

In this issue:

A New Year p. 1

Winter Activities 2020 p. 2

Flash Black 2019, Plan for
2020 p. 3Steps toward getting a
diagnosis p. 4How to prepare for a medical
appointment p. 5

Cold or Heat? p. 6

Between us p. 7

Heartfelt thanks p. 8

Collaborators p. 9

Guest speakers p. 10

Membership, Donation p. 11

**Flash Arthritis is
published three
times a year**, in
winter, spring and fall

**You can reach us at
all times by email
at:**

arthriterivesud@gmail.com

Do you know that :

*In Canada, osteo-
arthritis is the most
common form of
arthritis and affects
13% of Canadian
adults.*

A NEW YEAR

Together we battle for New Hopes and New Dreams

Arthritis South Shore slowly spreads its wings, thanks to the many wonderful people and organizations that gave it wings to fly.

In 2020, South Shore Arthritis continues its mission to inform, support and help individuals and their loved ones to live better with any form of arthritis.

Today, more than 6 million Canadians are living with arthritis, and by 2040, there will be 9 million. By supporting and encouraging Arthritis South Shore, together we can make a difference in the lives of many people.

Ms. Premela Pearson, the president, wishes to thank all those who have enabled Arthritis South Shore, individually and collectively to achieve wonders from September to December: 5 workshops, 2 lectures, 2 coffee support group meetings, 1 session of adapted exercises, 2 booths and 2 Sunday brunches.

These were made possible with the help and encouragement received from our key collaborators: the City of Brossard, the Arthritis West Island Self-Help Association (AWISH), the Arthritis Society - Quebec Division, the Montérégie-Centre Integrated Health and Social Services Centre and the Chartwell Residences. The members, collaborators, donors, speakers, facilitators, volunteers, and all participants in Arthritis South Shore events and activities, helped make it a success.

Thank you all for supporting us in 2019 and we hope that this support will continue in 2020. We have received your suggestions and we will strive to meet your needs and requests as best as possible.

We look forward to our two volunteer speakers for this spring: Dr. Rym Haouari, rheumatologist, and Caroline Berthiaume, kinesiologist.

Together we hope to bring even more happiness in 2020.

Health is the greatest wealth.

It is our greatest wish for each and every one of you.

**Free presentations in collaboration with the
Bibliothèque de Brossard Georgette-Lepage**

Lectures (in French)

Wednesday April 15 at 7:00 pm : Dr. Rym Haouari, rheumatologist, will talk about Medication and Arthritis

Friday April 24 at 1:30 pm : Ms Caroline Berthiaume, kinesiologist, will talk about the Benefits of Physical Activity for Arthritis.

Wellness Workshops (from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm)

Monday, January 13 : « Introduction to Arthritis » (English)

Monday, February 3 : « Tips and tricks on how to cope with Arthritis » (English)

Monday, March 9 : « Nutrition and Arthritis » (English)

Monday, March 23 : « Le stress et ses impacts » (French)

Trained volunteers give the workshops. Each workshop includes a presentation and a question period in both English and French.

Other activities offered in Brossard

Please register for the following activities by email at arthriterivesud@gmail.com or by phone at 438 630-7215

Adapted Fitness Exercises

On every Tuesday for 10 weeks, from January 14 to March 17 (from 10 am to 11 am)

At the Nathalie-Croteau Community Center (2210 André Street) – Maximum 15 participants.

Warm-up, aerobic activities, stretching, relaxation, fitness, sitting or standing exercises.

Fees: \$55 for members / \$65 for non-members, payable in cash or by cheque at the first meeting. Brossard Bciti pass is mandatory.

Coffee Support Group

On Friday February 14, March 13, April 10 and May 8, from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm.

At the Nathalie-Croteau Community Center. Informal meetings to talk about arthritis, share experiences and questions, in a friendly supportive environment. Fees: \$1 to cover the cost of tea, coffee and snacks – Brossard Bciti pass is mandatory.

Sunday Brunch

On Sunday January 26, February 23, March 29 and April 26 at 12:30 pm.

You are cordially invited to share lunch with members and friends of Arthritis South Shore. Each participant pays for the cost of his/her meal. Please contact us by email to book your place before the 15th of each month. You will be then given the name and address of the restaurant.

Free workshops at the Greenfield Park Chartwell Residence

2975 Taschereau Boulevard, Greenfield Park

Wellness Workshops - from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (in French) :

Tuesday January 14: « Outils pour mieux vivre avec l'arthrite »

Tuesday February 11: « Alimentation et arthrite »

Please register *as soon as possible* with Marilou Caron at the Greenfield Park Chartwell Residence, by phone at 450-923-9595, ext. 1500 or by email at mariloucaron@chartwell.com.

