

Campaign Overview for AARDA's National Awareness & Fundraising Campaign



SAVE THE DATE

Chicago Autoimmune Walk

June 2, 2012, Venue TBD

1-855-ADWALKS

www.AutoimmuneWalk.org

The American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA) is dedicated to the eradication of autoimmune diseases and the alleviation of suffering and the socioeconomic impact of autoimmunity through fostering and facilitating collaboration in the areas of education, public awareness, research and patient services in an effective, ethical and efficient manner. The launch and implementation of AARDA's inaugural national, grassroots Walk Campaign will greatly enhance their ability to raise vital awareness and funds and bring them closer to reaching their ultimate goals.

Walk Concept:

- Unlike the traditional walkathon that ventures out on a 3 to 5 mile course, the Autoimmune Walk will be held on a track or a short course of approximately ¼ to ½ mile & teams will walk in loops until their mile goal (1 to 5 miles) is reached.
 - Each team member can walk one lap, like a relay, or many teams can walk all laps together.
 - Each event will start with a concise but very compelling opening ceremony that speaks to how all autoimmune diseases are linked together and we are all now linking together for a cure.
 - At the beginning of the event, every participant will be given a paper "link" (or Tyvek) upon which they write their link to autoimmune disease. The "link" does not have to be one of the autoimmune diseases (lupus, type 1 diabetes, scleroderma, celiac, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, myasthenia gravis, etc), but instead could be how they are impacted by the disease (caregiver, doctor, son or daughter of someone with autoimmune disease, etc.)
 - The links will be used to create a "paper chain"...to be used during the opening & closing ceremony.
 - For the opening ceremony, all participants will be invited to stand in a circle (or several) and hook their links together with the participants next to them. All participants could then walk with the connected chain around the track (1 lap or more).
 - The closing ceremony will speak to how we are linked together now...fighting for a cure.
 - All "Participant Links", from all Autoimmune Walks, will be connected and taken to Capitol Hill as a part of the AARDA advocacy effort. The chain can be used in media and displayed at other events as a visual sign of how all autoimmune diseases are linked, and we are all in this fight together.
- AARDA constituents, contacts and new prospects will be recruited to register, become a team captain, create a personal fundraising page and raise vital funds for the Autoimmune Walk.

AARDA is the only national nonprofit health agency dedicated to bringing a national focus to autoimmunity, the major cause of serious chronic diseases. Approximately 50 million Americans, 20 percent of the population, suffer from autoimmune diseases. There are over 100 known autoimmune diseases; and unlike the many forms of cancer which are recognized as being part of the general term "cancer," autoimmune diseases are most often recognized singularly.

In addition to being a source of significant revenue, a primary goal of the campaign is to bridge the gap between the different autoimmune diseases and organizations, both from a public awareness and a fundraising perspective. The need to bring a national focus to autoimmunity as the common factor in all autoimmune diseases is vital in order to bring a collaborative effort to research, funding, early detection, and eventually prevention and cure for all autoimmune diseases.

The event, from beginning to end, is designed to bring autoimmune diseases together, under one banner, united for a cure. Both figuratively and literally, we will link together for a brighter tomorrow for all with autoimmune disease and link together for a cure.