

EMBRACE AGING

News from the RTOERO Foundation



Update from the Board Chair

by **Joanne Murphy**

Social isolation is more “top of mind” this year, than ever before. The early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic drove Canadians of all ages and demographic groups into a state of social isolation; a sort of unplanned exercise in how to cope with disconnection.

Now, as the economy begins to reopen and our communities start regrouping, most of us see the light at the end of the tunnel and a return to normalcy. For socially isolated seniors however, the end of the pandemic does not mean an end to loneliness – social isolation is their normal.

Imagine what it would be like to see no light at the end of the tunnel. How would you feel if you had to eat every meal alone for the rest of your life, had no one to say goodnight to, had no one to talk to all day long, everyday? This is the reality for an estimated 1 in 5 Canadians over the age of 65 and another 30% are at risk. We need to raise funds for research to combat this serious issue.

Together we need to shine a light on social isolation. This October marks the RTOERO Foundation’s third annual Social Isolation Awareness Month. We hope you join us in the fight against social isolation by participating in our campaign.

Please visit www.rtoerofoundation.ca/endisolation and register today for the campaign.

The focus of the campaign is to address the issue of social isolation among seniors in a variety of ways. The campaign helps raise awareness through the sharing of information, facts, tips and action ideas. It also helps individuals to recognize and help those who are socially isolated.

We have set a goal to raise \$100,000, but we can’t do it without the support of generous donors. I hope you’ll join me in helping each other stay engaged and connected by making a donation to the RTOERO Foundation and registering for our October campaign.

Health & Wellness

Sleep soundly – all night long

We've all been there – we have trouble falling asleep or wake up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom and can't fall back asleep.

Caffeine plays an interesting role in our ability to fall asleep and get back to sleep easily. Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, soda, energy drinks, and chocolate. Caffeine triggers your brain to stay awake. And although these effects begin quickly (within an hour), they also linger in your body longer than you may realize. Half of the caffeine in your drinks is still in your system 3 to 5 hours after you drink it. To make sure your sleep doesn't pay the price, avoid all caffeine after 5 p.m.

Here are some other doctor recommended tips for falling asleep – and most of these same suggestions can be used for getting back to sleep:

- **Stop watching the clock:** keeping track of how long you've been awake will just add to your stress. Turn the clock away from you so you can't see the time.
- **Stay away from screens:** put down your phone, put away your computer and turn off the TV.
- **Move to another room after 20 minutes:** go to a dimly lit room and do something relaxing and calming. The change in location will break the pattern of sleeplessness.
- **Unwind before bed:** practice light yoga or deep breathing exercises.
- **Limit alcohol prior to bedtime:** more than one night-cap can often leave you wide awake, and cause you to get up to use the bathroom.



UTI prevention

Article courtesy of **Utiva Health**

Did you know that Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) are one of the top reasons for doctor visits in Canada among patients over 55 years old? Although these patients will almost certainly be prescribed antibiotics, there are reasons to avoid taking them when possible. Excessive use can lead to antibiotic resistance and can also kill our much-needed good bacteria which helps with healthy digestion.

Therefore, if one is prone to UTIs, the best way to reduce antibiotic usage is to focus on prevention. In 2019, the Canadian Urology and GP guidelines for UTI prevention accepted cranberry as the only natural prevention option highlighting the PAC concentration. But what are PACs?

Cranberry PACs (proanthocyanidins) are the bioactive component of cranberries, which prevent bacteria from sticking to the bladder wall allowing for natural flushing when urinating. It is clinically proven that 36mg of PACs daily can minimize the likelihood of infection. But not all cranberry supplements are made equal. Most cranberry products are less than 1% PAC which does not come close to the necessary 36mg.

Utiva UTI Control is the ONLY cranberry capsule in Canada providing 36mg of PACs per capsule. You only need one a day for ongoing prevention. Dr. Colleen McDermott, Urogynecologist at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto says "I recommend Utiva which has 36mg of PACs to minimize UTI recurrences. Utiva has provided a positive impact on my patient's lives by reducing visits and the need for antibiotics".

Utiva also has a new proprietary probiotic (Probiotic Power 30B CFU) and UTI Home Test Strips for self checking in privacy.

To learn more visit Utiva online at: www.utivahealth.ca, email hello@utivahealth.com or call 1-888-622-3613



When social distancing leads to social isolation

We've been hearing since March that practicing social distancing is essential to help stop the spread of COVID-19. At the beginning of the pandemic, we were following a stay-at-home order which led all of us to become physically separated.

But as things are opening up and most of us are getting "back to normal", there are many seniors who aren't ready to take the risk of going back to their pre-pandemic routines.

