

# DAD HAS ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS

Two short graphic stories to explain spondyloarthritis to children



Dad has spondyloarthritis  
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Vision Graphique

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Inspired by **patients.**  
Driven by **science.**

## **A Message from the Canadian Spondylitis Association**

The Canadian Spondylitis Association (CSA) is a national non-profit organization run by patients living with Spondyloarthritis which include:

- Ankylosing Spondylitis
- Psoriatic Arthritis
- Undifferentiated Spondyloarthritis
- Enteropathic Arthritis
- Reactive Arthritis
- Juvenile Onset Arthritis

The mission of the CSA is to create awareness of Spondyloarthritis in order to ease the path to diagnosis. Our vision is to be the primary resource for people diagnosed and living with Spondyloarthritis in Canada. We achieve this through awareness, research, support and advocacy across Canada.

I am the President of the CSA and I live with both Ankylosing Spondylitis and Psoriatic Arthritis. Like many of you I have had my fair share of challenges over the years. When I became a father I realized how difficult it was to explain my illness to my daughter. Trying to explain my condition, symptoms and therefore my daily limitations to a 6 year old seemed impossible. I found this book to be very helpful for me and my daughter. She started pointing to the pictures of the swollen joints and understood clearly why Daddy couldn't do everything other Dads were able to do. We sit together quite often to read this book and she even shows her friends.

For those of you living with Spondyloarthritis I hope that you find this book of value and encourage you to join the Canadian Spondylitis Association ([www.spondylitis.ca](http://www.spondylitis.ca)) for continued support and education.

Gerald & Tessa Major

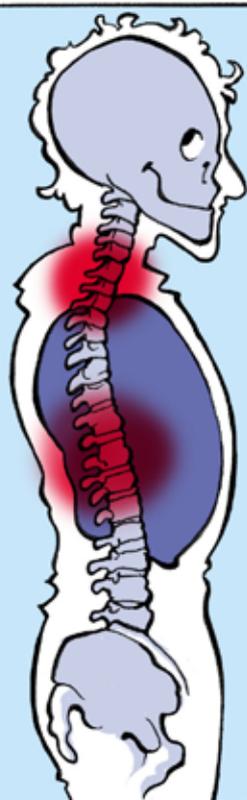
# CAT TO THE RESCUE!



ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS MAINLY CAUSES THE JOINTS TO BECOME INFLAMED\*.

THE JOINTS ARE THE JUNCTIONS BETWEEN THE BONES (IN THIS CASE THE VERTEBRAE). THEY SWELL AND BECOME PAINFUL.

\* INFLAMMATION IS THE BODY'S RESPONSE TO AN INJURY OR BURN. IT'S PAINFUL, WARM, RED AND SWOLLEN.



THE DISEASE ATTACKS THE SPINE, WHICH IS THE SERIES OF SMALL BONES THAT RUN DOWN THE BACK...

... BUT SOMETIMES ALSO THE PELVIS, HIPS, KNEES, ANKLES...

11/11/2016

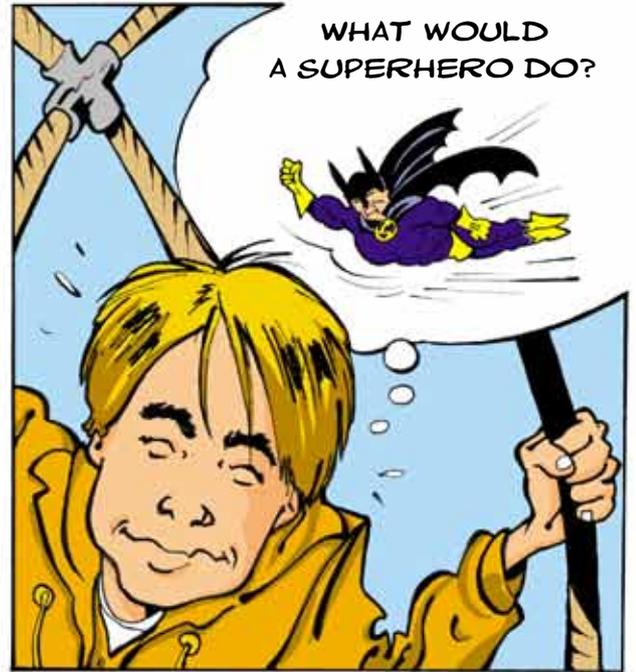
THAT'S WHY MY  
BACK'S A BIT  
STIFF AND  
I CAN'T  
CATCH YOU.



