

IMPACT IN MOTION

YOUR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Spring/Summer 2024



Research discoveries — made possible by you

With millions of people across the country counting on us, we are doing everything we can to help improve the quality of life and create brighter futures for people living with arthritis. Thanks to our generous donors, we are the largest charitable funder of arthritis research in Canada. Together, we empower arthritis researchers to explore promising ideas and make positive changes for people affected by arthritis.

A key to understanding osteoarthritis pain

Christie Costello from Memorial University of Newfoundland and Dr. Anthony Perruccio from the University Health Network have found traces of a biochemical process called phosphatidylcholine metabolism in blood samples from people with knee osteoarthritis. This process is associated with pain that remains even after joint replacement surgery. This finding could lead to blood tests that help predict treatment-resistant pain in patients after joint surgery. It could also inform enhanced care plans, including metabolism-altering treatments to reduce knee osteoarthritis pain. This research has been funded by Arthritis Society of Canada supporters.



Christie Costello



Dr. Anthony Perruccio

Easing inflammation

Thanks to donors like you, Dr. Ali Abdul-Slater of York University studied a protein called TRAF-1, which can act as a “brake” on inflammation. Using Arthritis Society Canada funding, Dr. Abdul-Sater and his team discovered that TRAF-1 can protect against inflammation and swelling in gout by blocking the activation of an inflammation-causing protein complex called the inflammasome. This research could open pathways to using TRAF-1 as a new therapeutic target in gout and potentially lead to relief for more than one million Canadians who live with this painful and debilitating disease.



Dr. Ali Abdul-Slater

“Together, we’ve made great strides in arthritis research. Our new State of Arthritis in Canada Report Card will help us keep moving in the right direction.”

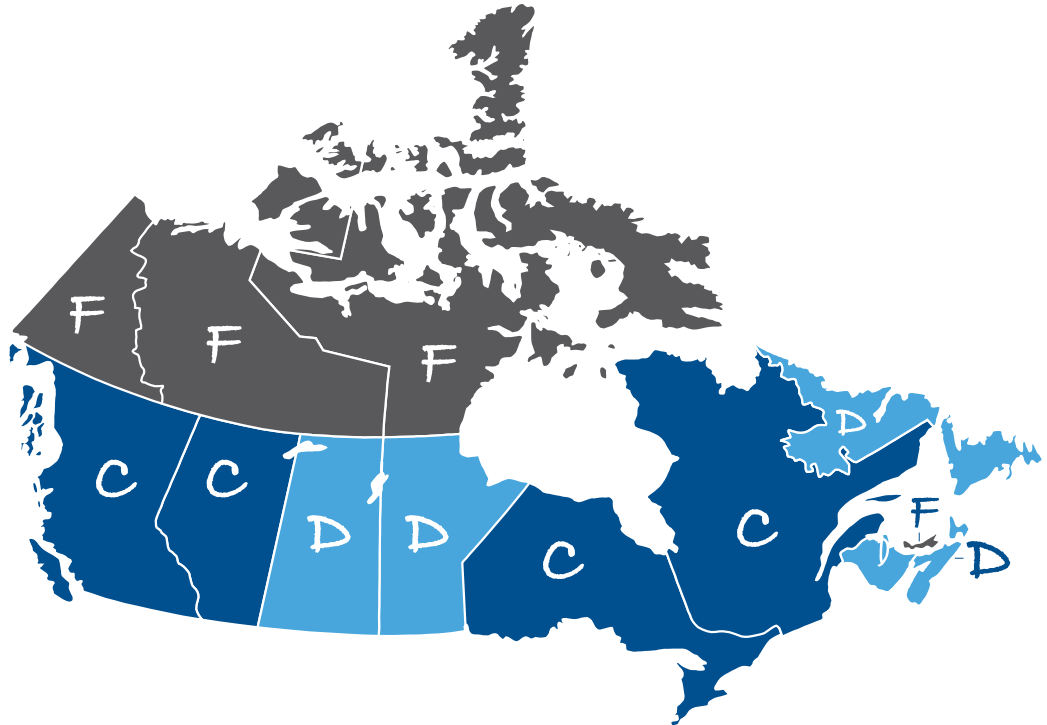
Turn the page to read more...”