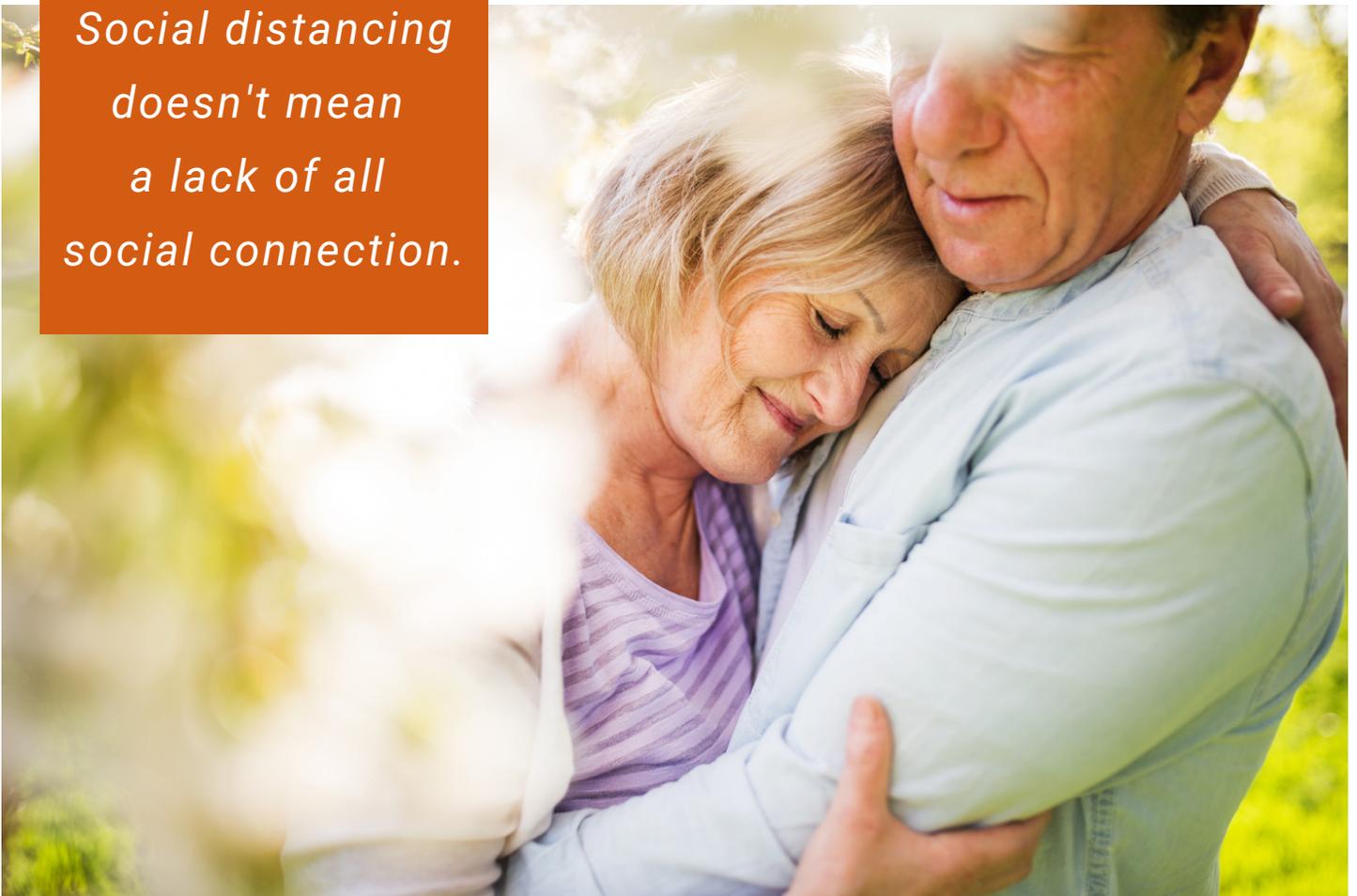
Without the ability or confidence to socialize, participate in social activities, go to restaurants, and attend events, it's very easy to see how social distancing can lead to social isolation. And for seniors, we know that the lack of social interaction and loneliness have serious negative effects on their overall health.

In fact, social isolation increases mortality risk on par with such factors as smoking, obesity and lack of physical activity. It's a risk that could prove to be an epidemic in its own right in these days of COVID-19.

Keep in mind that social distancing doesn't mean a lack of all social connection or having to stay home all day. Take time each day to go outside and breathe in the fresh air. Take a walk or meet up with someone in a park. Make sure you have a daily routine that includes healthy meals, light exercise and a phone call with a neighbour, friend or family member. Be good to yourself and each other.

Visit www.rtoerofoundation.ca/endisolation to register for our Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign and find out how you can make a difference.

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RTOERO Foundation staff is working from home

Since the middle of March, we've been working from home - and here's what it's been like. Read our answers to these questions below:

1. What do you like most about working from home?
2. What is the biggest challenge you face working from home?
3. What do you miss most about the office?



Mike, Executive Director

I really like seeing my two kids during the day and being able to have lunch together. But it's very difficult to be in the same house with the girls because I have to close myself in a room and ask them to leave me alone all day. I miss going to the gym on my lunch break. I just started getting myself back into shape in January, but now I think I've gained 10 lbs since working at home!

Deanna, Manager of Donor Relations

I like saving two hours a day by not commuting back and forth to work. I'm enjoying the extra time by spending it with family and riding my new bike. My biggest challenge is the lack of separation between "work" and "home" space. They seem to blend in after a while at home. I miss getting in my 10,000 steps a day. When you are at home all the time it is easy to forget to get up and move! I do also miss my Foundation and RTOERO colleagues.



Tammy, Manager of Philanthropy

I enjoy not having to commute because it allows me more time with my family. The biggest challenge about working from home is not having the ability to toss ideas around spontaneously and engage with my colleagues on the fly. I started with the RTOERO Foundation at the end of May during COVID-19 and I have never been in the office nor have I ever met Mike or Deanna in person or any of my RTOERO colleagues. So I suppose I miss everything and nothing.

Contact Us!
We'd love to
hear from you.



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