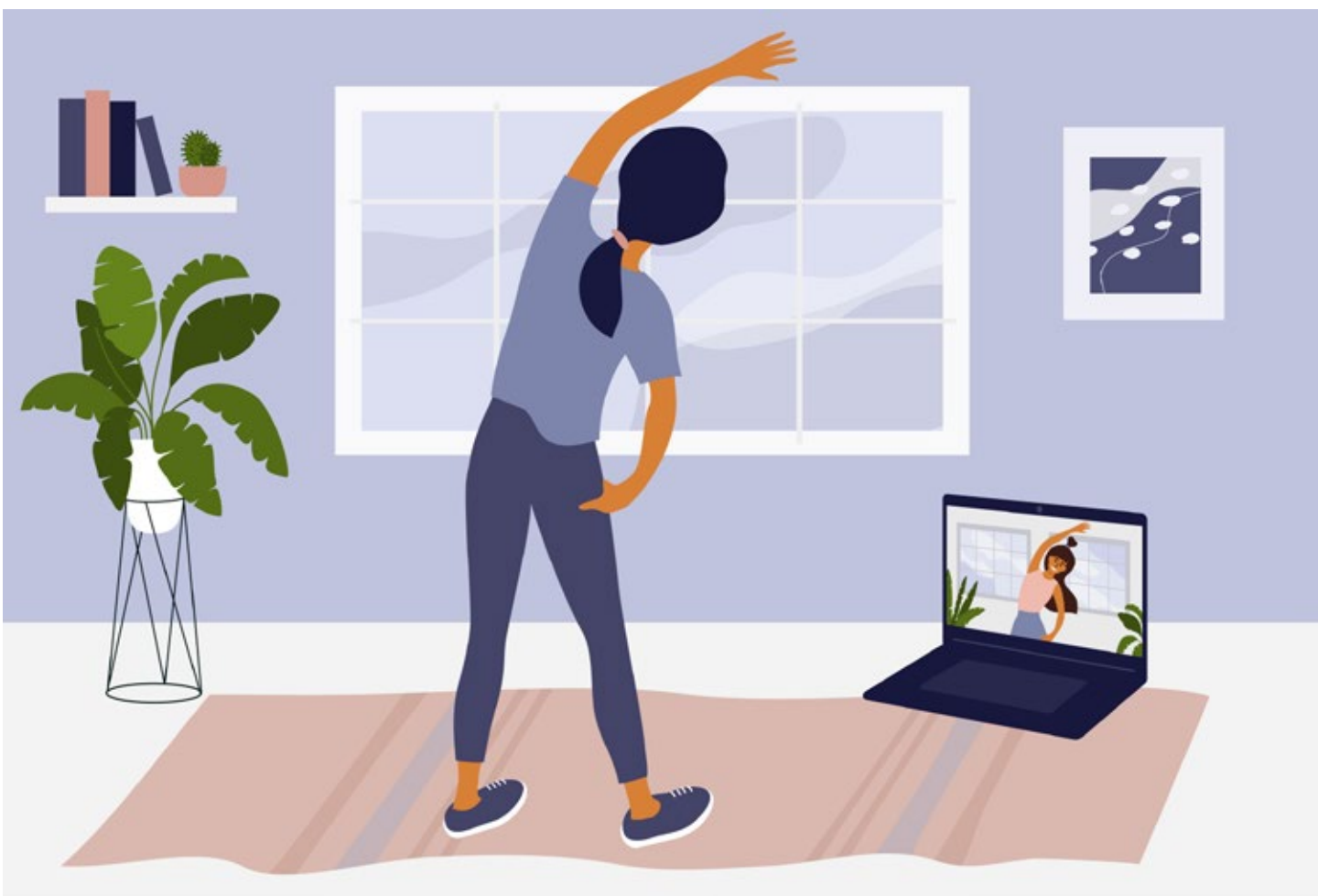


# LIAISON

October 2020

## Virtual fitness and dance will keep you moving



As the temperature drops this fall, you may be deciding to bring your workouts indoors. Physical spaces across the country are open with limited occupancy, however you may want to examine some options that you can do at home. Here are some affordable or free resources that may be of interest.

If you are a member of a gym you may want to see if they have any virtual classes available. [YMCA 360](#) offers free videos for all age groups. Programs include yoga, dance fitness, tai chi, and options for active older adults.

If you prefer dance, virtual dance classes such as [Sharing Dance Seniors](#) is a must. Created by Baycrest and Canada's National Ballet School (NBS) this free six-week dance class is a safe accessible program for all levels of dance.

Fitness mobile apps or YouTube are also great resources. The [Bodybreak](#) YouTube channel is a great example of this as they have been teaching Canadians healthy living for over 30 years.

