

# The New York Arthritis Reporter

Arthritis Foundation, Inc., New York Chapter • 122 East 42nd Street • New York, New York 10168-1898 • (212) 984-8700

## Osteoarthritis Research Update Accelerating the Momentum of Discovery

An estimated 21 million Americans have osteoarthritis (OA), making it the most prevalent of the 100 related diseases that fall under the arthritis “umbrella.” Historically, research in OA has focused on later stages of the disease: providing symptomatic relief and improving surgical techniques for joint replacement. However, efforts are currently underway at the Arthritis Foundation to accelerate the momentum of discovery in OA by strengthening our own research programs



on the national level and establishing collaborative research opportunities with other key international health organizations. The ultimate goal is to find effective ways to intervene in the disease process of OA before joint damage takes place.

As OA becomes more prevalent in the population, the Arthritis Foundation remains committed to supporting and promoting new and innovative research in the field. Future research will not only focus on the expansion of treatment options for OA, but will also aim to discover new methods for prevention, early detection and, ultimately, work towards finding a cure. Some key research areas include: examining molecular biomarkers as potential indicators for the disease, exploring the role

of specific, mechanical factors that may cause OA, learning how to repair and grow cartilage through complex tissue engineering, and improving the use of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and other types of imaging techniques in order to detect the presence of OA at its earliest stages. As the Foundation looks toward the future of OA, these types of discoveries are the key to success.

“In order to accomplish these research goals, collaborative initiatives must be developed by the Foundation and other key arthritis-related organizations to build upon prior successes in research and develop new ways of treating and preventing this debilitating disease,” says Dr. John Hardin, Chief Scientific Officer of the Arthritis Foundation. Many successes in past OA research have relied on what scientists already know about the ways in which our joints function. Dr. Hardin explains, “Historically, we have focused on a body machinery that we already understand. While this has been critical for OA research so far, it doesn’t encourage us to look forward.”

According to Dr. Hardin, the Arthritis Foundation will begin this next step forward by encouraging researchers from across the globe to work together and share their ideas about the future of OA. One way to begin this collaboration is by building upon the annual Segal OA Symposium in Chicago. This symposium, funded by Gordon and Carole Segal, the founders of Crate & Barrel, provides a venue for leaders in the field to discuss cutting edge research advances and



new directions in OA research. The Arthritis Foundation is expanding this symposium by including international OA researchers who will come together to share their ideas about OA and collaborate on directions for the future. At this workshop, called “SNOW” (The Segal North American Osteoarthritis Workshop), the Arthritis Foundation will join forces with OARSI (Osteoarthritis Research Society International) and CAN (Canadian Arthritis Network) to create an international scientific dialogue. The Arthritis Foundation hopes that SNOW will gain international recognition and spark the necessary momentum to encourage new discoveries in OA.

A second initiative that is underway at the Arthritis Foundation is the creation of a multi-institutional “Center of Excellence” for OA research. The goal for this center would be to find and fund the “best of the best” OA research projects and create a central data bank and tissue repository for participating institutions with the purpose

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Partners In Research



The Chapter is pleased to announce that it has once again partnered with **Merck & Co., Inc.**, to offer research opportunities to young OA and orthopaedic investigators from leading medical institutions throughout New York City. **The Merck & Co., Inc./Arthritis Foundation, New York Chapter Osteoarthritis Research Fellowship Award in Rheumatology** allows the Chapter to continue to promote top-notch research projects that aim to develop new tools for the prevention and treatment of OA.

**This issue is underwritten by an educational grant from Wyeth.**

# Making the Mind-Body Connection

Complementary therapies are those that may work along with conventional medicine to help relieve your arthritis-related pain. By emphasizing the mind-body connection, these therapies treat the individual from a holistic perspective, looking at the many different influences that may impact your arthritis. Some examples of complementary therapies include tai chi, meditation, acupuncture and yoga. The Chapter has created a new brochure, **Make the Mind Body Connection**, that describes each of these therapies in more detail.



If you are interested in learning more about the mind-body connection, please join the Chapter at the **Albert W. Grokoest and Muriel C. Hoyt Mind Body Connection Symposium**. This fall, the free symposium will be held at **Burke Rehabilitation Hospital** on **Thursday, November 1st, at 5:00 p.m.** and will cover topics such as therapeutic yoga, the effects of relaxation on arthritis and eating well with arthritis.