Trained volunteers will give the workshops. Each workshop includes a presentation and a question period.

We were there: Flash back 2019 → We'll be there: Plans for 2020!

In 2019, we were able to offer you many free activities and we will continue to do so in 2020.

We held 2 conferences and 3 workshops in collaboration with the Bibliothèque de Brossard Georgette Lepage. The two conferences attracted 73 and 80 people respectively, while the workshops had 18, 23 and 28 participants. This sustained participation confirmed the need and importance of these activities.

- The same workshops will be offered in English this winter. Our volunteers are preparing workshops on other topics such as stress and chronic pain to be presented later in 2020. Conferences with guest speakers will be offered, two are already scheduled, one on Medication and Arthritis on April 15 and the other on the Benefits of Physical Activity for Arthritis on April 24.

We offered two workshops, one in French and one in English at the Chartwell Residence in Greenfield Park in December 2019. It attracted 30 people.

- There was a workshop in January and there will be another one in February. Chartwell offers 20 free places to outsiders in addition to residents.

We started a class of arthritis adapted fitness exercises and held two Coffee Support Group meetings, thanks to the logistical support from the City of Brossard. We thank Mr. Jean Proulx, a certified physical educator, for helping us establish the first adapted exercise program in Brossard dedicated to people with arthritis, chronic pain and reduced mobility.

- Mr. Proulx will continue to offer these exercises until June 2020 in two sessions of 10 weeks each. It is not too late to sign up.

Our monthly Sunday brunch is becoming more and more popular.

- We will continue these monthly get-togethers till the last Sunday of April. You are most welcome!

We participated in 4 booths in Brossard and Saint-Hubert. We were present at the "Salon des 50+" as part of the 5th edition of Brossard's Semaine des jeunes de coeur on October 1st and at the "Semaine des intervenants" organized by the CISSMC on November 25. We especially thank Ms. Danièle Auclair for this invitation, which allowed us to inform and collaborate with the Brossard CLSC health workers.

- We invite you to come and meet us on February 8th from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm during the "Building Community together" event, a special family edition, at Heritage High School, 7445 Chambly, St-Hubert. It is organized by the Assistance and Referral Centre (ARC) and the Regional Health and Social Service Partnership Table.

Coming soon

We are preparing our next annual general meeting and we will have a distinguished guest speaker: Mr. Jean-Louis Brazier (French). Stay in touch, it is a must!

Steps towards getting a diagnosis or an access to a specialist

- by Johanne Fortier

Do you suffer pain that seems like osteoarthritis or some other forms of arthritis?
You want to meet a rheumatologist and you do not know how to proceed with it?

Whether you have a family doctor or not, there are steps to follow to get a diagnosis or an access to a specialist. Here are a few ways to help you achieve your goal within a reasonable time frame.

First, you must meet with your family doctor to inform her of your concerns, doubts and pains. If you do not have a family doctor, you will need to see a doctor in a clinic and brief her on your health.

The more precise the information will be about your health, the more reliable will be the doctor's diagnosis: indicate when your pain has started, point out the intensity of your pain, your disabilities, your family history and don't be afraid to express your concerns. If necessary, the doctor will prescribe a specific blood test for arthritis. The doctor may not refer you to a rheumatologist, but if she does so, you would have to go through the services of the Centre des répartitions des demandes de service (CRDS).

The CRDS, in place since 2016, is a health service distribution center designed to optimize the waiting times to see a specialist. All medical specialties will be taken in charge by the Centre by the end of 2020.

The family doctor completes the form required as a first request to see a specialist, which is faxed to the CRDS. The Centre sorts requests by postal address in order to determine the specialist or the clinic you should be referred to. The form must specify the reason(s) for the referral and the urgency to see a rheumatologist by ticking the appropriate priority box: Code A for less than 3 days, code B for less than 10 days, code C for less than 28 days, code E for less than 12 months. However, an appointment may take longer than requested on the form, considering the shortage of specialists in Quebec.

The form also includes a box for the family doctor to suggest a reference name for the specialist. Should you prefer to be seen by a specific rheumatologist or in a specific clinic you should mention it to the doctor who will write it in the priority box. Don't be afraid to specify your requests! The next step will be the call from the secretary of the specialist to schedule your appointment.

If you have a specialist but no family doctor, your referral will not be sent to the CRDS because the procedure in such a case is different. If your health condition is urgent, the doctor will get an appointment for you quickly or he may call one of his colleagues. Otherwise, he will give you a reference paper enabling you to get an appointment with a rheumatologist.

Depending on the type of arthritis, getting a diagnosis can be long. Please arm yourself with patience, and good luck for the future!

How to prepare for a medical appointment

You may come out of a medical appointment and realize that you forgot to ask a question or mention a symptom; unfortunately, you cannot go back. How to prevent this from happening again?

