



News from the Arthritis Foundation

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ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES TOP 10 ARTHRITIS ADVANCES OF 2007

ATLANTA, Jan. 23, 2008 – A team of engineers has recently created a new framework upon which cartilage tissue can be grown. The novel scaffold is porous, so the fabric can be seeded with cells and transplanted into a joint damaged by arthritis. The woven “fabric” will be absorbed by the body, leaving only healthy, strong cartilage for those who suffer from osteoarthritis or other cartilage injuries. This is just one of the top 10 most significant arthritis advances of 2007, according to the Arthritis Foundation.

The Arthritis Foundation’s annual Top 10 Arthritis Advances also includes a survey released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) quantifying the high cost of arthritis, in which arthritis-attributable work limitation affects one in three working-age adults (aged 18-64 years) with doctor-diagnosed arthritis. Another important advance this past year was the first ever quantification of the number of children with juvenile arthritis and documentation of the severe shortage of pediatric rheumatologists to provide diagnosis and care for children with juvenile arthritis in the United States. Moreover, several approaches were identified to increase access to subspecialty care by pediatric rheumatologists, which include enhancing the availability and financing of fellowship training to increase the number of trainees in the field and also improving the financial viability of pediatric rheumatology practices in academic settings.

“As the prevalence of arthritis continues to soar in the United States, advances made in 2007 provide the groundwork for improving the lives of the 46 millions people who live with arthritis now and the 40% more projected to be affected by 2030,” said John H. Klippel, M.D., president and CEO of the Arthritis Foundation. “With arthritis being the most common cause of disability, advances in research and the development of more effective and safer treatments will continue to contribute in helping to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis.”

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The Arthritis Foundation's Top 10 Arthritis Advances of 2007 include:

- Passage of FDA Legislation on Drug Regulation and Safety
- Quantification of Work Limitation and Earnings Losses
- Projections of Increases in Doctor-Diagnosed Arthritis and Arthritis-Attributable Activity Limitation
- Identification of RA Susceptibility Genes *STAT4* and *TRAF1-C5*
- Uncovering the Importance of Cadherin-11
- Development of a Woven Mesh for Cartilage Engineering
- Approval of *Lyrica* for Treatment of Fibromyalgia
- Availability of NIH's Osteoarthritis Data and Images
- Quantification of Children with Arthritis and Number of Doctors Needed
- Evidence of Benefit and Safety of Biologic Therapy in Children

Summaries of each of the top arthritis advances, as well as what they mean for arthritis patients are available at <http://www.arthritis.org/top-10-2007.php>

To develop its fifth annual list of the Top 10 Arthritis Advances, the Arthritis Foundation sought input from clinicians with expertise in various forms of arthritis, scientists from a wide variety of research disciplines, and organizations with an interest in arthritis and related diseases.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation is the leading health organization addressing the needs of some 46 million Americans living with arthritis, the nation's most common cause of disability. Founded in 1948, with headquarters in Atlanta, the Arthritis Foundation has multiple service points located throughout the country.

The Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, not-for-profit contributor to arthritis research in the world, funding more than \$380 million in research grants since 1948. Celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, the foundation helps individuals take control of arthritis by providing public health education; pursuing public policy and legislation; and conducting evidence-based programs to improve the quality of life for those living with arthritis. Information is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-283-7800 or www.arthritis.org.