Finally, the CBC article [Online workouts for seniors and how to pick the right one for you](#) will provide you with expert advice on navigating through your virtual fitness journey.

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## Socially or solo: 5 ways to enjoy fall and celebrate Halloween



Autumn in Canada has so much to offer, and you can enjoy it all solo or socially. Be sure to check these activities off your fall to-do list:

- Embrace the fall season by making apple or pumpkin pies, pastries or tarts. Challenge family members or friends to a baking contest if you want to add the element of friendly competition.
- Visit your local farmers markets to purchase fresh produce and goodies. This is also a great way to help support local merchants throughout the cooler months.
- Check online to find out about farms near you that offer seasonal activities such as pumpkin picking or corn mazes.
- Don't forget to embrace the spooky season! As Halloween approaches, create a classic thriller film countdown. If you want to make it social, share your list with others and discuss the films virtually with those who are brave enough to work their way through your list.
- Host a Halloween costume competition or fashion show with family or friends in your social bubble. You can also do this virtually by creating a Zoom or Skype event. Celebrating solo doesn't mean you can't challenge yourself to create a spooktacular costume!



## Join the fight to end social isolation

It's October and the RTOERO Foundation is excited to launch the third annual Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign. The focus of the campaign is to address the issue of social isolation among seniors and to raise \$100,000 for programs and research.



The COVID-19 pandemic has forced most of us to stay inside our homes for the last six months and it has deepened our empathy for people who live with chronic social isolation. That's why the Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign is more important this year than ever before.

We know RTOERO members understand the value of collective action. By joining this campaign, you'll become part of a movement that will shine a light on social isolation and help make huge strides towards assisting lonely seniors.

Please consider making a contribution to the campaign today. Any amount will help create a future where all seniors can feel connected and engaged.

[Click here to donate.](#) Together we can make a difference.

## RTOERO's 4th annual Vibrant Voices advocacy event goes virtual



On October 1, we recognized the International Day of Older Persons with our 4th annual Vibrant Voices Advocacy event. In previous years, the events were held at Queen's Park in Toronto. We joined Question Period as observers, hosted networking luncheons and last year introduced one-on-one meetings with government officials.

At this year's virtual event, members of the Board, Political Advocacy Committee and Senior Management team attended 15 meetings and connected with 25 government officials and staff using the Zoom online platform. Government officials received information packages prior to the meeting with background on our [three key issues](#) —**seniors strategy, geriatric health care and environmental stewardship.**

The information package included:

- RTOERO - [Who we are statement](#)
- [Position paper summaries](#) of our issues
- White papers with detailed overviews on our issues [\(seniors strategy, geriatric health](#)

[care, environmental stewardship\)](#)

- [Renaissance Magazine](#)
- [2018 Annual report](#)

This year, we built relationships with government officials, increased awareness of our advocacy issues and established follow-up actions.

Digital campaigns underway for British Columbia and Saskatchewan and elections

Provincial elections are taking place in British Columbia on Oct 24 and in Saskatchewan on Oct 26. RTOERO launched a [digital campaign](#) through Vibrant Voices to share our advocacy issues and encourage members and residents to send letters to election candidates through.

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## Staying connected through clubs



It's easy to start your own club, virtually or in-person, in an effort to keep social and motivated. Virtual clubs allow for friends and family from across Canada, or the world, to join. If you want to start an in-person club, make sure the members are within your social bubble or you are able to have COVID-19 distancing parameters in place. Looking for club ideas? Try one of these:

- **Photography club:** pick a shot or technique each month. Share your photographs in addition to your tips and tricks.
- **Recipe club:** pick a theme ingredient each month. Exchange your best recipe with the featured ingredient and share pictures of the final result. If your club members are within your social bubble, then host a potluck where you each bring your dish.

- **Meditation or yoga club:** have a different member host a meditation or yoga routine each time you meet.
- **Arts club:** pick a theme for each month, members create a piece based on the theme in their preferred art form (painting, drawing, knitting, woodworking, whatever they choose). Share pictures of your final pieces.

## New member portal coming soon

We are thrilled to announce that RTOERO, along with our administration partner Johnson Inc., will be introducing a new member portal. We are currently testing and putting the final touches on this new modern platform that will be launching at the end of 2020.

The new site includes exciting changes to the sign-in process and the online claims submission tool. This will improve the overall customer experience for you, our members! It will simplify the claims submission process and give you immediate claim details, all while accelerating reimbursements and providing improved security.

Communiqué (the RTOERO benefit plan renewal document) will contain more information on this new tool. Watch for Communiqué in your mailboxes at the end of November.

## Diabetes and your eyes

Millions of Canadians are living with diabetes and prediabetes. It is important to understand the impact of this disease on the eyes and the role the optometrist plays in managing eye health for those affected.

