



IMPACT IN MOTION

YOUR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Spring/Summer 2023

BREAKING NEWS

The best painkiller for osteoarthritis?

The results are in from a study that reviewed evidence from nearly 200 clinical trials on the effectiveness and safety of available painkiller drugs used in the treatment of osteoarthritis — including 90 different drug formulations and dosages. The discoveries made by Dr. Bruno da Costa and his team, including postdoctoral fellow Dr. Pavlos Bobos, were supported by Arthritis Society Canada, and should be of great interest to more than 4 million Canadians living with the disease.

Using advanced statistical techniques to analyze data published over decades from more than 100,000 patients with osteoarthritis, two NSAID pills (etoricoxib 60 mg/day and diclofenac 150 mg/day) were suggested to be among the best options for most people with osteoarthritis. For people with knee osteoarthritis, the best option was found to be diclofenac (70-81 mg/day) applied to the skin.

This research can now help inform updates to clinical guidelines for doctors and patients, and challenges the use of opioids, whose potential for harm could outweigh the benefits. It also impacts the future of treatment plans, because the lowest effective dose of a painkiller with the lowest risk of harmful side effects for an individual patient’s overall health could ultimately be life-changing. And that’s what your support of Arthritis Society Canada is all about — changing lives for the better.

New immunotherapy for rheumatoid arthritis

The most prescribed anti-inflammatory drugs for rheumatoid arthritis ease joint pain and swelling, but don’t actually stop disease progression. They also don’t work for everyone. Immunotherapy, which harnesses the power of your own immune system to fight disease, may be a promising new approach that could transform rheumatoid arthritis treatment.

Immunotherapy using immune cells called dendritic cells has already been proven safe for human use. Dr. Abdelaziz Amrani is developing an innovative new approach to rheumatoid arthritis therapy using dendritic cells genetically engineered to fight inflammation, studying the approach in both mice and cells from humans. Funded by Arthritis Society Canada, these experiments could accelerate a potential immunotherapy for rheumatoid arthritis into clinical trials. And your support of cutting-edge research like this gives people with this disease hope for a better future. 😊

WHAT’S INSIDE

Awareness Through Art.....	2
A Legacy Story to Remember.....	2
Stories of Inspiration.....	3
Personalized Medicine.....	3
Educational Content.....	4

Artist re-invents herself, raises arthritis awareness

For Karine Giboulo, a Montreal-based visual artist, reinventing herself as an artist is something she does constantly. But the 42-year-old never expected to have to reinvent herself in her personal life.

When Karine got pregnant with her first son twelve years ago, she started to feel tremendous pain in her back and found it extremely difficult to move around.

“It took over nine years between my pregnancy and my diagnosis. It got to a point where it was a relief to learn I have ankylosing spondylitis.”

Expressing the pain

After finally landing on medication that mostly kept her symptoms in check, and after finding comfort and inspiration in other Arthritis Society Canada’s ambassador stories, she started to reinvent herself.

Eventually, chronic pain became part of her artistic expression. Karine has gained particular attention across North America for her dioramas of miniature human environments.

Her current exhibition invites visitors into an immersive reimagining of her home, brought to life by over 500 miniature clay figures. It includes an intimate scene set in the bedroom of the clay version of herself, showcasing the vulnerability arthritis has dealt her.

Perhaps one day, a whole exhibition will be dedicated to life with chronic illness. “I am certainly considering it!” she says. 😊



Photo by Tony Hafkenschaid

A legacy story to remember

Meet the physicist who left a lasting commitment

Last summer, Helen Capogreco contacted Arthritis Society Canada with surprising news: her brother Frank had left behind a remarkable gift after he passed away. A retired physicist, Frank Capogreco kept a quiet life in Ajax, Ontario. He also played the stock market — quite well, as it turns out.

About 25 years ago, Frank opened an investment fund in the name of Arthritis Society Canada. From a nominal sum to begin with, until the day he died at the age of 71, Frank’s investment fund grew to exceed \$445,000.

Frank was an ardent tennis player, but in the mid-1980s, he started to notice his game was slipping. In 1985, his doctor diagnosed him with rheumatoid arthritis.

Frank had to stop playing the sport he loved, and about a decade later at age 45, he had to retire with disability from the job he loved: senior scientist at Ontario Hydro.

