

## Providing

reliable and up to date information to improve the understanding of arthritis and osteoporosis

## Promoting

healthy lifestyles and self-management to optimise health outcomes.

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# joinNTed

## Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT

December 2022

### Annual General Meeting

This was held in our office on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October.

Board positions are now:

President:	Ruth Quinn
Vice President:	Amin Islam
Secretary:	Hilary Fowler
Treasurer:	Ruth Garden
Other board members:	Lyn Skipper and Margaret Murray



We warmly welcome Ruth Quinn as our new President, and thank her for taking on this role which had been vacant for many months.

Further vacancies are available for eight other positions. These may be filled at any time of the year. Enquiries and expressions of interest are encouraged. Please don't hesitate to contact the office for more information.

Read below to meet our new President.

### President's ponderings

My name is Ruth Quinn. and I am the newly elected President of Arthritis and Osteoporosis NT. I am relatively new to the organisation, having only joined about 18 months ago after attending the very useful Pain Management course, ably presented by Hilary and Ruth G. I may be new to the organisation, but like many of you, I am not new to arthritis. Osteoarthritis is something I have been trying to manage for over 20 years – Sigh!!

I am also not new to the world of Boards. I worked for many years at Charles Darwin University as the Director of Library Services until I retired at the end of 2015 and was a member of the CDU Amenities Board. I also served on the Board of Healthy Living NT for 6 years until the end of 2020. I was a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) for several years until retirement and I found they have a lot of relevant information for not-for-profit boards. AONT is a relatively small organisation with a limited membership. During my term as President I would like to see an increase in our membership base and also more involvement from our current members, so we can raise the profile of AONT and advocate for our members around Arthritis and Osteoporosis issues. I look forward to working with members of the Board and encourage you to contact me through the office if you wish to raise any concerns, or just to say hi!

## Latest Research Snippets

Welcome to Research Snippets! The idea behind this column is to highlight some of the research around arthritis appearing in the media. We are not medical experts and will not recommend one treatment over another. Our aim is to keep you informed. We hope it will become a regular column.

This month we consider **Knee Osteoarthritis** and a popular procedure that has been around for many years: **platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections into the knee**, said to relieve symptoms of osteoarthritis to the extent that knee replacement surgery can be delayed, if not completely avoided. Sounds too good to be true? Maybe, maybe not. You'll have to make up your own mind. The ABC's Health Report recently briefly covered this issue by interviewing Prof David Hunter, a professor of Rheumatology and researcher at the University of Sydney. Paper copies of this interview transcript are available through the AONT office. The interview has been archived on the Health Report's website:

<https://www.abc.net.au/radional/programs/healthreport/knee-joint-osteoarthritis-and-platelet-rich-plasma/13649884> Check out the information and discuss with your favourite medical practitioner.

Prof Hunter is also overseeing the SCULpTOR study, looking at the effectiveness of stem cell injections, another treatment used by some practitioners for osteoarthritis of the knee.

## Back Pain? Some exercises which may help

From - <https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/exercising-with-arthritis/exercises-for-healthy-joints/exercises-for-the-back/>

Versus Arthritis is a UK based organisation and is the result of a merger between Arthritis Research UK and Arthritis Care

*If you have ongoing pain, check first with your doctor or health care professional as to whether or not these exercises are appropriate for you.*

### Stomach tone

Lie on your front with your arms by your side, head on one side. Pull in your stomach muscles, centred around your belly button. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three times. Build up to 10 seconds and repeat during the day, while walking or standing. Keep breathing naturally during this exercise!



### Pelvic tilt



Lie down with your knees bent. Tighten your stomach muscles, flattening your back against the floor. Hold for five seconds. Repeat five times.

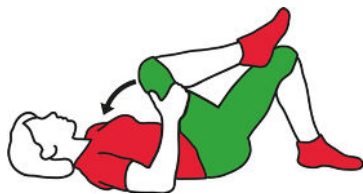


### Knee rolls

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet together. Roll your knees to one side, keeping your shoulders flat on the bed or floor, and hold for 10 seconds. Roll your knees back to the starting position, and then over to the other side and repeat. Do this exercise three times on each side.



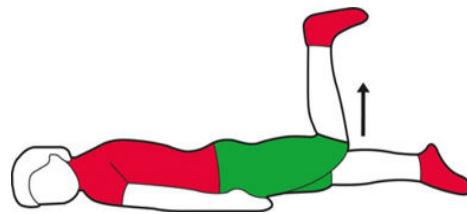
### Knees to chest



Lie on your back, with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor or bed. Bring one knee up and use your hands to pull it gently towards your chest. Hold the leg in position for five seconds, and then relax. Repeat this exercise with the other knee. Do the exercise five times with each leg.

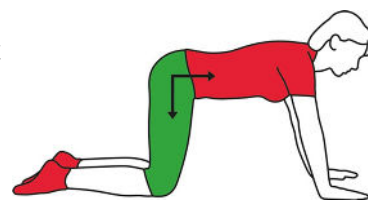
### Buttock tone

Lie on your front and bend one leg up behind you. Lift your bent knee just off the floor. Hold for up to eight seconds. Repeat five times each side.



