

Member Organizations

Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute

Arthritis & Autoimmunity Research Centre

Arthritis Community Research & Evaluation Unit

Arthritis Consumer Experts

Arthritis Health Professions Association

Arthritis Research Centre of Canada

Arthritis Patient Advisory Board of the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada

Arthritis Research Foundation

The Arthritis Society

Bone and Joint Canada

Canadian Alliance of Pediatric Rheumatology Investigators

Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance

Canadian Academy of Sports and Exercise Medicine

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

Canadian Chiropractic Association

Canadian Obesity Network

Canadian Orthopaedic Association

Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation

Canadian Physiotherapy Association

Canadian Rheumatology Association

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology

Canadian Spondylitis Association

Cochrane Collaboration

Consumer Advisory Board of the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada

Institute for Work and Health

McCaig Institute for Bone and Joint Health

Patient Partners

Member Companies

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Amgen Canada Inc.

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Pfizer Canada Inc.

UCB Canada Inc.

World leading Scientists Present New Directions in Osteoarthritis Research at Arthritis Alliance of Canada Symposium

Calgary, October 21, 2015 – According to the Arthritis Alliance of Canada (AAC), there are currently more than 4.4 million people living with osteoarthritis (OA). Within a generation, more than 10 million (or one in four) Canadians are expected to have OA. At its third Annual Meeting and Research Symposium, to be held October 22-23 in Kananaskis, Alberta, the AAC, in partnership with the CIHR's Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis, will focus on advancements in osteoarthritis research that may provide the tools for our health care system to face the growing burden of the disease.

At the AAC Symposium, "**New Directions in Osteoarthritis Research**," the world's leading osteoarthritis researchers will present promising new approaches for future research and identify knowledge gaps and opportunities to an audience of Canada's leading scientists, healthcare providers, trainees, specialists, key stakeholders and advocates.

"People attending the Symposium may be surprised at what they hear," said Dr. Gillian Hawker, Sir John and Lady Eaton Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine, University of Toronto and as co-Founder and Member of the Arthritis Alliance of Canada. "The highest rates of OA are increasing fastest among young people (20-59 years), due largely to childhood obesity and knee injury. While effective therapies exist, the high prevalence of comorbidity in people with OA makes management challenging (as many of 90% of people with OA have *at least one additional chronic condition* – most often diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure)."

Canada's aging population represents another OA challenge, according to the Symposium's Keynote Speaker, the University of Southern Denmark's Dr. Ewa Roos, one of the world's leading authorities on exercise as prevention and treatment of joint pain, joint injury and osteoarthritis. Aging baby boomers are much more active than previous generations. Keeping active is imperative for good general health and healthy aging. Often, joint pain is a barrier to stay active, and people get anxious and as a result get inactive to ease the pain.

"The last 20 years of research has however convincingly showed that there is a paradox, because focused supervised exercise actually reduces pain with up to 30%," said Dr. Roos. "Contemporary OA treatment therefore starts with patient education and exercise. Over the last 3 years we have successfully rolled out this program via 250 physiotherapy clinics in Denmark. More than 8.500 people with knee or hip pain have participated in education and 12 sessions of neuromuscular exercise. We see reduced sick leave, reduced intake of analgesics, reduced pain, improved physical function and walking speed, and increased physical activity. The education seem to help people to continue with self-management once the 3 month program is over, since the results seem to persist at one year."

ABOUT THE ARTHRITIS ALLIANCE OF CANADA The Arthritis Alliance of Canada is a coalition of over 35 organizations representing patient groups, arthritis consumer

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organizations, professional organizations, not-for-profits, government, industry and researchers. The Alliance’s goal is to improve the lives of Canadians with arthritis. While each member organization continues its own work, the Alliance provides a central focus for national arthritis-related initiatives. For more information, visit www.arthritisalliance.ca.

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:
Kelly Lendvoy Vice President, Communications and Public Affairs
Arthritis Consumer Experts
Mobile: 604.379.9898 Email: lendvoy@jointhealth.org