



# OrthoLink



A newsletter dedicated to bone and joint health

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Go to

[whenithurtstomove.org](http://whenithurtstomove.org)

to learn more about your orthopaedic journey.

## SPECIAL EDITION: *The COF and the COVID-19 Pandemic*

In this rapidly-changing world affected by the COVID-19 pandemic there is so much news that we wanted to share it all with you, our valued constituents, in this SPECIAL Pandemic edition of *OrthoLink*. In this issue, you will find:



- The COF's **Position statement on prioritizing orthopaedic surgery**, as hospitals re-start surgeries.
- A chance for you to **have your say** in asking governments to work to reduce orthopaedic surgery wait times. Please consider adding your voice to this initiative; it's a **fast and easy** on-line process, and quickly lets our governments know that this is an important issue.

- An update on an advocacy initiative of the Health Charities Coalition of Canada - COF is a member charity. We're humbled and grateful for the response to our request for researchers to add their support of funding for charities to be able to continue operations, in order to be able to fund health research.
- An opportunity to **help the COF to WIN \$20,000** - much needed, as the pandemic is resulting in deeply declining revenue, as our main fundraising event (Bad to the Bone Golf Tournament) is cancelled, and donations are decreasing. Whether we win the top prize or not, your donation will be much appreciated.

There's no question that times are tough on all of us right now. We want you to know that the Board and staff of the COF are committed to continuing our operations - continuing to support and advocate for orthopaedic patients, to provide our educational materials virtually, and to honour our research commitments.

Our hearts are with those who contracted the COVID-19 virus and their families, and we're grateful to the many doctors, nurses and others working on the front lines providing health care.

If you have questions about any of the articles in this Special Edition, or about the Foundation at all, I encourage you to **reach out to me** at [isla@canorth.org](mailto:isla@canorth.org). Stay safe and healthy.

Isla Horvath

## COF's Position Statement on Prioritizing Orthopaedic Surgery

### ***For those living with debilitating pain every day, surgery is essential***

As the COVID-19 pandemic begins to stabilize and health care decision-makers face challenges regarding prioritizing surgeries, the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation is advocating for the many thousands of orthopaedic patients who continue to live with debilitating pain every single day.

Canadian joint replacement patients face the longest wait times of developed countries according to CIHI with access now being [worse than 4 years ago](#). With surgeries deferred due to the pandemic these wait times are now even longer, and patients are suffering intolerable pain.

Orthopaedic patients who saw a light at the end of the tunnel as their surgery dates approached - a time when they could live without pain - have seen that light extinguished with the OR closures.

Canada's healthcare system must not let them down. These pain-relieving, life-changing surgeries must proceed as soon as possible.

See the full position statement [here](#).

### ***We need your voice:***

#### **Help us in asking governments to prioritize orthopaedic surgery**

Anyone who is living with painful bones and joints and who is at the point of needing surgery already knows the frustration with long surgical wait times. Now, due to the pandemic and the cancellation of elective surgeries, these **wait times are even longer**. As surgeries begin again, the COF is advocating for a quick return to orthopaedic surgery.

We are supporting The Arthritis Society (TAS) in a project aimed at **asking governments to implement a coordinated plan to reduce wait times for joint replacement surgery** when elective surgeries are restarted.

TAS has established an easy-to-use digital platform for reaching out to governments. Visit [arthritis.ca/TakeAction](http://arthritis.ca/TakeAction). Follow the on-screen instructions: type in your name where shown and your postal code, and your letter will be directed to your elected representatives. You can click on the letter in the box to personalize it, if you wish.

### **Thank you, COF Researchers**



The COF reached out to orthopaedic researchers to sign on to a letter from the [Health Charities Coalition of Canada](#) (HCCC) to the Prime Minister advocating for financial support of charities. The 27 members of the HCCC (of which the COF is one) **collectively provide \$155 million annually to fund health research**. As fundraising events (like the COF's *Bad to the Bone* Golf Tournament) are cancelled due to physical distancing, and

Canadians just don't have money to donate, charities are registering devastating revenue losses. The HCCC is requesting funding from government to allow charities to continue their work.

From a COF perspective alone, we typically fund 12 researchers and their teams, with a total research investment of about **\$250,000 annually**. Imagine the loss to the orthopaedic research world if the COF was not able to run its research program. These numbers become magnified when we total up the research programs of the other 26 members of the HCCC: research in heart disease, cancer, arthritis, Alzheimer's and more.

This initiative resonated with the Canadian research community, as it was signed by 1013 researchers, **63 of which are COF-funded researchers**. Thanks to all who answered the call for support. Read the letter and see the long list of supporters [here](#). Of special note, the first researcher on the list is a COF researcher.

### **Help the COF to win \$20,000**

The *Great Canadian Giving Challenge* is taking place in June, and the COF is part of it. An initiative of Canada Helps, this fundraising campaign is aimed at encouraging people to support the charities that matter to them, and offers a prize of \$20,000 to one lucky charity. Every single dollar donated to a charity in June through the *Great Canadian Giving Challenge* portal represents an entry into the contest. \$50 gives us 50 chances to win, \$100 gives us 100 chances to win ... and so on.



Wouldn't it be wonderful if the COF was the lucky charity to win that additional \$20,000? That's enough money to fund a research project, or support our Ortho Connect program to connect patients with volunteer peers, or to create a new educational resource ... **\$20,000 goes a long way in supporting the COF.**

Please consider taking part in this initiative today; make your donation at our Canada Helps giving page [here](#).

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### **Support the gift of pain free movement.**

The Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation is Canada's only health charity dedicated solely to helping people to maintain and restore their bone and joint, or orthopaedic, health. Created by Canada's orthopaedic surgeons, the Foundation has three main programs: research (uncovering new and improved surgical and treatment procedures), education (booklets and videos to guide patients through their orthopaedic journey) and care (through connecting patients with volunteer mentors, and programs like GLA:D™ Canada).

Make your monthly or one-time donation by clicking the link below. Thank you for your important contribution. **Your donation matters.**

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