



The Bone and Joint Decade 2000-2010 PRESS RELEASE

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The Bone & Joint Decade
Department of Orthopaedics
University Hospital
Lund Sweden SE-221 85
tel: +46 46 17 71 61
email: bjd@ort.lu.se
<http://www.bjdonline.org>

Bone & Joint Decade Action Week Events Shine Spotlight on Musculoskeletal Health

16 October 2006 | LUND (SWEDEN) -- October 12th - 20th marks the sixth annual **Bone and Joint Decade Action Week**, dedicating specific days to major conditions affecting the musculoskeletal system, with activities planned in countries around the world aimed at highlighting the severe impact of these disorders on millions of children, adults and elderly people worldwide.

The Bone & Joint Decade International Action Week runs every year from October 12th through 20th. Focus days include:

October 12 - World Arthritis Day

October 16 - World Spine Day

October 17 - World Trauma Day

October 20 - World Osteoporosis Day

This year's Action Week is highlighted by activities around the world -- the following is a sample of international and country-specific activities:

United States: The US BJD's National Action Week was launched at an American football game of the New York Giants vs. the Washington Redskins. The event was organised by the NY Giants and the International FOP Association to especially raise awareness of Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP) and 'kick-off' Action Week. In addition timed to coincide with the week, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued an update on the prevalence of diagnosed arthritis and arthritis-attributable activity limitation. The new figures show that in the US alone, 46.4 million persons had doctor-diagnosed arthritis, and more than 17 million adults are limited in their activities because of arthritis. For these full stories please see http://www.usbjd.org/projects/NAW_op.cfm?dirID=258

Poland: On the occasion of World Arthritis Day a conference entitled "Rheumatic Diseases - a Problem of Public Health" will be held in Warsaw and attended by Poland's Minister of Health, Professor Zbigniew Religa. Rheumatic diseases as a national health priority and treatment strategies from primary care through specialised care will be discussed. For more information please contact Dr Jacek Kruczynski, BJD NAN coordinator at jacek@rose.man.poznan.pl

Sweden: In Stockholm in recognition of World Osteoporosis Day a full day symposium on osteoporosis will be presented. The theme for World Osteoporosis Day 2006 is 'Bone Appetit', highlighting the role of good nutrition on building and maintaining strong bones. For more information please see http://www.osteofound.org/activities/world_osteoporosis_day/index.html

Belgium: Biking against Rheumatism in Europe (BARIE): In Belgium during Action Week there will be a special edition of the "Beau Vélo de Ravel" (Ravel's Beautiful Bike), 20km bike ride organised by the Belgian public radiotelevision (RTBF) dedicated to people with musculoskeletal handicap. In particular, patients with juvenile rheumatism will participate. Please see www.clair.be for more information.

The Netherlands: The Dutch Arthritis Association is organising a national conference entitled “To a Future Without Arthritis” to coincide with World Arthritis Day. Participants will be informed about the latest developments in scientific research into the disease. At the same time, the Dutch Arthritis Association the Dutch Rheumatism Patients’ League will launch a press campaign to create more public awareness of the consequences of living with arthritis/rheumatism. For more information please go to www.wereldreumadag.nl.

Prof Lars Lidgren, Chairman of the Bone and Joint Decade, and Head of the Department of Orthopaedics at the University of Lund, said: “Musculoskeletal disorders are the leading cause of disability around the world, affecting one out of every four adults and accounting for 25% of the total cost of illness.” The Decade aims to build awareness of the burden of musculoskeletal conditions by educating the public and driving research and legislation to improve care.

Some facts:

- Several hundred million people worldwide already suffer from joint diseases such as osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, and this figure is set to increase exponentially due to the predicted doubling of the number of people over age 50 by the year 2020.
- One in every three women over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.
- Up to 80% of people will suffer from back pain during their lives.
- Back pain is the second leading cause of work-place sick leave.
- Every 30 seconds someone dies in a road traffic accident, and in the same time frame three others are severely injured.
- Road traffic accidents are the leading cause of death and disability for people under age 45.

Launched in January 2000, the Bone and Joint Decade is an NGO, headquartered in Sweden, comprised of National Action Networks in 60 countries and with the support of more than 750 related organisations globally. Its mission is to advance understanding of musculoskeletal disorders worldwide through research and to improve the quality of life for those affected. The Bone and Joint Decade is supported by professional medical societies, patient advocacy groups, governments, industry and researchers who are united with the goal of advancing knowledge in the field and bringing about policy change. The Bone and Joint Decade is delighted to have the personal and active support of Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General, the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

The Bone and Joint Decade encompasses diseases associated with musculoskeletal disorders such as joint diseases, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, low back pain, spinal disorders, severe trauma to the extremities, crippling diseases and deformities in children. For more information, see www.bjdonline.org.

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For further press information, please contact the Bone and Joint Decade communications office:

Ms Sara Martin

BJD Communications Manager

Tel: +32 476 274 325

Email: smartin@skynet.be