

Arthritis Matters



Katrina and Briony

Your gifts at work

AUTUMN 2026 | Your donor newsletter

Thank you to all who gave to The Arthritis Movement's Christmas Appeal 2025.

Your gifts have expanded our gentle exercise programs to offer more classes to people who need them, to give them a path of hope back to their independence. In 2026, we are helping more people with arthritis to move freely and find their place in their family again.

Thank you to Katrina and her daughter Briony who shared their story with us.

They bravely told of the impacts that arthritis has slowly and silently had on their lives, such as the loss of important family moments, their feelings of connection and independence.

Christmas 2025 was a day of joy for their family as Katrina was able to embrace her family and join in the festivities that had become tradition for them, traditions they had feared would never be the same.

Thank you to all our donors for understanding that the small gains in strength and flexibility made each week in our exercise classes build confidence and balance and even improve sleep.

To donate, call 1300 275 826 or visit arthritis.org.au.

Sleeping deeply, with your help

Breathing into calm

Your kindness has given our community new ways to relax and reduce anxiety to help them better navigate the challenges of living with arthritis.

Our Relax and Restore program has brought calm, deep sleep and new ways to breathe away anxiety to our community. Sharing their stories are Judy who takes the online classes from Wagga Wagga and Janette who logs in from Rockhampton.

Judy, 76, has combination osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis resulting in two shoulder replacements. **She says the breathing exercises give her a good night's sleep and more comfortable days.**



Judy takes her Relax and Restore class online

'I started the classes in January, and they have been miraculous. I was having trouble getting comfortable to go to sleep,' Judy said. 'Now I do the breathing exercises the instructor gave us every night and I'm asleep before I'm finished. I listen to them first thing in the morning.'

'You must do them every day and the more you do them, the better they are for you.

The classes are unique and I feel very lucky to be able to do them online.'

Preparation for surgery

Janette, 77, enrolled in Relax and Restore to help prepare for her shoulder surgery, and to ease anxiety about the operation and her recuperation.

'The breathing exercises had me sleeping better from the first night. **Then I knew I had the tools in my own body to limit my anxiety and restore equanimity,' she said.**

Thanks to the relaxation techniques, Janette coped well with the surgery and had little trouble getting comfortable to sleep while recovering.

'When you lose capacity, you don't want to lose everything. I want to live the best life I can.'

Thank you for supporting the gentle exercise classes that help people like Judy and Janette keep their peace and enjoyment of life.

To donate, call 1300 875 236 or visit: arthritis.org.au.

Your impact shines at Twinkletoes

A day of learning and laughter

Thanks to you, five families living with juvenile arthritis (JIA) had a wonderful time at Twinkletoes Day in Brisbane.

Held at Lone Pine Sanctuary in February, the families enjoyed activities with the native animals, met others like them and connected through similar challenges.

Your gifts gave Carly the opportunity to bring her 9-year-old daughter Hannah to Twinkletoes for a second time.

‘Hannah first showed symptoms of JIA aged 5 while we were on holiday in western Queensland,’ Carly said. ‘She has polyarticular JIA in both ankles, knees, toes and jaw. Her school is very supportive and she has met kids with JIA in hospital but **it wasn’t until we came to Twinkletoes 2024 in Brisbane, that she made a JIA friend in a fun environment.**

‘They met up at the 2026 event and she was so happy. It’s made a real difference to her confidence and positive attitude.’



Hannah made a friend she could talk to about her arthritis at Twinkletoes Family Day.

The 2026 Twinkletoes Day was a first for Sarah and her daughter Mackenzie, 5, who was diagnosed with JIA at 18 months.

Thanks to your generosity, Sarah heard valuable new perspectives from other parents who even gave advice on how to settle Mackenzie into school.



Mackenzie loved the animals at Twinkletoes.

‘The rheumatologist updated us on research and government, and I liked hearing about JIA from another specialist. It was also great that my husband and I could go together,’ Sarah said.