In order to make the most of your medical appointments, both the Montreal Health and the Arthritis Society websites recommend you to be well prepared. The following present their suggestions.

- A few weeks before the appointment, prepare a list of your concerns as well as the questions you want to be addressed (consult the first website below).
- Track your symptoms at least two weeks before the appointment using a symptom log (consult the second website below).
- Make sure you have a list of all your medications in hand, a valid health insurance card (and a valid hospital card if the appointment is there) and, if applicable, your request (referral).
- Prepare a list of all your current treatments (physiotherapy, acupuncture...) and over-the-counter supplements or medications you are using.
- On the day of the appointment, don't hesitate to ask all your questions (even the most delicate ones) and take notes. Bring a relative or friend with you if you wish so.
- If you are unable to attend an appointment, notify the clinic or the hospital quickly.

To facilitate the preparation of your appointments, the Arthritis Society has prepared various downloadable tools that you can consult through these links:

Get ready for your appointment: Key questions

https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/ab1ad077-ef41-4b2b-b3e0-8fac3d94d242/Key-Questions-for-Your-Healthcare_ENG.pdf

Daily symptom log:

<https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/19524227-02df-46dd-9fca-f9234d47d260/EN-daily-symptom-tracker.pdf>

Checklist for medical appointments:

<https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/aecbc65d-4a0f-4484-bded-631309cea86a/en-appointment-checklist.pdf>

Joint symptom checklist:

<https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/b4fac3b9-8b48-4ec1-ac38-6bba4e2f2322/EN-joint-symptom-tracker.pdf>

Post-appointment notes:

https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/6db21f97-18af-499d-937e-c55aa6842707/Post-Appointment_Record_ENG.pdf

Online Learning Capsule: Getting the most out of your medical appointments

<https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/0aaa21d2-bf16-472e-b96d-12cd9af04474/Navigating-your-Healthcare-Final.pdf>

Cold or heat? Thermotherapy in a nutshell

Heat

- Heat can help relax sore and tense muscles
- Heat provides a relaxing effect and better circulation of blood in the joints (relieves pain), increases the range of motion and reduces stiffness
- Take a shower or a 15-minute bath in hot water
- Apply hot compresses, heating bags or a hot water bottle to sore areas.
- When you are awake, use an electric blanket or heating pad

Cold

- Cold can reduce the inflammation of a joint that is inflamed (hot to the touch), swollen and painful
- Use an ice bag wrapped with a thin, wet towel and apply to the area (numb and calm the pain)
- Apply cold gel compresses kept in the freezer, or a bag of frozen pea or frozen corn vegetable.

There are certain precautions to take when using heat and cold to treat your pain:

- Make sure the sensitivity of the area to be treated is normal. Make sure you feel the difference in sensation between hot and cold: otherwise, do not use the cold or heat treatment.
- Make sure your skin is in good condition and has no sores or infections.
- Never apply heat to drug patches as this could result in rapid absorption of the medication as well as side effects.
- Do not apply heat or cold to an area where you have applied cream or ointment to relieve pain.
- Treatment by heat or cold should not last more than 15 minutes. If necessary, you can start treatment again after a 20-40-minute break.

Wait 10 to 15 minutes after applying cold treatment before starting your physical exercises. Your muscles need time to warm up and relax

Attention: *Thermotherapy cannot be used by people with the following conditions: blood circulation disorders, including those caused by diabetes, circulatory complications, and Raynaud's disease*

Reference: Arthritis Society, *Managing Chronic Pain Module (Lesson 7: Heat and cold)*

Between us

Arthritis South Shore Volunteers

Johanne Fortier, who wrote the article "*Steps toward getting a diagnosis or an access to a specialist*" is a volunteer for Arthritis South Shore. She co-hosts the Brossard Coffee Support Group.

She prepared the text to inform people about how specialized clinical appointments work. "As a retired medical secretary in specialties and having worked in the community for more than 15 years, people often asked me how it works and why it takes so long to get an appointment. In explaining the functioning of the CRDS, I hope to help people better understand why there are delays and why it is important to get involved as a patient. If this information empowers you to contribute to what is written on the CRDS document, I will have done my part to inform and enlighten you."

Johanne has been suffering from Rheumatoid Arthritis for 12 years, and she is interested in knowing more about the disease and sharing her experience.

Coffee Support Group News

At one of the Coffee Support Group in Brossard, we shared a theme that has proved very informative, on how a diagnosis of arthritis is delivered and received, and how to cope with it.

In literature, it is well known that there are stages like the ones of a bereavement. The first stage is the diagnosis. Sometimes, the diagnosis is abrupt and thereafter, the person is left alone. Sometimes, the diagnosis is not clear or perhaps one is not ready to hear it, being in denial. Some other times, the diagnosis is expected because, for example, there are cases in the family; the doctor confirms what has been already suspected.

