

# Where is arthritis?

You might not be aware: but arthritis is all around you.

During National Arthritis Month this September, the arthritis community is taking arthritis “on the road” to raise awareness and change British Columbians’ perception of the effects arthritis has on our communities, our families, and our lives.

Arthritis is a vastly misunderstood disease. Among the top three chronic diseases in Canada, arthritis is actually a group of more than 100 types of arthritis and musculoskeletal diseases affecting people of all ages. It affects one in six Canadians, about four and a half million people, including 600,000 British Columbians, costing the economy billions of dollars per year. The most serious inflammatory forms of the disease can be devastating, debilitating, and even fatal.

- TODAY arthritis disables more people than any other disease, including cancer, heart disease, respiratory conditions, and spinal cord trauma. It also is among the most common chronic diseases in children.
- TODAY wherever they live in BC, residents do not have a consistent standard of diagnosis, care, and funding for arthritis and related issues..
- TODAY musculoskeletal diseases are the leading cost driver in our health system, estimated to cost British Columbia \$2.1 billion each year, surpassing diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.
- TODAY arthritis is the leading cause of work disability and burden to the Canadian economy.

### It’s time for change.

Starting in late August and running through the month of September, we will be leading a **Where is Arthritis?** tour throughout BC to talk to communities about arthritis. The tour offers resources, workshops, support, and information for people living with arthritis. During the tour, we will be reaching out to community leaders, media, people with arthritis ... and you.

We will be reaching out to media to raise awareness and encourage people to take action on behalf of people living with arthritis. We would like to invite you to join us at one of these tour stops to learn more about this disease and what you can do to help.

### Our key messages for the Where is Arthritis? campaign are:

**AWARENESS:** Arthritis is among the top three chronic diseases in Canada, affecting people of all ages. It can be devastating, debilitating, and fatal.

**EQUITABLE CARE:** Wherever they live, British Columbians deserve a consistent standard of diagnosis, care, and funding for arthritis and related issues.

**EDUCATION:** Health professionals must have access to appropriate medication and treatment strategies for effective arthritis disease management. Early diagnosis is critical to prevent permanent and crippling damage to the body.

**PREVENTION:** Physical activity, weight management and appropriate medication are key strategies for better arthritis disease management to reduce disability costs and improve quality of life for British Columbians with arthritis.

## Tour Schedule

Vancouver  
**Aug 28**  
False Creek  
Community Centre

Prince George  
**Sept 3**  
Northern Health  
Unit Auditorium

Vernon  
**Sept 10**  
OKIB Health Center

Kelowna  
**Sept 11**  
Interior Health  
Centre, Capri Mall

Kamloops  
**Sept 12**  
Tournament Capital  
Centre

Abbotsford/  
Chilliwack  
**Sept 17**  
Abbotsford  
Recreation Centre

Surrey/  
Cloverdale  
**Sept 23**  
Surrey Sport &  
Leisure Centre

Saanich  
**Sept 25**  
Vancouver Island  
Technology Park

Victoria  
**Sept 26**  
Monterey  
Recreation Centre