The Chapter is also exploring options for a new disease management program involving yoga designed specifically for people with arthritis. Yoga is an ancient practice that combines mental, physical and spiritual training and is a good way to improve flexibility and promote relaxation.

If you are interested in getting more information about the development of this program, details about the *Mind Body Connection Symposium* or for a copy of our new brochure, *Make the Mind-Body Connection*, please contact the Chapter at 212-984-8730.

## Osteoarthritis Research Update (continued from page 1)

of sharing information. In order to assess the feasibility of this targeted research initiative, the Arthritis Foundation has created a task force of leading experts in the field. Dr. Steven Abramson, Director of Rheumatology and Vice Dean for Education, Faculty and Academic Affairs at NYU Medical Center, is a leading member of this task force. He explains that the "Research conducted at this center would not only be biomedical, but would also be clinical in nature. This center could be the catalyst for new and innovative research for OA." By examining the



genetic, cellular, and biomechanical factors that lead to OA and discovering new imaging techniques, this center would be a driving force behind many different and diverse areas of research. The ultimate goal for the research conducted at this center would be to create a viable "end-product" (such as a new medication) that could directly help people who are suffering with OA.

The SNOW workshop and the creation of a Center of Excellence, are only a few of the ways that the Arthritis Foundation is paving the way for new discoveries in OA research. As the Arthritis Foundation moves forward, there is reason to expect many impressive improvements in the prevention, detection and treatment of OA.

For more information on arthritis research, visit our Web site, [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org), and click on "Research" at the top right corner of the page. You will gain access to a wide variety of research topics. To find out more about OA, you can request a copy of our free brochure, *Osteoarthritis*, by calling the **New York Arthritis Exchange™** telephone helpline at (212) 984-8730, or, from the 914 or 845 area codes only, (800) 246-2884.

### NEW YORK CHAPTER



## The New York Arthritis Reporter

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Copies of our financial and operating report have been filed with the state and are available upon request. To obtain one, write: Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271, or contact us at the address above.

### FREE Arthritis Foundation Self-Help, Osteoporosis and You, and Arthritis Foundation Exercise Programs for GHI Subscribers

Pre-registration required, contact Cathy Hogstrom at (212) 984-8713 for locations in our Chapter region.

A distribution of \$20,343 from the estate of Agnes Cipolla will support programs for people with arthritis.

# Upcoming Programs

This fall is filled with many opportunities for you to learn more about arthritis! The Chapter's public education programs offer participants the opportunity to hear noted rheumatologists and other medical professionals from the New York City medical community present on topics related to arthritis and information on cutting-edge treatments. Please join the Chapter at one of the following free events, held in different communities throughout New York City:

### Thursday, September 20th, 1:30pm

#### Treatment Options for Rheumatoid Arthritis—Chinese

Sponsored by **Wyeth**

Charles B. Wang Community Health Center  
268 Canal Street, New York, NY

### Tuesday, September 25th, 1:00pm

#### Women and Arthritis: Lunch and Learn

Sponsored by **Amgen**

Arthritis Foundation, New York Chapter  
122 East 42nd Street, 18th Floor,  
New York, NY

### Friday, September 28th, 11:00am

#### Treatment Options for Rheumatoid Arthritis—Spanish

Sponsored by **Wyeth**

Sunnyside Community Center  
43-31 39th Street, Sunnyside, NY

### Tuesday, October 2nd, 5:00pm

#### Treatment Options for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Sponsored by **Wyeth**

Staten Island Physician Practice: Clove Lake Medical Office  
1050 Clove Road, Staten Island, NY

### Monday, October 15th, 5:00pm

#### Charles L. Christian Symposium: Today's Options for Osteoarthritis Management

Lighthouse International

111 East 59th Street, New York, NY

### Monday, October 22nd, 12:45pm

#### Osteoporosis: The Silent Epidemic—Spanish/English

Sponsored by **Eli Lilly**

Marble Hill Senior Center  
3565 Broadway, Bronx, NY

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# Questions and Answers

**John A. Hardin, MD, is the Chief Scientific Officer of the Arthritis Foundation and Professor of Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.**

**Q: As the Chief Scientific Officer, what is your vision for the future of research at the Arthritis Foundation?**

**A:** The mission of the Arthritis Foundation is to improve lives through leadership in the prevention, control and cure of arthritis and related diseases. In order to accomplish this, we must find better treatments to prevent and cure this disease! We must create strong research programs to provide answers to the critical questions that so many people are asking about arthritis.