‘Mackenzie loved the helpers and teachers. She hasn’t stopped talking about the animals. She was too shy to talk to the other kids, so it helped that we could bring her sister.’

Thank you for giving families the gift of connection and joy, which the Children’s Program delivers multiple times a year.

To donate, call 1300 875 236 or visit: arthritis.org.au.

Thank you Andie

Andie is one of the special supporters who took on the March for Arthritis challenge, our virtual moveathon.

She and almost 200 other people proved that small regular gains can make a difference if we work together.

For Andie, The Arthritis Movement gave her understanding and support after she spent her childhood struggling to meet the challenges of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JIA) when few knew or understood her illness. **She is happy to give back, knowing it will help others like her.**

Diagnosed aged 8

Andie was diagnosed with JIA when she was eight years old and coped with her illness by trying to forget she had it. She didn't want to stand out as different, but knew she had to ask for help sometimes.

'Not many people knew about JIA when I was a kid and people often thought I was faking pain and fatigue. So, I started talking about what I was going through, why I couldn't go to school sometimes or do Phys Ed,' Andie said.

'Later on, The Arthritis Movement gave me a lot of reliable information. Their social media support groups, particularly for women and kids living with arthritis, gave a

lot of advice and I even discovered things I didn't know I needed to know via their new app Clara.'

'The Arthritis Movement raises awareness of how painful and debilitating – and non-ageist – this disease is. We've come a long way since my school days.'

For the final result of March for Arthritis, visit arthritis.org.au.



Andie on her daily walk.

You can be an Arthritis Hero

By becoming a Regular Giver through a tax-deductible, monthly gift, you'll help us confidently plan activities to support more people with arthritis. You'll receive regular communication sharing the impact of your support.

Contact Ana for more information on 1300 875 236 or avalbuena@arthritis.org.au

Your Support Changes Lives

RA therapy goal in sight

Your gifts are supporting the clinical trials of a rheumatoid arthritis (RA) immunotherapy that could transform patient care.

A new curative therapy with the promise of drug free disease remission would be a game changer in the treatment of RA, and Professor Ranjeny Thomas AM and her team are getting closer to that goal.

A rheumatologist and researcher at the University of Queensland, Professor Thomas has produced an Antigen-Specific Immune Tolerance Immunotherapy (ASITI) and companion blood tests.

ASITI-301 comprises tiny lipid particles containing an immune-modulatory drug, vitamin D, and an RA-associated peptide antigen. It is designed to target the dysregulated immune system that underlies autoimmunity in RA.

‘We have completed a phase 1 single-dose trial of ASITI-201 tailored for autoimmune diabetes in adults with type 1 diabetes. Excitingly, ASITI-201 was safe and well tolerated at all doses, and 2 doses were chosen to progress to multiple dosing, which is ongoing in 2026,’ she said.

‘We anticipate manufacturing the clinical batch of ASITI-301 in July to be ready to start our first clinical trials in RA at the beginning of 2027.’

The first trials will examine the safety and immune response to ASITI in patients with treated recent-onset RA.

For more information visit: arthritisaustralia.com.au/reset-ra/

Lifestyle intervention

With essential exercise, healthy eating, not smoking and emotional wellbeing so important to people with arthritis, Prof. Thomas and her team are also running a healthy lifestyle trial in recent-onset RA: Resilience And Healthy Lifestyle for RA.

The trial is delivered by researchers with expertise in rheumatology, psychology, exercise training, nutrition and smoking cessation in the self-management of RA.

The trial is recruiting fast from south-east Queensland and northern NSW. To book your place, visit: [Healthy lifestyle for rheumatoid arthritis - Partners and community - The University of Queensland](#)

Thank you for supporting this important research which could transform care for people living with rheumatoid arthritis.

To donate, call 1300 875 236 or visit: arthritis.org.au.



Professor Ranjeny Thomas

Your gift of knowledge

TAM's webinar program in 2025 attracted 4,046 registrations, that's a record number of people from our community who learned more about their condition and ways to manage it, thanks to your generosity.