Despite this life-changing diagnosis, Frank never complained. As Helen says, “He was committed to staying active as often as he could, swimming each morning to loosen his joints, doing his prescribed physio, even hiking with his walker.”

Helen, along with Arthritis Society Canada, is proud that Frank was able to live life on his terms. He would often quote Jean-Paul Sartre: ‘Freedom is what we do with what is done to us.’

Arthritis Society Canada is forever grateful for Frank Capogreco’s extraordinary generosity.

If you would like more information on how to make the gift of a lifetime, go to arthritis.ca/plannedgiving 😊

“Frank would often quote Jean-Paul Sartre: ‘Freedom is what we do with what is done to us.’”



Growing pains and glowing gains



“There were some dark days. Not being able to ski anymore broke my heart.”

Maddie Watts, 19, from Vancouver, B.C., was scared to try adaptive skiing.

Not for fear of hurting herself; she was terrified she would hate this version of it.

Growing up near Whistler, B.C., her best childhood memories were made on the slopes, surrounded by friends and family.

So, when she received her diagnosis of facet joint syndrome — a form of arthritis aggressively attacking her spine — at the age of 17, she immediately grieved the loss of her favourite activity.

Then, her dad recommended she give adaptive skiing a try.

A new love

“I was doing turns on the first day. It came so naturally! Soon enough, I was back in the high mountains. I was hooked!”

As Maddie embraced her newfound love for adaptive skiing, she quickly caught the attention of the Canadian Paralympic Committee. They extended her an invitation to train, learn and meet other athletes in the program.

“The hardest part was the unknown. Getting the right diagnosis took time and there were moments where I felt helpless. But I consulted Arthritis Society Canada’s website and found help in support groups.”

With a few years to prepare, improve and grow her love for adaptive skiing, she now embraces the dream of joining the 2026 Canadian Paralympic Team. The next time you read about Maddie Watts, there might be a picture of a smiling young woman with a gleaming medal around her neck. 😊

“ I consulted Arthritis Society Canada’s website and found help in support groups. ”

Personalized medicine: Getting the right treatments to the right children

With support from Arthritis Society Canada, Dr. Luiza Graziotin at the University of Calgary and the UCAN CURE Consortium have been hard at work studying the challenges that children living with arthritis face on a daily basis. Their findings recognize that children with arthritis who are prescribed medications often follow a complex trial-and-error path, with more than 100 different sequences identified in medical records.

This research highlights the need for personalized medicine in order to get the right treatments to the right children, and, at the right time. For people and families who have been affected by childhood arthritis, the future of this research has the potential to have a profound impact on their lives — just as you’ve had a profound impact on the interdisciplinary team’s work with your generosity. 😊



Rise and Shine: 10 tips to manage morning stiffness in your joints

The morning can be a tough time of day when you live with arthritis. Try these tips to get added relief, and for further details, visit arthritis.ca/living-well

- 1 Try gentle range-of-motion exercises in bed
- 2 Use heat in the morning
- 3 Consider using creams and oils
- 4 Pay attention to your sleep positions
- 5 Plan ahead
- 6 Choose ergonomic tools
- 7 Prioritize sleep
- 8 Eat right
- 9 Keep moving day to day
- 10 Talk to your doctor about your medications

Introducing the New Gout Information Hub

Despite gout being the most common form of inflammatory arthritis (especially in men), there are substantial gaps in educational content available. We're pleased to share we now have curated and updated content at arthritis.ca/gout with easy-to-understand, reliable information, all of which has been reviewed by rheumatologist Dr. Jean-Philip Deslauriers.

Namaste! Yoga for Arthritis

Yoga can be an effective way to manage arthritis pain. Visit our YouTube channel to view our instructional 6-episode series.



youtube.com/@ArthritisSociety/playlists

Upcoming Arthritis Talks:



APRIL
Gout

This discussion includes important steps people can make to manage their gout, including watching what they drink, choosing food wisely, and finding suitable medications and non-pharmaceutical treatment options.

Sign up for our free, online information sessions with experts at arthritis.ca/talks



JUNE
Fact or myth: Arthritis diets and supplements

Examining the science behind various diets and supplements that claim to treat or cure arthritis and discuss what people with arthritis could be doing to manage their health.

Donate today to help extinguish arthritis



Giving is easy:

By phone: 1.855.834.4427

Online: arthritis.ca/givenow

By mail: Return the enclosed form in the postage-paid envelope

THANK YOU for your inspiring generosity and partnership.