Arthritis Matters

In this issue... •Everyday tips for living with arthritis

- Travel Tips
- ·A moment with...

Plus...

- Health Services update:
 'Living with chronic pain techniques for coping'
- Focus on Pacing
 - ... and more!



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For information and support
Arthritis Helpline

1800 011 041

Country Free Call

Arthritis Foundation of South Australia A: 118 Richmond Road Marleston SA 5033 T: (08) 8379 5711 www.arthritissa.org.au

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A message from the President

Welcome to my second message since taking up the Presidency.

Whilst continuing to focus on what we need to do to best serve you, our members, over the last six months the board and I have also been looking at the internal health of our organisation. Like many other charities and member based organisations we are facing some significant challenges in terms of increased costs and reducing donations, and changing needs from our members.

I am pleased to say that as a board, we are being proactive in our strategies to continue to be able to support our members and the community with ongoing education and support services and investment in essential medical research which is at the heart of our mission.

Resulting changes will largely be "behind the scenes" and will not directly affect the services we offer. However going forward you will see some changes, including possible relocation to a new premise more closely aligned to future needs. More on that next issue!!

This year we are particularly looking forward to celebrating World Arthritis Day on Tuesday 8th October with a public lecture, again in partnership with The University of Adelaide. We have invited one



of the foremost speakers on osteoarthritis, Professor David Hunter to present. I hope you can join us.

As a board we are excited to be embarking on this new stage in our journey which we believe will position Arthritis SA in the best possible way to support those living with arthritis for the next generation to come. We look forward to continuing to support you and hope that you will continue to support us.

Dr Tiffany Gill Board President

You're invited to...

World Arthritis Day is a global awareness day celebrated every year on the 12th of October. To highlight the day this year, Arthritis SA is holding two events during the week leading up to World Arthritis Day.

The first event is an education event in partnership with the University of Adelaide at their city campus on the evening of the 8th of October featuring keynote speaker Professor David Hunter.

The second event is a community stall in Rundle Mall on the 11th of October where people are welcome to come and talk to one of our health educators about arthritis, take home some information flyers for someone they know living with arthritis, or simply walk up and say hello. There will be exercise demonstrations, giveaways, and guest speakers.

More details on these events will be released in the coming weeks on our website, social media, and in our eNews.

A message from the CEO

Hello and welcome to our winter edition.

In the midst of repositioning our organisation for the long term, our priority continues to lie with providing the best information and services possible to support families and carers, as well as those of you living with arthritis to allow you to live your best life every day.

I am absolutely thrilled to advise that as part of this focus we have obtained the services of Tracy Rose to join our team as a Health Educator. Tracy is best known for her work at the Women's and Children's Hospital and brings a wealth of specialised experience in the area of juvenile arthritis adding to our existing amazing health education team.

Remember, the team is available to present on a range of arthritis related topics in the community so if you would like us to visit your group please get in touch.

In addition to the Public Lecture to celebrate World Arthritis Day noted by our President, this year we are also planning a pop up event in Rundle Mall on Friday October 11th; please come along and say hello – I would love to meet you!!

At a more practical level, this edition focuses on how to get through the cold months as well as possible with hints on how you can help



yourself to stay mobile and minimise fatigue. Whilst it is easy to skip the exercise regime during these months (oops... guilty of that!!) it is even more important at this time of year to keep the joints moving to reduce stiffness and soreness.

Good luck staying warm and I hope to see you at one of our two World Arthritis Day events.

Denise McMillan Hall
Chief Executive Officer





Follow us on Facebook to get interesting news, event updates, or information on a daily basis.

National News

In June, Pain Australia announced the launch of the National Strategic Action Plan for Pain Management with support from the Australian Government through a pre-election commitment of \$6.8m. The Action Plan is a set of key priority areas for best practice strategies and improving access to treatment of chronic pain.

We know that musculoskeletal conditions, including arthritis, are often the cause of chronic pain and the burden of pain is only set to increase with our ageing population.

We also know there is growing evidence of some people being prescribed opioids for pain management ultimately becoming addicted to them.

Arthritis SA sees managing pain as an essential part of managing arthritis for wellbeing.



On page 5 you will see an article on some new resources recently developed and we will be watching this space closely to keep you up to date with any developments.