As I see it, there are three main goals for our Research Program. The first is to bring all of the chapters together to create a **single, nationwide grant portfolio**. Although we must be sensitive to the needs of each of the local chapters, we must also create the strongest research initiative possible. In order to accomplish this, we must pool our resources and have a network of strategically directed programs that are all headed toward the same goal: the prevention and cure of this disease.

The second goal is to **increase the number of investigative rheumatologists** in the field. Right now, this field is getting smaller and smaller. With this in mind, we must continue to develop young, new investigators interested in studying arthritis and musculoskeletal diseases. By expanding this pool of investigators, we will be able to encourage and support high quality professionals and ultimately, further our research program.

Lastly, we must **improve our ability for translational research**. That is, we must find better ways to get scientific information from 'the bench' (or the lab) to the patient!

One way to do this is by creating the *Arthritis Scholar Award* and model it after the New York Chapter's successful *Young Scholar Award*. This would be a well paid, clinical fellowship that would encourage more clinically trained rheumatologists and orthopaedic surgeons to participate in Arthritis Foundation funded research and, ultimately, bring the newest scientific information to their patients.

**Q: How do you see these research efforts affecting medical progress in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JA)?**

**A:** For both of these diseases, we must create targeted research initiatives that are driven by central, leading questions which direct our course. With RA, for instance, our key questions are: what triggers this disease and who will respond best to what treatment? The Arthritis Foundation has developed a task force of leading rheumatologists in order to develop new and innovative ways to address these critical issues. Ultimately, we hope to create a national patient registry to help with this process. Our goal is to improve the lives of those people who are living with RA.

With JA, we are also eager to create a strategically directed research initiative that aims to meet our current needs in the field. Our goals are to increase our capacity of pediatric rheumatologists nationwide and strengthen their translational research capabilities. In addition, we must identify the pathophysiological mechanisms for JA, so that we can approach it similarly to RA. In order to do this, we must work with leaders in the field of pediatric rheumatology to develop research centers that are fully equipped to begin addressing these critical needs.

## Kids Get Arthritis Too!



Thanks to an educational grant from **Amgen**, the Chapter is pleased to be holding the third annual **Kids Get Arthritis Too Family Day** in Brooklyn, New York this fall. The program, for children with arthritis and their families, will be multi-tiered, with specific sessions targeting parents, children and teens. Families will be given the opportunity to learn from medical professionals and each other about topics such as *Medications, Physical Activity/Exercise and Therapy for Children and Adolescents with Arthritis, Nutrition and Arthritis and Managing Your Child's Pain*.

The Chapter has also begun working with local families to form a **Mother's Networking Group** for mothers of children with arthritis. This social networking group will bring families together, in a relaxed environment, to share their experiences, challenges and insights on raising a child with arthritis. For more information about this group, please contact Michele Greco at 212-984-8712 or [mgreco@arthritis.org](mailto:mgreco@arthritis.org).

let's talk  
**RA**  
Rheumatoid  
Arthritis  
Arthritis Foundation®

**Do you have rheumatoid arthritis and get tired just performing everyday tasks?**

If so, it may be time to talk to your rheumatologist. How you talk to your doctor about your rheumatoid arthritis may be more important than you know. Your rheumatologist should have a clear understanding of how RA affects your daily life. To help make the most out of your appointments, the Arthritis Foundation has created a FREE Let's Talk RA Communication Kit that provides tips on talking to your doctor about your symptoms and pain.

**To get your FREE Communication Kit**

Call 1-800-283-7800 or  
visit [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)



Bristol-Myers Squibb

The Arthritis Foundation thanks Bristol-Myers Squibb Company for its support in underwriting the development of the "Let's Talk RA" program.



## Visit Our Thrift Shop

**Arthritis Foundation Thrift Shop**  
1383 Third Avenue • New York, NY 10021  
(212) 772-8816

Donations always welcome.

A distribution of \$84,008 from the estate of Anne Ducey will support arthritis research.

The estate of Yetta Krell made a bequest to the Chapter of \$34,763.