Other stages depend on various studies such as: denial (there must be an error), anger (why me), haggling (it's not that bad), depression (it is too difficult) and acceptance (what do I do now). In practice, it's not that linear. One may have accepted the disease and managed it well, regained some serenity and a have new way of life, and yet momentarily fall back into anger or depression.

We are not our arthritis, and we are not completely at its mercy. We still have the power to choose how to cope with it and what to learn from it.

References and readings:

- 1) Confronting illness, the 5 psychological stages, Abbvie CARE.
- 2) Announcement of a diagnosis of chronic disease to a patient, J-S. Giraudet, Synovial May 2006, No.151, p8-13.

Heartfelt thanks

- To our Members, Supporters and Volunteers
- To our Donors

The City of Brossard 

Ms Paulette Zielinski, friend, supporter and mentor

Mr. Glen Hoa, friend and supporter

Arthritis Society – Quebec Division



- To our Community Organisation Collaborators
 - Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN) – *Pauline Wiedow*
 - Assistance and Referral Center Health and Social Services – *Chris Lapointe*
 - Filipino Canadian Community of the South Shore – *Phil Villafranca and Elvira Parayno*
 - Joie de Vivre – *Marguerite Cadieux and Lise Lussier*
 - Maison de la Famille – *Catherine Guillemette-Bedard*
 - Association des Femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs – *Josée Chatelle and Zainab Akkaoui*

Heartfelt thanks

➤ To our Collaborators



- The Arthritis Society-Québec Division – *Diane de Bonville*
- The Arthritis West-Island Self-Help Association (AWISH) – *Paulette Zielinski and Ginette Gagné*
- The Montérégie-Centre Integrated Health and Social Services Center – *Danielle Auclair*
- Chartwell residences, Greenfield Park – *Deborah Humphrey and Marilou Caron*
- The GSSAA – *Julie Felix*
- Bibliothèque de Brossard Georgette-Lepage – *Magda Zemmou and Michelle Tibblin*
- Alliance Carrière Travail
- La Résurrection Parish

Thank you so much

Upcoming guest speakers

- *Dre Rym Haouari* – Rheumatologist
- *Caroline Berthiaume* – Kinesiologist

Dr. Rym Haouari is a graduate of the University of Sherbrooke in Internal Medicine and Adult Rheumatology. She has been practicing since 2014 at Charles Lemoyne Hospital and the DIX30 Specialist Clinic. She is also a professor at the clinical education of the University of Sherbrooke and a member of the Royal College of Canada. Her presentation will focus on Medication and Arthritis.

Caroline Berthiaume is a kinesiologist, a graduate of the University of Montreal, a professional in physical activities with more than 25 years of experience. She has a certificate in rehabilitation in chronic pain, is a certified teacher of Hatha Yoga and Yin Yoga, and an aqua fitness instructor. She works mainly as an educator and private trainer but also offers group classes to the public, both in the pool and in the gym (including also pilates, bodybuilding, dance). Many of her classes are adapted to the problems of her clientele. Her presentation will focus on the Benefits of Physical Activity for Arthritis.

Arthritis South Shore Board of administrators

- Premela Pearson, President
- Virginia Cisneros, Vice-President
- Johanne Boisvert, Secretary
- Danielle Jacob, Treasurer
- André Faucher, Administrator

The dangers of life give it its value: the hero is the
one who battles challenges when all the odds are
against him
Aeschylus

The articles in this newsletter, whether translated or modified, are for informational purposes only. They do not necessarily represent the opinion of Arthritis South Shore.

They cannot in any case substitute for a medical opinion or diagnosis. You should consult your doctor if you have questions about a diagnosis or treatment.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ PROVINCE: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

➤ Would you like to receive our Newsletter and information about our activities? yes ☐ no ☐

MEMBERSHIP: Renewal ☐ New member ☐
Type of membership: **20\$** Individual ☐ **30\$** Family ☐ **50\$** Corporate ☐

Family membership: please provide the names of family members

DONATION Amount: _____\$ 20\$ ☐ 50\$ ☐ 100\$ ☐

PAYMENT METHOD: by cheque made payable to *Arthrite Rive-Sud*

CORRESPONDENCE: English ☐ French ☐

VOLUNTEERING: Arthritis South Shore is looking for volunteers. Please check what you would like to do:

Administration ☐ Facilitator ☐ Fundraising ☐ Stands ☐ Other ☐: _____

Type of arthritis you have : _____

Please send your completed form and cheque to this mailing address:

Arthrite Rive-Sud, 5811 rue Auteuil, Brossard (Québec) J4Z 1M9

(Please do not cut)

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