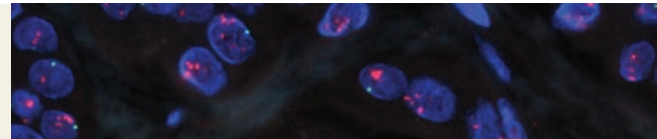


IMPORTANT RESEARCH NEWS!



REPRODUCING THE HUMAN IMMUNE SYSTEM RESPONSE

Drs. Robert Inman and Joan Wither are conducting an innovative project to analyze and develop new therapies and assess the efficacy of these new treatments in patients with rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis (arthritis of the spine).

They are collaborating with Dr. John Dick, a world leader in stem cell research and holder of the Canada Research Chair in Stem Cell Biology.

“The advantages of using stem cells from adults are two-fold. We avoid the highly charged political issue of embryonic stem cell harvesting and, given the patients are between fifty and seventy years old, we can have a better understanding of genetic susceptibility to disease because of age.”

- Dr. Rob Inman

“We are fortunate to have access to stem cells that are taken from the bone marrow of adults undergoing hip replacements through our partnership with the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery at Toronto Western Hospital,” says Dr. Inman.

This is an exciting project as this is the closest anyone has come to reproducing the human immune system response in an animal model.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF CHRONIC ILLNESS

For the first time, it has been shown there is a difference in the magnitude of individual and population attributable risks for a wide range of conditions and various health outcomes.

The study, conducted by Arthritis Community Research and Evaluation Unit researcher Dr. Elizabeth Badley and doctoral students Anthony Perruccio and Denise Power indicated that at the population level in Canada, arthritis and related illnesses overwhelmingly ranked as having the greatest impact on disability and poor self-rated health, at 17% and 16% respectively. Asthma and heart disease followed with the second highest impact on disability, but at half the risk of arthritis. This is in stark contrast to individual-level rankings where fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, cancer, and to a lesser extent stroke and heart disease, were shown to affect quality of life in individuals.



These are important findings with substantial impact on the Canadian population. *Dr. Anthony Perruccio*

Perruccio says, “These findings need to be taken into account when setting clinical and public health priorities because interventions need to be targeted to different conditions depending on which aspects

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of health are being considered. Conditions with the greatest population impact may not be the conditions that have the greatest individual impact.”

The team used a cross-sectional survey conducted by Statistics Canada to collect self-reported health information from approximately 130,000 Canadians related to their health status, service use and health determinants.

HONOUR ROLL

Dr. Paul Fortin was recently awarded the Kirkland Scholarship Award. These awards are used to support a current existing investigator in lupus research and/or future SLE investigators.

Dr. Fortin will use the award to support young lupus investigators who will work at the Lupus Clinic at Toronto Western Hospital and will perform their research locally and/or through the Canadian Network for Improved Outcomes in SLE. The first Kirkland Fellow is Dr. Renée Leclerc.

Dr. Eleanor Fish received a prestigious Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Women’s Health and Immunobiology. These Chairs are awarded to outstanding researchers acknowledged by their peers as world leaders in their fields.

Given men and women respond differently to infections, a key aspect of Dr. Fish’s research is to understand these sex differences in order to provide better treatments. Her studies of hormonal and chromosomal differences—and how these affect disease susceptibility—also have implications for autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis, which mostly affect women.

By understanding what makes people susceptible to such diseases, Dr. Fish hopes to develop targeted drugs that will provide better treatment for both women and men, whether against a virus infection or an autoimmune disease. This January she was also elected President of the International Society of Interferon and Cytokine Research.



SIMPLE CHANGE...BIG IMPACT!

When Janie McLeod explained how difficult it is for her to use doorknobs and asked me to consider installing levers on all the doors when renovating the office, I said “of course!” It was such a simple thing to do and has made such a difference to my patients whose feedback has been nothing but positive.
— Dr. Andrew Penuvchev



Dr. Penuvchev and Janie show off the new lever door handles, helping the dental practice to be more accessible.

We first introduced you to Janie, a long time AARC Foundation supporter and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patient, in the summer 2006 newsletter. As a result of RA severely disfiguring her hands, Janie is extremely familiar with the challenges that people with disabilities face in their day-to-day activities.

“I was alarmed at the number of people who didn’t have the courage to speak up about a round door handle or water tap in public places,” says Janie. “I asked myself, who is advocating for us? And decided, if not me, then who?” Since then, Janie has committed herself to educating people and advocating for lever door handles, which are much easier to use.

Thanks to her one-woman crusade, professionals in Janie’s life have been heading to their nearest hardware stores for new door handles, making life a little easier for so many. Janie expresses her sincere thanks to all the people who have taken her request to heart; including her dentist Dr. Andrew Penuvchev; Teresa Kic of KIC Salons; Dr. Paul Ho her chiropractor and acupuncturist; and Laura Sweeting, Lab Supervisor at the lab where Janie goes for monthly blood work.

Thank you for making a difference ... one doorknob at a time!

WALKING TOGETHER TO CONQUER LUPUS!

Walk a Block for Lupus began six years ago as a small family walk and has become Lupus Canada's single most important national public awareness and fundraising event.

Traditionally, the Walk has been held in October coinciding with Lupus Awareness Month in Canada. This year the event will take place on May 10th to celebrate World Lupus Day, with similar walks happening around the globe. Lupus Canada and its member organizations hope to see you and your enthusiasm in May!

PHOTO: Pictured here are Drs. Paul Fortin and Dafna Gladman and the Toronto Western Hospital Walk a Block for Lupus team as they set off on last year's walk. Thanks to their participation and that of 94 other teams across the country, Lupus Canada raised over \$325,000!