Health Educator Mary Frack presented 17 webinars with the most popular being on the Mediterranean diet (397), followed by Strength Training (378), Natural Therapies (368) and Flexibility and Mobility (364).

Words of gratitude

Here are words of gratitude from our audience who are enjoying their newfound knowledge and the empowerment that goes with it.

'The information I gathered from the webinar on osteoarthritis will be very helpful in my ongoing effort to live well.'

'The webinar was excellent. Our generation wasn't exposed much to discussion on mental health issues. But the topic as presented on Mindfulness I have no doubt I can use to help with my osteoarthritis.'

'People experiencing the emotional pain of arthritis fear they are over-reacting and are reluctant to seek help. The webinar normalised my anxiety and depression about arthritis: I am not alone. This knowledge was a game changer for me.'

'I now have more hope for non-surgical intervention for my hip osteoarthritis which will be useful when I next see my surgeon. I've made significant improvements to the mobility and pain caused by osteoarthritis in my foot, hand, lumbar and knee. Thank you for the support that you have given me via webinars, classes and community.'

'The webinar on the anti-inflammatory diet was so clear, with scientific key facts, principles and, most importantly, practical dietary advice to implement going forward.'

'The webinar on osteoarthritis by Professor David Hunter was the best 50 minutes I have spent to help me understand my condition. It's wonderful to have facts. It has saved me money and given me hope that I am not necessarily doomed by my osteoarthritis.'

Our 2026 webinar schedule promises more great topics. Register for a live presentation or recorded session: arthritis.org.au

Thank you for giving to The Arthritis Movement. To donate, call 1300 875 236 or visit: arthritis.org.au.



Health Educator Mary Frack

Your kindness on the move

Changing lives one gentle movement at a time

Your support of our gentle exercise programs, such as Arthritis Moves, means so much to those whose classes have changed their lives for the better.

Take Dornell, who started Arthritis Moves classes seven years ago. Aged 82, she still mows her lawn, even her neighbour's nature strip, with her battery mower.

'I overworked in my garden and got aches and pains in my back. X-rays showed I had osteoarthritis everywhere,' Dornell said.

Proactive

'I'm a proactive person and researched ways to help myself with exercise. I started physiotherapy and Arthritis Moves classes because I wanted to improve my balance.'

Dornell's strength and balance soon improved, and she decided to do a Degree in Creative Writing at QUT, which she completed in 2025.

'I was so busy at uni that I felt I didn't need to do Arthritis Moves anymore and my strength and balance declined very quickly. I had a couple of falls in the garden with the secateurs in my hand.'

Use public transport

'I started Arthritis Moves again recently. The classes increase my fitness so I can walk to the bus stop and use public transport. You must keep doing things for yourself or you'll develop learned helplessness.'

Dornell's hands are affected by arthritis and she has been using a squeeze ball from our pain pack to relieve pain and improve

flexibility. 'I can open jars again using a hand grip,' she said.

She has praise for our Exercise Program Co-ordinator Sean Carmody as well. 'Sean has been a rock of support and remembers people in the class. He personalises your experience by remembering your issues.'

Thank you for supporting the gentle exercise classes that help people like Dornell stay independent and able to contribute to her neighbourhood.

To donate, call 1300 875 236 or visit: arthritis.org.au.



Dornell still mows her lawn, and her neighbour's nature strip.

It's your legacy



Leaving a gift to The Arthritis Movement in your Will is incredibly powerful.

Did you know that leaving just 1% of the value of your estate to The Arthritis Movement in your Will, so your family and loved ones inherit the rest, can change the lives of those living with arthritis?

If you have questions about the impact of your gift, call 1300 275 826 or email Philanthropy Manager Nick Cadey (NSW) on ncadey@arthritis.org.au.

Phone: **1300 275 826**

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Support groups

To find out more about support groups in your local area and online, visit: arthritis.org.au/how-we-can-help/online-support-groups/