Research news: A3BC

Currently there is no cure for arthritis and arthritis related conditions. However, a group of doctors at Royal North Shore Hospital have been working on something they believe may lead to a cure.

The Australian Arthritis and Autoimmune Biobank Collaborative (A3BC) was formed in 2016 by a group of Australian rheumatologists and researchers in response to a clear need to enable better prediction of prognosis and treatment outcomes among Australian men, women and children living with arthritis and autoimmune conditions.

Lead by rheumatologist Prof Lyn March AM, the 'arthritis biobank' (officially called A3BC) aims to identify causes and cures for a wide range of musculoskeletal and autoimmune conditions using biobank-enabled, data-linked, collaborative, and multidisciplinary research.

The A3BC will identify the biological/environmental causes and consequences of musculoskeletal conditions and combine these with a broad range of patient and population health datasets, to uncover unknown patterns and associations for safer, more effective and evidence-based prevention, diagnosis, treatment and prognosis strategies.

The only project of its kind in the world the A3BC aims to -

- Establish a national, open-access (ethics-approved), best-practice biobank network to collect, process and store a broad range of high-quality biospecimens for research;
- Integrate data with multiple national datasets, Apply cutting-edge visualisation (dashboards), big-data analytics and machine-learning tools to interrogate these integrated datasets for potential associations/ patterns of patient and population significance; and
- Enable the translation of research discoveries into a comprehensive evidence base for improved musculoskeletal policy/ practice across precision and preventive medicine – to give the right care, to the right patient, at the right time!

For more information or if you would like get involved see https://a3bc.org.au



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Focus on Pacing

Finding the right balance between work, activity and rest is an important part of being able to achieve the things that really matter to you.

Arthritis can be tiring at the best of times as a consequence of broken sleep, mental focus required to get through everyday activities and dealing with constant pain.

To make sure you have the energy to do what matters to you just when you need it, learning to pace yourself will help.

Learn to listen to your body and be guided by it. Accept that you need rest when you are tired and don't force yourself to work or exercise through pain.

Switching off the guilt to get everything done 'now' and learning how to pace yourself will allow you to achieve the outcomes that are important to you in your life and make the most of what you can do. Sounds easy but hard to do; so here are some simple tips to help you pace your activities.

PLAN, PLAN, PLAN



You will see us talking about planning time and time again. It may seem annoying at the time but the pay-off is immense. Take quiet time to carefully plan and organise your activities in advance so you make the most of your energy.

INVOLVE FRIENDS AND FAMILY





SIMPLIFY TASKS



For example, buy pre-cut vegetables and meat to make cooking simpler or use recipes that involve fewer ingredients. Seek out appliances that can make tasks easier.

ACCEPT THE BAD DAYS

If you are having a bad day, do not force yourself to work through pain. Accept that the best thing you can do for yourself is to adapt and change plans to allow yourself time to recover.



ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT



Many people like to feel needed and often get a lot of satisfaction out of helping.

eat heln to di



Can be a great help to discover ways you can save time and energy in carrying out daily tasks. Your health practitioner will be able to refer you to someone suitable.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

PRIORITISE JOBS

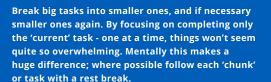
Where possible plan to do the hardest jobs when you are likely to be feeling your best. Recognise that you are likely to be tired afterwards so plan or incorporate breaks.



PLAN YOUR DAY

Plan so that you can alternate periods of activity with periods of rest

USE 'CHUNKING' AS A WAY OF LIFE





TAKE ADVANTAGE OF 'GOOD DAYS'



Do the things you may have been putting off.

Remember not to overdo it on these days as

it could result in pain and fatigue the
following days

Living with chronic pain - Techniques for Coping

Arthritis SA Educators visit regional South Australia

Pain is classified as chronic once it continues past the normal healing time of three months. Acute pain can transition into chronic pain if it is untreated or poorly treated. This happens when neuroplastic changes occur within the brain and nervous system, making the body more sensitive to pain and can create sensations of pain even without external pain stimuli.