### Deep stomach muscle tone

Kneel on all fours with a small curve in your lower back. Let your stomach relax completely. Pull the lower part of your stomach upwards so that you lift your back (without arching it) away from the floor. Hold for 10 seconds. Keep breathing naturally! Repeat 10 times.



### Leg raise

Lie face down, though you might want to turn your head to one side if this is more comfortable. Tighten your stomach and buttock muscles to lift one leg slightly off the floor, while keeping your hips flat on the ground. Hold this position for 5 to 10 seconds and repeat 3 times.



### Arm raise

Lie on your stomach with your back in a neutral position. Tense the muscles in your lower stomach and raise one arm upwards. Hold this position for five seconds, and then relax your arm. Repeat this exercise 10 times with each arm.



### Hamstring stretch

You may need something nearby to hold onto for this exercise. Steady yourself, then put one leg up on a chair. Keeping your raised leg straight, bend the supporting knee forward to stretch your hamstrings. Repeat three times each side.

**Please note:** For those with acute sciatica this hamstring stretch may also pull on the sciatic nerve, making it feel worse. If in doubt, ask a physiotherapist if this exercise is suitable for you.



### One-leg stand

Steady yourself with one hand on a wall or work surface for support. Bend one leg up behind you. Hold your foot for 10 seconds and repeat three times each side. Try to keep your knees and thighs level with one another.



## Arthritis Australia

### 1. Condition specific websites

Arthritis Australia has constructed several interactive websites to help people with osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, axial spondylitis (which includes ankylosing spondylitis) and back pain.

Go to <https://arthritisaustralia.com.au/> or ring us on 1800 011 041 or 8948 5232 for more information.

### 2. Consumer webinar on COVID-19

For up to date health advice on COVID management Arthritis Australia and the Australian Rheumatology Association have a recorded a webinar to answer your questions. The panel includes a rheumatologist and a paediatric rheumatologist as well as representation from Arthritis Australia.

It is available at the following website:

<https://arthritisaustralia.com.au/consumer-webinar-arthritis-covid-19-and-you-answering-your-questions-on-vaccines-boosters-and-medicines-for-kids-and-adults/>

## Recipe - Creamy Mushroom, Chicken & Asparagus Bake

From - <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/278001/creamy-mushroom-chicken-asparagus-bake/>

### Good for your bones—high in calcium!

Egg free, nut free, soy free.

Time: 35 mins     Servings: 6

#### Ingredients

- 1 ½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus 1 ½ extra teaspoons
- 450 g sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 2 ½ cups milk
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese divided into two
- 450 g fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2 cm pieces
- 1 ½ cups **cooked** brown rice
- 2 cups chopped **cooked** chicken breast
- ¼ cup breadcrumbs

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 190 degrees C. Heat 1 ½ tablespoons oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and onion; cook, stirring often, until the moisture released from the vegetables evaporates and the mushrooms are lightly browned, 9 to 10 minutes. Stir in flour; cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Gradually add milk; cook, stirring constantly, until the liquid thickens, about 2 minutes. Stir in tarragon, salt and half the Parmesan until melted. Stir in asparagus, rice and chicken. Remove from heat.
2. Toss breadcrumbs with the remaining 1 ½ teaspoons oil and remainder of the Parmesan in a small bowl; sprinkle over the chicken mixture. Bake until the mixture is bubbly and the topping is golden, about 15 minutes.





## Out and About

### Association of Independent Retirees Darwin



Our Secretary, Hilary, spoke to about 20 attendees at a recent meeting of the Darwin group of the Association of Independent Retirees. She spoke about arthritis and osteoporosis and the role of Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT. Great interest in the information was expressed by many present.

Go to <https://airnt.org/> for more information about the group.



### Country Women's Association NT

After addressing the Litchfield branch in September, Ruth Garden was invited to give a presentation to the AGM of CWA NT.

The presentation focussed on the role of our organisation and was well received, as some present had not known of our existence.

*If you belong to, or know of, any community group which welcomes guest speakers please let them and/or us know.*

*Presentations can be tailored to suit any audience.*



Congratulations to One IT on 10 years in business. Ruth (above left) and Natalie (right) celebrating with Lisa and Stephen Roberts, the owners and managers of One IT, who have been our IT consultants for many years.

## Season's Greetings to all our members and supporters

**Office closure:** The office will close at 2:00pm Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December, to re open on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January at 9:30am.

During this time there will be checking of our post office box, emails and phone messages - 1800 011 041 or 8948 5232.

*Membership renewals during this time are welcome and will be attended to as soon as possible!*



## Staying well as you age

Extract from:

**Staying well as you age - [jeanhailes.org.au](http://jeanhailes.org.au)** 1800 JEAN HAILES (1800 532 642)

To enjoy life in older age, it is important to care for the health of your mind and body. There are many things you can do for your mental health that will help you feel good.

### Tips for mental health

#### Stay active

Find an activity that suits your body and that you enjoy and try and do 150 minutes a week. It will help your mood, self-confidence and memory and help reduce feelings of depression.

