly the largest hot yoga class ever held in support of arthritis research!

A very special thank you to the presenting sponsor Amgen Wyeth for their continued support and a generous contribution of \$10,000 presented at the event by Laura D'Angelo.

Through the support and commitment of amazing sponsors, volunteers and hot yogis we raised over

\$60,000 net. Thus, with proceeds raised last year, over \$100,000 has been put toward the Smythe Chair in Arthritis Research...we couldn't have done this without you! Top individual fundraising prizes were awarded to Deena Robertson of Moksha London and Kelly Tipler of Hot Yoga Oakville, while the UHN HR Yogis took home prizes for being the top fundraising team.

Thank you again for believing in the power of movement and helping us beat arthritis and autoimmune diseases! We look forward to seeing you in 2009 as we continue to stretch right across Canada!

For more information on the event or to sign up for e-news blasts about the 3rd annual event, please visit www.powerofmovement.ca



Dorna Chee, a lupus patient and yoga instructor, was the inspiration for Power of Movement. This photo appeared in a National Post article about autoimmune illnesses and the benefits of hot yoga.

Photo by Peter J. Thompson

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NATIONAL POST

A special thanks to Bhim Rana and his team at the Wellesley Community Centre.

FACT

12% of Canadians with arthritis aged 18 years and older report unrefreshing sleep, more than double the proportion in Canadians without arthritis.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2nd Annual Charlie Spence Memorial Golf Classic

Saturday, August 9th, 2008

Maple Ridge Golf Course, London

The Spence family invites you to support the 2nd annual Charlie Spence Memorial Golf Classic. This fun filled day of golfing raises funds in support of Vasculitis research under the leadership of Dr. Simon Carette. Spaces are limited so register today online for golfing and/or dinner at www.charliespenceclassic.tripod.com



5th Annual St Regis Room Fashion Show and Luncheon

Tuesday, September 16th, 2008

Arcadian Court, The Bay on Queen Street

Join us again for the fabulous annual St. Regis Room Fashion Show and delicious lunch at the prestigious Arcadian Court. For all upcoming details of the event and to purchase tickets please call 416-340-4800 ext 6679 or visit our website at www.beatarthritis.ca



9th Annual Day at the Races

Sunday, September 28th, 2008

Woodbine Entertainment Complex

Racing fans! Please join us for another amazing afternoon of racing excitement, incredible buffet, refreshments and silent auction. Chair Don O'Born and Co-Chair Sheila Norman have a great day planned for you! For event and sponsorship details, to purchase a ticket or make a donation please visit www.racetobeatarthritis.ca



Matching Gifts

Did you know that many employers provide a corporate matching gift which may double, even triple your charitable contribution? And, some companies match gifts made by retirees and/or spouses. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, contact your Human Resource Department.

If your company is eligible, request a matching gift form from your employer, and send it completed and signed with your gift. We'll do the rest. The impact of your gift to the AARC Foundation may be doubled or possibly tripled! IBM and American Express, for example, match donations made to the Foundation. **Thank you!**

Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre Foundation

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