For example, people can feel pain from a breeze or clothes touching their skin. This is called pain sensitisation .The longer pain remains untreated, the greater the risk of the body becoming sensitised to pain, and the pain becoming chronic. Therefore, timely and effective treatment of acute pain is essential to prevent transition to chronic pain. (Source Pain Australia)

One in five Australians live with chronic pain, increasing to one in three above the age of 65. With an ageing population, the incidence of chronic pain is projected to increase.

Arthritis SA were successful in obtaining a grant, supported by Country SA PHN, to deliver education about chronic pain across regional areas of South Australia during the first half of this year.

A community education session focussing on techniques for coping with chronic pain and a health professional education session focussing on chronic pain and all the apps and resources available for patients were delivered from Mount Gambier to Port Lincoln to Whyalla and the Mid Murray.

Through the delivery of this grant we were able to produce a short TV ad for use in regional GP practice waiting rooms which focussed on the strategies that can be used to help people cope with ongoing pain. Visit our website to view the ad.

We thank Country SA PHN for their support of the Chronic Pain project and all those community members and health professionals who attended the education sessions and shared their stories.

More recently on July 30th, a new website for managing back pain has been launched by Arthritis Australia. MyBackPain includes tailored, trustworthy information and will be a great resource. See MyBackPain.org.au. If you don't have access to a computer contact us on 08 8379 5711 and we can send you some information.

Four online resources have also been developed, please visit our website to find them:

Finding help for Pain online

This resource is designed to assist you in understanding where to find reliable online health information that can help you manage your pain.

• Ways to cope with ongoing pain

This online course looks at ways to help you understand the process of pain and steps you can take to actively manage your pain in everyday life.

• Finding Pain information for Families

This short course aims to help you understand the process of pain and looks at steps you can take to help your child.

• Talking to your GP about pain

This webinar will give you tips on how best to prepare for and communicate with your doctor about ongoing pain.

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Joint Replacement - A last resort

The following article has been prepared by Orthopaedics SA who have supported Arthritis SA with expert presentations this year. For those of you who receive our eNews, you may recognise the first part of this article but we felt it important to run them together to give the complete picture.

Arthritis SA strongly encourages integrated health care and every option explored to manage and mitigate symptoms before concluding surgery is necessary.

Disclaimer - Arthritis SA do not endorse the work of Orthopaedics SA nor any other medical or health professional but feel it important to share all information which may have relevance to our members.



About Orthopaedics SA

"Orthopaedics SA has the most comprehensive group of Orthopaedic surgeons in SA, with 26 surgeons able to treat bone and joint problems relating to arthritis, degenerative conditions, sports injuries, trauma, fractures and genetics. We are conservative in our approach to surgery, and will be happy to discuss the effective management of your injury or condition."

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How to improve your lifestyle and delay surgery

While many of our patients believe surgery is inevitable, they want to avoid it for as long as possible. There are many things that can be done to delay the need for surgery.

So what can you do to delay surgery?

Weight loss is very effective in reducing the load or stress on joints and the subsequent pain. A loss of 10 per cent of body weight in overweight people can reduce pain from knee arthritis by up to 50%.

To promote weight loss, choose a healthy diet and regular gentle exercise options like yoga, pilates, swimming, hydrotherapy, tai chi and beach walks.

A daily stretching routine and light weight-bearing exercises are helpful in strengthening muscles and increasing flexibility. Strong muscles help to support the joints.



Exercise can also build cartilage which can slow the progression of arthritis. Remember it will take time to establish a routine and notice improvement in your joint pain and swelling.

Regular exercise can help to:

- Improve general mobility, movement of joints, muscle strength, posture and balance
- Decrease pain, fatigue, muscle tension and stress.

All Australian adults should be aiming to accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week.

Exercise safety tips:

- Talk to your doctor and physiotherapist before starting an exercise program
- You may need more rest and less exercise during a period of increased pain or stiffness
- Always build up slowly
- Always start your exercise with some gentle movements to warm up your body and your joints
- Cool down at the end of your session with some gentle movements and stretches.

A healthy diet is also important

Review your diet and limit fatty and sugary treats. A calcium or glucosamine supplement may be beneficial – speak to your GP or a dietician for advice.

Educate yourself on pain management. You can learn useful pain management strategies at the Take Charge of Pain workshops offered by Arthritis SA.

Consider your emotional health too

Exercise will also assist in boosting your mood, another symptom of long-term joint pain. A walk with a friend could be a welcome distraction from discomfort and provide positive social interaction.