## Fellowship Profile

# Meet Our New Investigators

The New York Chapter is paving the way for new discoveries in OA research by funding some of the best and brightest researchers in the field. For the past three years, the Chapter has proudly supported these young investigators



Dr. Svetlana Krasnokutsky



Dr. Jason McKean

as they work to develop new advances and treatments for OA. Made possible by our partnerships with **sanofi aventis** and **Merck & Co., Inc.**, these specialized, orthopaedic and OA fellowships aim to further spark the momentum of new OA research on the horizon.

This year, the Chapter is thrilled to sponsor two research fellows whose projects both focus on innovative ways of approaching OA, from disease detection to treatment. Our fellows this year are **Dr. Svetlana Krasnokutsky** of NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases and **Dr. Jason McKean** of Columbia University/New York Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Krasnokutsky began her Merck-sponsored fellowship in August 2007. The focus of her research is on detecting potential biomarkers in blood that may indicate an increased risk of developing OA or a tendency, for those who are already living with the disease, to have a more severe case. The identification of these OA biomarkers will provide a number of significant benefits, including the possibility of giving physicians the ability to identify, in advance, patients most at risk for OA disease progression.

Dr. McKean began his sanofi aventis-sponsored fellowship in July 2007. His research focuses on different ways of treating OA, specifically for arthritis of the basal joint of the thumb, also called carpometacarpal (CMC) arthritis. By collecting data about patient-specific characteristics, treatment interventions and their impact on functional outcomes, Dr. McKean will compare a variety of current treatments (both operative and non-operative) that are available for CMC and show which of these treatments work best for this condition.

Translational research projects by young rheumatologists, such as Dr. Krasnokutsky and Dr. McKean, are precisely the type of driving force necessary to create change in the field of OA. In past years, the Chapter's fellowship partnerships have produced several successful OA research projects, such as: finding less invasive spinal fusion procedures (Dr. Matthew Cunningham of the Hospital for Special Surgery), improving the way that tendons heal to bone (Dr. Lawrence Gulatta of the Hospital for Special Surgery), and investigating the role of synovial inflammation in OA (Dr. Carla Scanzello of the Hospital for Special Surgery). The Chapter is dedicated to supporting important ventures such as these and will continue to do so in an effort to bring about new developments in the prevention and treatment of this disease.

## Upcoming Programs

Continued from page two

**Thursday, November 1st, 5:00pm**  
**Albert Grokoest and Muriel C. Hoyt Mind Body Connection Family Symposium for People With Arthritis**  
Burke Rehabilitation Hospital  
785 Mamaroneck Avenue,  
White Plains, NY

**Monday, December 3rd, 5:00pm**  
**Women's Health Summit**  
Sponsored by **Abbott**  
Lighthouse International  
111 East 59th Street, New York, NY

Programs require pre-registration. For further information, call the New York Arthritis Exchange™ at 212-984-8730 or, from the 914 and 845 area codes only, 800-246-2884.

Lisa Sabin remembered the Chapter in her will with a bequest of \$5,000.

Shirley Jackson remembered the Chapter in her will with a bequest of \$3,056.

## Dates to Remember

### Metro SportsMed Physical Therapy

380 Second Avenue—Ground Floor  
(corner East 22<sup>nd</sup> Street)  
New York, New York

- September 26** Osteoarthritis Updates  
Noon – 1:00 PM
- October 22** Nutrition & Arthritis  
Noon – 1:00 PM
- November 8** Management of Arthritis Pain  
Noon – 1:00 PM
- December 7** Non-Surgical Treatment Options for Arthritic Knees  
Noon – 1:00 PM

### Metro SportsMed Physical Therapy

263 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2A  
(between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Street)  
Brooklyn, New York

- September 27** Osteoarthritis Updates  
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- October 23** Biophosphonates & Osteonecrosis of the Jaw  
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM
- October 31** Improving Patient-Doctor Communication  
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
- November 6** Healthy Eating for Healthy Aging  
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
- November 6** Hormones and Healthy Bones  
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Programs require pre-registration. For further information, call the **New York Arthritis Exchange™** at (212) 984-8730 or, from the 914 and 845 area codes only, 800-246-2884.

Esther Rosenberg remembered the Chapter in her will with a bequest of \$500.

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- Arthritis Advocates in Action
- Advocacy News
- Your Direct Access
- Kids Get Arthritis, Too
- Food for Thought
- The New York Arthritis Reporter
- Información en español

Log on to [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org). Enter your zip code to find the New York Chapter.



## In the Next Issue: Women and Arthritis