– Trish Barbato, CEO

The State of Arthritis in Canada Report Card

Grading legend

- A** : Excellent
- B** : Good
- C** : Satisfactory
- D** : Improvement Needed
- F** : Significant Improvement Needed



In a groundbreaking effort to improve arthritis care, we worked closely with our partners and communities across Canada to look closely at how provinces and territories are supporting people living with arthritis. We found an urgent need for action and innovation in the field of arthritis care. Guided by our key findings, we are committed to helping develop an effective, solution-oriented Arthritis Action Plan that improves access to care, research and education.

Key findings:



Canada needs better arthritis data.



Access to arthritis care is a challenge.



Arthritis research is underfunded.



The highest grade among all provinces and territories in Canada was a "C".

Action required:



Enhance the quality of health data



Invest in arthritis research



Improve access to arthritis care



Raise awareness of arthritis

You can learn more about the state of arthritis across Canada by checking out the full report at arthritis.ca/ReportCard

Persevering through the pain



“Excruciating pain stole my ability to hold my baby.”

When Cristina was 21 years old, she experienced the sudden onset of rheumatoid arthritis, a debilitating autoimmune disease. Her joints began to swell and within a couple of months, she was completely bedridden.

Arthritis wasn't her first brush with chronic pain. Since childhood, she had experienced severe digestive issues, pain, and fatigue due to Sjögren's syndrome, an autoimmune disease impacting salivary glands, tear glands, joints, muscles, nerves and organs. The additional challenges of rheumatoid arthritis amplified her agony and caused upheaval in Cristina's life. She was forced to resign from her job as a homecare nurse because of her symptoms.

Determined to make a positive impact in the healthcare field, Cristina pivoted to become a Registered Dietitian in Canada. Though this new career better supported her needs, she continued to face challenges. And one of the most challenging times she faced came when she got pregnant.

Throughout her pregnancy and after her child's birth, Cristina dealt with unimaginable suffering.

“Excruciating pain stole my ability to hold my baby... to dress him and bathe him, says Cristina.

“It made me feel inadequate as a mother and stole my joy of being a new mom.”

Adding to Cristina's load, she was diagnosed with fibromyalgia, a pain condition impacting the central nervous system. Her three illnesses interact and impact Cristina's quality of life but she remains undeterred. She has built a beautiful community on social media to share her nutrition and lifestyle expertise. Cristina is committed to supporting other women like her, helping them feel less alone.

“Fellow patients and followers enjoy my approach to coping,” says Cristina.

“I shed light in the darkness and put a smile on people's faces when they see me on Instagram.”

For all Cristina has been through, she maintains a hopeful zest for life, encouraging other women with chronic illnesses to do the same. As an outspoken advocate, she says,

“I'm not ashamed of my twisted hands. I proudly show them because it's the only way I can make an invisible disease visible.”



Share your story | Stories like yours will help educate people in Canada. To get involved, please email info@arthritis.ca and we'll be thrilled to connect!



Five ways to manage your arthritis in the warmer months

- 1. Eat consistently** | Maintain energy and reduce stress levels by eating nutritious foods every three hours.
- 2. Get active** | Low-impact workouts like walking or swimming help deliver oxygen and nutrients to your organs and promote mood-enhancing endorphins.
- 3. Prioritize sleep** | Create a comfortable sleep environment and if painful symptoms make it difficult to doze off, try incorporating a bath, yoga, or meditation into your bedtime routine.
- 4. Stay hydrated** | Keep your hydration and energy levels up by having fresh drinking water with you at all times.
- 5. Take care of your mental health** | Be sure to incorporate regular mental health practices like meditation and fun, engaging activities into your daily routine for overall mind and body wellness.

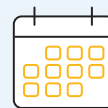
Upcoming Arthritis Talks:

This webinar series brings expert, evidence-based information to help people manage their arthritis. The program has reached more than 285,000 people in Canada, with most living in underserved areas.



APRIL

Pain
Management



JUNE

Ankylosing
Spondylitis

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

Calling all volunteers from across Canada

Volunteers are an essential part of the Arthritis Society Canada team.

We have opportunities for all skill sets to support people living with arthritis across Canada.

If you're interested in getting involved, visit us at arthritis.ca/get-involved/volunteer or call us at 1.800.321.1433.

Donate today to help end the agony of 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 incredible kindness and generosity.