If you need help with household duties, ask a friend, family member or community service for assistance. Trying to push beyond your physical limitations may do further damage.

Still in a lot of pain?

If you are still in a lot of discomfort, ask your GP, who may refer you to a specialist. Surgery can be a successful option for people with advanced disease, severe pain, and functional limitations.

So you have to have surgery?

Sometimes no matter what we do to avoid, delay or prevent surgery, it may be that surgery is the only practical option. In this case, it is important to be mentally, physically and emotionally prepared.

Having a clear understanding of your surgical recovery and realistic expectations of your rehabilitation process will give you the best chance of a positive outcome.

Be mindful that no two patients are the same, and therefore individuals can experience very different recovery times. Following are some suggestions of how to be ready for surgery and fit for recovery.





Mentally prepared

Try to focus on the positive long-term outcome of surgery rather than the surgery itself. Visualising yourself three months post-surgery may provide positive affirmation.

Focus on the benefits of surgery and how your lifestyle could improve. Now is not the time to be googling YouTube videos of your operation!

Long term stress and tension can have physical effects on the body, so be aware of signs of tension within your body such as a clenched jaw, teeth grinding, headaches and back aches.

Yoga, mindfulness, meditation, gentle exercise, deep breathing, listening to music and social interactions are a pleasant distraction, and increase your overall mood.

Physically prepared

It will be important to stay hydrated and maintain a healthy diet in the weeks leading up to surgery, as your body will need good nutrition to fight infection and enable the healing process following surgery.

There are some useful apps which help to remind you to maintain hydration throughout the day. Being underweight could affect wound healing and the stress of surgery. Patients who are overweight or obese, particularly with a body mass index greater than 40 have markedly higher complication rates after some operations.

If you are considering significant changes to your diet, seek advice from a medical professional. Follow any pre-surgery instructions or preparations as indicated by your surgeon or the hospital.

Note any medications that you may need to cease prior to surgery, and strictly follow any fasting requirements prior to surgery. Having a regular sleep pattern and getting enough sleep is important.

Prepare your house

Consider your mobility within the house on your return from hospital. Remove any tripping hazards or clutter. Does your house have stairs? Will you require a ramp for physical access to your home or work?

You may like to prepare or buy some meals in advance, for your convenience whilst you are recovering. If you have any pets to be cared for while you are in hospital, organise a pet minder.

Consider any essential tasks that will need to be done at your house in your absence, and organise for someone to take care of them for you.

Prepare for your hospital stay

Consider what personal items you will need for a hospital stay:

Day clothing, night attire, underwear, dressing gown and slippers, toiletries (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant and razor). Will you require any special equipment post-surgery?

Find out from your surgeon if you will require special footwear, crutches or a wheelchair.





Support

Ask for support from your friends, family and community services during your recovery. Arrange someone to pick you up from the hospital after surgery. You may require someone to drive you initially.

Find out from your surgeon when you will be able to drive again post-surgery. Consider organising home delivery of groceries whilst your mobility is restricted and you are physically recovering from surgery.

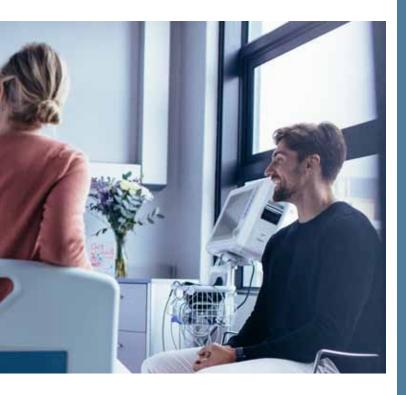
Returning to work

Arrange sufficient time off work after your surgery to rest and recover. Consider the duties you will perform at work on your return.

This may affect when you are permitted to return to work, particularly if you have a job which requires long periods of standing, or physical labour. Your surgeon will be able to give you an indication of expected recovery time.

Any questions?

Contact your surgeon or hospital staff if you have any specific queries about your surgery.



EverEasy Garden Tap

Over the past few years the 'Accessible Design Division' of Arthritis Australia has been working towards easier to open packaging through a range of advocacy and testing processes.