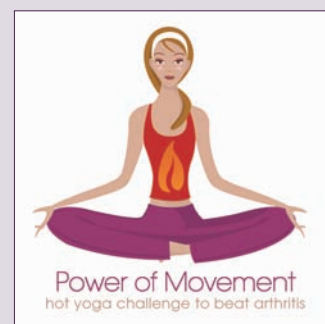
2ND ANNUAL POWER OF MOVEMENT

It's back and hotter than ever! The 2nd annual Power of Movement Hot Yoga Challenge to Beat Arthritis is being held February 24th, under the heated roof of the Wellesley Community Centre in Toronto. Participants will have an unforgettable hot yoga experience while raising critical funds for arthritis and autoimmune disease research.

This event is committed to sustainability – the environmental impact will be nearly zero as a result of our eco-friendly staging efforts and the help of socially and environmentally conscious sponsors: Amgen Wyeth, Moksha Yoga, Whole Foods Market, Gaiam, Teranet, GTA Yoga.com, Aardvark Group, Lasenza Spirit, Voudou Teas, Evoke Salon and the City of Toronto. Bullfrog Power is ensuring that it is entirely green powered.

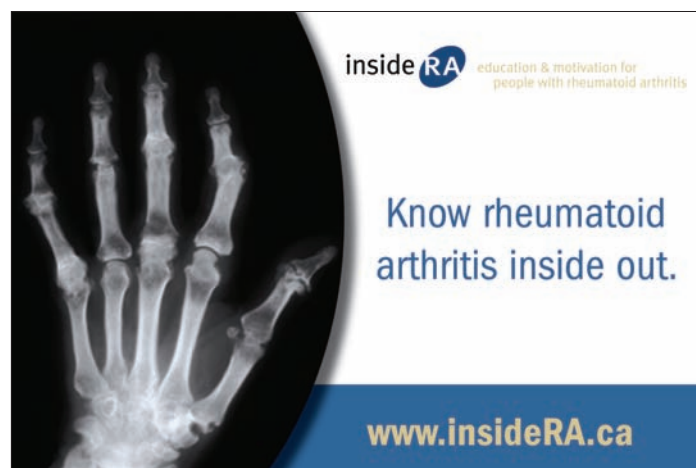
Again this year, all proceeds will go to the Smythe Chair in Arthritis Research, named in honour of Dr. Hugh Smythe, a passionate visionary who helped spearhead arthritis programs across Canada.

To register for the challenge, sponsor a friend or team, or make a donation, visit www.powerofmovement.ca or call Lisa Ripper at 416-340-3607.



GREEN FOR SPRING!

Given the Power of Movement is a green event, the AARC Foundation has chosen to build on our efforts to be more environmentally aware and meet the changing needs of our supporters. Partnering with Bullfrog Power was a first move in that direction, and now the AARC Foundation will be printing much of its material on FSC-certified paper. The Forestry Stewardship Council of Ontario (FSC) stamp of approval guarantees that the paper being used has been responsibly harvested. The Printing House is our print supplier of FSC paper and supports us in this initiative.



Brought to you by AMGEN WYETH

LEAVE YOUR MARK ON SCIENCE!

Some people support research because they have an interest in science. Others support research because arthritis or autoimmune diseases have played a role in their lives and community, and they want to help ensure that future generations don't suffer the way they did. What these donors have in common is that they want to find cures for this mysterious family of illnesses; whether it be in their lifetime or in the future.

There are many ways to leave a legacy and help the AARC Foundation in its efforts to beat arthritis; bequests, securities, retirement plans, charitable remainder trusts, life insurance, residual interest gift or gifts of property. Whatever you choose, your gift can help recruit, retain and train the doctors and scientists of tomorrow, support breakthrough medical discoveries, purchase state-of-the-art technology and ultimately

benefit the over 4.5 million Canadians living every day with arthritis.

Please let us know about your plans for a charitable bequest so that we may ensure that your bequest wording avoids cost or confusion to your estate. Letting others know about your intentions can serve as an inspiration to those considering a similar gift. And the most important reason to notify the Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre Foundation of your future gift is because it gives us the opportunity to personally thank you!

To leave a lasting legacy, make a gift of securities and for more information about other giving opportunities; please contact Ms. Gerri Grant, Executive Director at 416-340-3937.

"Sadly, very few people have ever heard of scleroderma, resulting in little financial support and hence little research being devoted to the treatment and cure of this disease.

It is our hope that a substantial donation will increase awareness of scleroderma, both in the general public and in the medical profession. We were thrilled to learn that Dr. Sindhu Johnson and clinician scientist Dr. Simon Carette, also a senior investigator associated with the Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre, have a special interest in scleroderma. This made it easy for us to make the decision to make a future gift to the AARC Foundation in support of this important research and eventually find a cure for scleroderma."

– Marilyn and Morton Ritz

PHOTO: The Ritzs have a passion for travel despite the challenges of living with a chronic illness. Here they are on a recent trip to Jerusalem.



Your opinion matters to the Foundation and we'd like to know what you think of the newsletters and newsflash! Please take a moment to fill out the enclosed survey and return by mail or visit www.beatarthritis.ca and fill it out online. Thank you!

Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre Foundation

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Website: www.beatarthritis.ca

Charitable Registration #11929 0773 RR0001

The logo for beat arthritis.ca features a stylized human figure with arms raised in a 'V' shape, positioned above the text 'beat arthritis.ca'. The text is in a lowercase, sans-serif font.