#### Eat well

Eating well is important for your brain and body. Every day, eat foods like green leafy vegetables, colourful fruit and wholegrain cereals. Include oily fish such as salmon at least once a week and remember to drink plenty of water.

#### Reduce alcohol

More than two standard drinks a day can affect your sleep, mood and mental and emotional health. Try to have at least two days a week when you have no alcohol.

#### Connect with others

Social connection benefits your mental health in many ways. It can help you feel less lonely and improve your mood and self-confidence. You can connect by volunteering, joining community groups and spending time with family and friends.

#### Get good sleep

Getting a good night's sleep is important for your mental health. It refreshes your body and mind and helps you manage your day better. You will sleep better if you are active during the day, avoid drinks with caffeine in the evening, sleep in a cool, dark room, and reduce screen time (e.g. TV, phone or computer) before bed.

#### Relax

Finding an activity that helps you to relax can help support your mental health, reduce stress and improve sleep. Activities that you find calming can help e.g. meditation, gardening, art, reading etc.

### Challenges as we age

#### Money

Stress and worry about money can affect your mental health. Help and support is available if you are finding it hard to pay bills or rent or have other money problems.

Places to get help include: your local council, a community health service, National Debt Hotline (1800 007 007), and [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au).

#### Relationships

Common causes of fear and anxiety include: conflict at home or with family and friends, bullying, racism, war, religious persecution, and experience as a refugee.

## Elder abuse

This is a form of violence affecting more women than men. It may be neglect, financial, psychological, physical, social and/or sexual abuse.

For support, contact your doctor or elder abuse support services at **1800ELDERhelp (1800 353 374)** or **1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)**.

## Loss and grief

As you get older it is common to experience grief with sickness, loss of parents, partners, friends or children. You may also experience grief as your lifestyle and role in society change. You may get support by talking to your doctor or friends or contact the following resources.

## Additional resources

Beyondblue: [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au) or call **1800 224 636**

Smiling Mind: [smilingmind.com.au](https://smilingmind.com.au) and Moneysmart: [moneysmart.gov.au](https://moneysmart.gov.au)

## Curcumin - Health Benefits and cautions explained

Information taken from: <https://www.arthritiswa.org.au/health-and-lifestyle/curcumin-health-benefits-and-cautions-explained/>

Curcumin is the major component of the herb turmeric. There are many studies to confirm its benefits but there are some cautions as well.

***When considering supplements you should always work with the guidance of your doctor or a health care professional.***

### Benefits

Curcumin has an anti-inflammatory action so it can help reduce joint pain. Curcumin has been found to be a safe and effective anti-inflammatory across six human trials.

One study showed that patients with rheumatoid arthritis found patients taking curcumin had a significant improvement over patients taking diclofenac sodium. Another study showed curcumin helped people with osteoarthritis in a three months trial.

Its anti-inflammatory properties may also improve heart health; studies having shown it to be useful for some heart conditions including atherosclerosis.

### Cautions

Curcumin has been found in some studies to cause gastrointestinal side effects such as diarrhoea and nausea. These effects depended on the dose.

Turmeric has blood thinning properties like pharmaceuticals such as aspirin and warfarin. So it is not advisable to use curcumin if you take anti-coagulant or anti-platelet medication.

Curcumin also lowers blood glucose levels so if you have diabetes and take medication for it, curcumin can lower blood sugar levels further resulting in hypoglycaemia.

It can also affect the gall bladder, making the body produce more bile. So if you have gallstones avoid it.

Overall most studies have found curcumin should have a therapeutic effect at about 2000 mg per day.





**The Arthritis  
Foundation of the  
Northern Territory Inc.**  
Trading as  
**Arthritis &  
Osteoporosis NT**  
ABN 67 099 326 608

**Patron:**

Her Honour the Honourable  
Vicki O'Halloran AM  
Administrator of the NT

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**We are open:**

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Monday to Thursday  
(excluding Public Holidays)

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Natalie Valastro

**Board**

**President**

Ruth Quinn

**Vice President**

Amin Islam

**Secretary**

Hilary Fowler

**Treasurer and Public  
Officer**

Ruth Garden

**Ordinary Board Members**

Margaret Murray

Lyn Skipper

Proudly sponsored by  
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## What We Do

### Our work includes:

- Responding to walk-in, email and telephone enquiries
- Providing personalised information packs in response to enquiries
- Preparing and circulating six newsletters each year
- Hosting pain self-management courses for anyone experiencing chronic pain. Call the office on Freecall 1800 011 041 or 8948 5232 for more details of the next available course
- Providing information stands at a range of forums throughout the year
- Keeping in touch with other community health organisations and the services they provide
- Delivering bulk materials on request to a range of health services
- Presentations to community groups by invitation
- Making applications for various small grants to assist with special projects
- Liaising with Arthritis Australia and other state and territory arthritis organisations
- Liaising with Healthy Bones Australia.



[facebook.com/arthritis.osteoporosis.nt](https://facebook.com/arthritis.osteoporosis.nt)

Find us at **[www.aont.org.au](http://www.aont.org.au)**

**Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
from all of us here  
at Arthritis &  
Osteoporosis NT**