Arthritis Australia says "We know that packaging can have an adverse impact on quality of life, with 65% of consumers having to wait for someone to come and open packaging for them (Catalyst Research, 2013) and 89% of consumers are currently feeling frustrated or furious with packaging (Catalyst Research, 2013). 53% of consumers have also suffered an injury while trying to open packaging (Catalyst Research, 2013). These negative experiences with packaging can impact a consumer's life, particularly if they live alone or have a functional limitation.

The packaging industry needs to take responsibility for a consumer's post-purchase experience and consumers should seek alternative products that better meets their needs."

The Division recently certified the "EverEasy Garden Tap" made by an Australian company so we decided to give it a test run. This is what Arthritis SA staff member Bernadette Pope had to say:

"After a sample was sent from Arthritis Australia, I volunteered to trial this tap. I found the EverEasy Garden Tap very easy to install without the requirement of a plumber. The whole process only took 15 minutes.

The water pressure assisted garden tap is reported as 'only a feather touch is all that is needed' (to operate) and I certainly found this to be true. I have arthritis in both wrists and have had a previous history of struggling to turn the tap off tight enough to stop any drips. With The EverEasy Garden Tap it was so easy and smooth that I did not feel any shooting pain that normally comes with that action. It took me by surprise the ease of use and as an avid gardener, will appreciate the easy turning mechanism to relieve the arthritic pain in my wrists.

This is an invention by a small Australian company called Ox Controls Technology who focuses on innovation that improves the quality of life of consumers. Currently available in Bunnings at a cost of \$14.90 RRP making it an affordable and beneficial aid for those who suffer from arthritis."

Bernadette

about Terry.

Not only is she an Arthritis SA Life Member, but she has also been a committed volunteer, who has made numerous contributions to the organisations, including running health education courses and answering the Arthritis Help Line.

Who could be a better a choice to be the face of Arthritis SA than someone who has put many years of effort into helping others?



Terry was diagnosed with Arthritis in 1984 and she knows this because her doctor recently told her "You are walking much better in my office now than you did 35 years ago".

A moment with...

When she saw her doctor the first time, she had great difficulty walking properly and her hands were hurting. "I thought that I'm way too young for this" she said. "My youngest son had just started Uni and I didn't know what to do".

The first step for Terry was attending a self-management course organised by Arthritis SA. "That course helped me realise that if I wanted to get better, something needed to change. I had to change!" Terry went back to what she knew best: swimming.

Once a well-trained athlete, she struggled to do just three strokes in a row at that time. "I knew that if I wanted my mobility back, then I needed to be persistent. And I was! These days, I still swim a lot and three strokes, over time, became 800m".

Thanks Terry for all the years of support and for sharing your story.

09

4th - Arthritis and Dental Health

17th - Arthritis mini seminar series week 1

OCTOBER

4

1st - Arthritis mini seminar series week 2

8th - World Arthritis Day education event

11th - World Arthritis Day community event

12th - World Arthritis Day

15th - Arthritis mini seminar series week 3

22nd - Arthritis SA AGM

29th - Arthritis mini seminar series week 4

WHATS O

Everyday Tips for Living with Arthritis



Do you feel the weather affects your arthritis? If the answer is YES, you are not alone!

While research has not yet provided a definitive answer to this question, with winter here and chilly days and colder nights we've gathered together a few ideas for the winter months.

We all have an instinct to hibernate in winter and the cold weather can cause changes to exercise plans. However, it's important to maintain physical activity.

Winter can be a great time to try something new or revisit an old favourite, brush up on your home routine, or attack things you've been thinking about for a while. A physiotherapist or exercise physiologist can advise you about a home exercise routine or help you set up an ongoing program.

Indoor exercises such as Tai Chi or Hydrotherapy (contact ASA for factsheets) can be a great low impact choice but it doesn't have to be a formal group or class. You Tube, DVD's and pay TV all have a great range of 'classes' available.

Choose your exercise

Household chores, playing with children, listening to music and dancing, using the stairs instead of the lift, stretching or doing light exercises while watching TV can also be great ways to maintain physical activity in the colder months.

Many large shopping centres, such as Marion, and West Lakes have, mall walking groups. Enquire at the shopping centre for more information. Be it walking, Tai Chi, Strength 4Life classes, line dancing or something else entirely your local council can be a valuable source of information.