Diabetes generally affects the eyes of people who have been suffering from the disease for many years or who have trouble controlling their blood sugar levels. Certain eye conditions that may develop as a result of diabetes include:



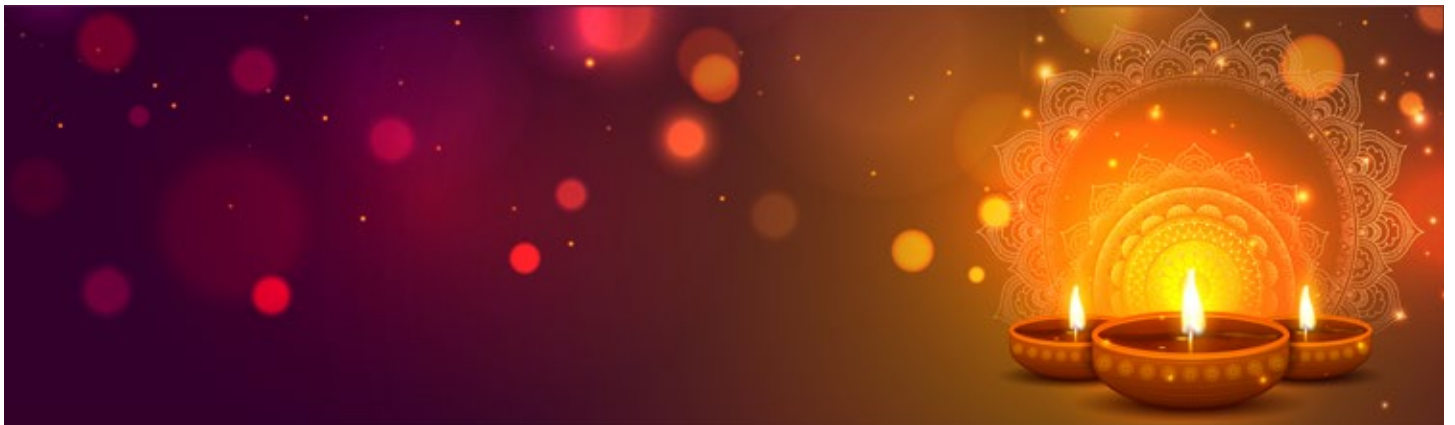
- Diabetic retinopathy, a complication that damages the blood vessels of the retina and can permanently damage vision
- Cataracts, which clouds the eye's lens
- Glaucoma, which causes pressure to the retina

Through a comprehensive [eye exam](#), optometrists can detect early signs of certain health conditions, like diabetes. They can even refer you to the appropriate health professionals for the particular condition that they identify. If you already have diabetes, your optometrist will pay close attention to your eyes and may recommend that you have pupil dilation in order to examine them thoroughly.

If left untreated, eye conditions caused by diabetes can seriously and sometimes permanently impact your eye health. Monitoring the progression and maintaining control of the disease is key for people affected by diabetes. With regular visits, you can greatly reduce the risk of eye diseases related to diabetes.

[Article courtesy of IRIS](#)

## Autumn features faith and culture celebrations



Autumn features several important days of observance and commemoration in different faiths and cultures.

### **Navaratri – Oct. 17 to 25**

This Hindu festival, spanning nine nights and 10 days, is celebrated in the fall, culminating in the holiday of Vijaya Dashmi (also known as Dassehra) on the last day.

### **Diwali – Nov. 14**

Shubh Deepawali, Happy Diwali to those celebrating this South Asian holiday, also known as the “festival of lights.”

### **Bandi Chhor Divas – Nov. 14**

This holiday is one of the most important in the Sikh calendar.

### **New Year – Nov. 15**

Adherents of Hinduism and Jainism celebrate the 2020 New Year on Nov. 15.

### **Guru Nanak Jayanti – Nov. 30**

This holy day celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism.

This time of year is a chance to learn more about important holy days and holidays in other faiths and cultures and to extend greetings to those in our community and our acquaintance who are observing one or more of these important dates.

Watch RTOERO’s [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for more information about each commemoration.

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## RTOERO STAFF PROFILE



**Name:** Judith Lemieux

**Title:** Senior Membership Services Specialist

**How long have you been at RTOERO?** 3 years

**How do you help RTOERO Members?**

I am one of the bilingual staff at RTOERO. I make sure members' contact information and subscription preferences are up-to-date. I answer membership-related inquiries, such as questions about the services we offer and the application process. I also assist with meeting preparations for the Member Services Committee.

**What do you enjoy most about working at RTOERO?** I find it very satisfying to ease prospective members' anxieties about the application process. I like knowing that I can provide answers clearly and in an approachable manner. I appreciate that my role allows me to facilitate change in the organization. Because I work so closely with members, I am often relaying feedback back to my team for ways to improve the membership experience. I am also truly grateful for my wonderful, supportive colleagues!

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