The SA community's website is another great option for finding local groups - www.sacommunity.org

Staying Warm

Warm showers or baths can help with achy joints and stiffness. Try lightly towel drying, then slip into a fluffy robe, this will keep areas like your upper back and shoulders warm while getting dressed.

Your hairdryer is not just for your hair! Heat clothing and shoes before putting them on. Set the hairdryer to a cool setting and use the airflow to dry or warm difficult to reach body parts like feet and in skin creases.

If the idea of getting into a cold bed fills you with fear and you don't like electric blankets or find filling a hot water bottle difficult, use larger wheat bags to warm the bed. Just remember to remove before going to sleep.

Flannelette sheets and quilt covers are often warmer than cotton for winter use. It's important to stay warm when sitting indoors so apply some of the clothing ideas below to both indoors and outdoors.



Clothing

Dressing warmly is key. Opt for loose layers not only do they require less energy to put on, loose layers trap body heat to help keep you warm. Pay special attention to the head, hands and feet, as the majority of heat is lost from the body's extremities. Outdoors wear a hat or beanie to protect your head and a scarf to protect your neck.

Invest in good gloves to protect your hands. Mittens can keep the hands even warmer as they trap an extra layer of air. Try fingerless gloves that you can wear all day indoors and out. While some brands sell themselves as "arthritis gloves" and many products are available online it's really about finding gloves that are comfortable for you and suit your daily needs. If you can, try out a few different styles.

Department and outdoor stores can be a good place to start. In addition to intended use, consider the fabric and thickness of the gloves, particularly if you have dry and sensitive skin or poor grip. If you know what works for you your family will love the suggestions for gifts for celebratory occasions such as birthdays.

Think about your footwear to help reduce the risk of a trip or fall. Remember it's not just about outdoor shoes, check indoor footwear too. Make sure shoes are waterproof, still fit well especially with thicker winter socks, can be safely and easily fastened and have good grip. If you're unsure, your feet have changed or you have concerns with swelling of your feet a podiatrist can give you advice about suitable footwear.

Travelling tips

If you're heading away to escape the cold, here are a few tips for your travel. In the excitement of planning for a trip don't forget to consider footwear, clothing and luggage and any special items such as heat packs you may want to travel with.

While there is no perfect travel shoe or suitcase its worth thinking about how well what you are planning to take matches your trip. Will you be walking over rough ground in the outback or the cobbled streets of Europe? Does your hotel have a lift or will you need to carry cases up stairs?

On a plane Move! Move! Long periods sitting still can cause stiffness so move around regularly and do some simple stretches in your seat. Do a few laps of the airport before your flight and try to fit in a gentle walk when you arrive at your destination.

If you have dry skin associated with your arthritis or medications, plane travel can be a particular challenge. Moisturise skin before flying and when you arrive. Carry some with you for exposed areas such as hands and face.

Talk to your doctor or chemist about using nasal saline if you have dry nasal passages. Bring sugar-free candies, lozenges, gum on board to help your mouth stay moist.

Depending on your medications you may also need to consider specific carrying requirements, check with your doctor, pharmacist or the manufacturer.

Keep everything together in the original packaging and use a clear zip lock bag so security can easily see what's inside and it's easy for you to access on the plane.

Some airlines may have restrictions on the size of products you can take on board if you're not sure contact the airline or your travel agent.

To make travel more comfortable talk to a physiotherapist about some simple stretches for planes, cars, trains and long bus rides. If it's a driving holiday don't forget take regular stretch breaks, and consider your seat and driving position before you travel. Adjust your seat, steering wheel and mirrors for maximum comfort.

Ask yourself the following, Can I hold the steering wheel comfortably? Can I turn and look to reverse? There are many small aids such as blind spot mirrors that can make driving easier.

The RAA has a program called CarFit which helps you adjust your car for maximum comfort and safety. Contact them directly.



Great Escape Lottery 2019 Winners

Congratulations to all of the winners:

1st Prize - Ticket #13329

2nd Prize - Ticket #3717

3rd Prize - Ticket #3924

A full list of winners is available on our website.

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2019 Great Escape Lottery.



Your donation is

much appreciated!

Thank you Denise McMillan-Hall
CEO Arthritis SA



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