CONCENTRATE  
HARD SO YOU  
WON'T BE  
AFRAID.



WHAT WOULD  
A SUPERHERO DO?



HEY!  
HOW DID  
THAT CAT  
GET THERE?



HE'S GOING  
TO SAVE YOU!  
FOLLOW HIM!



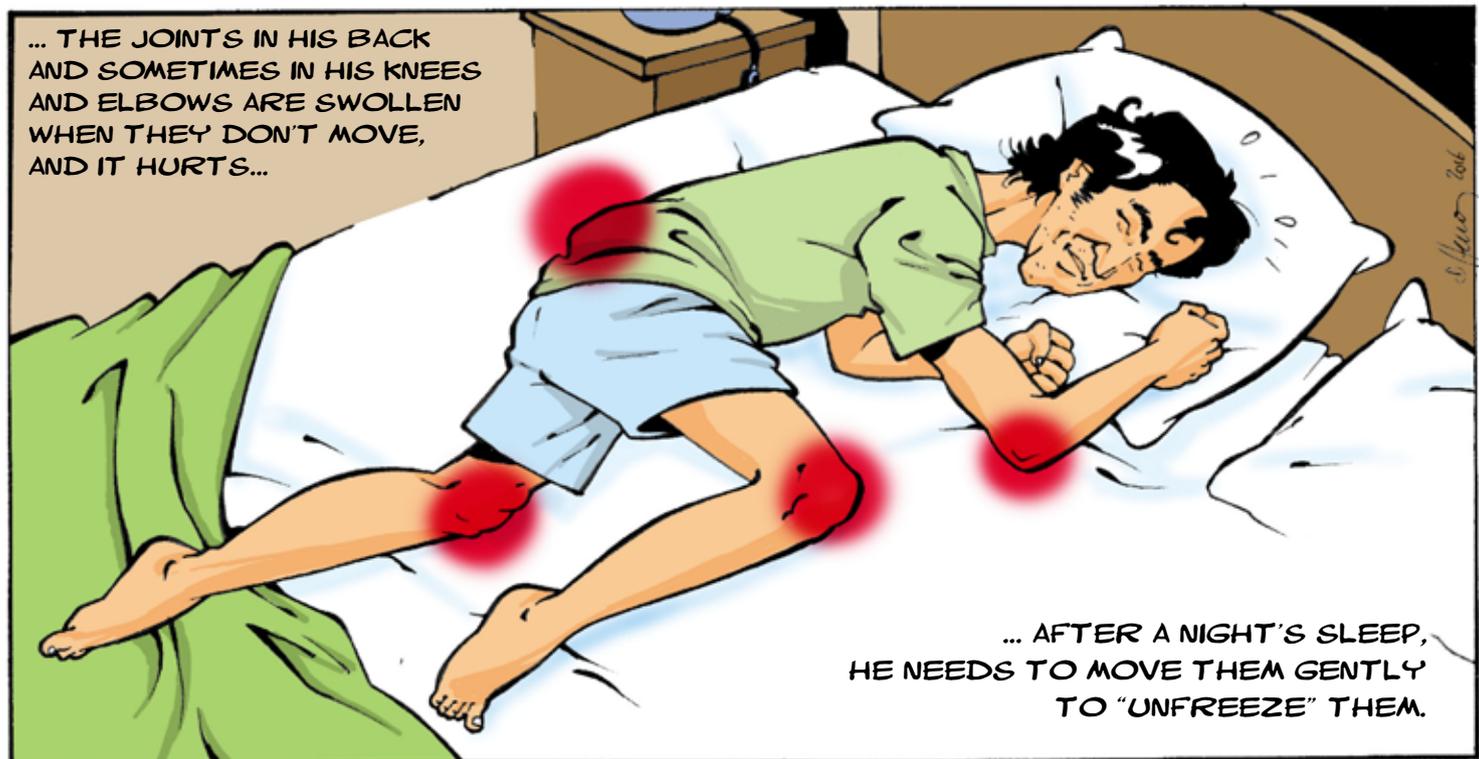
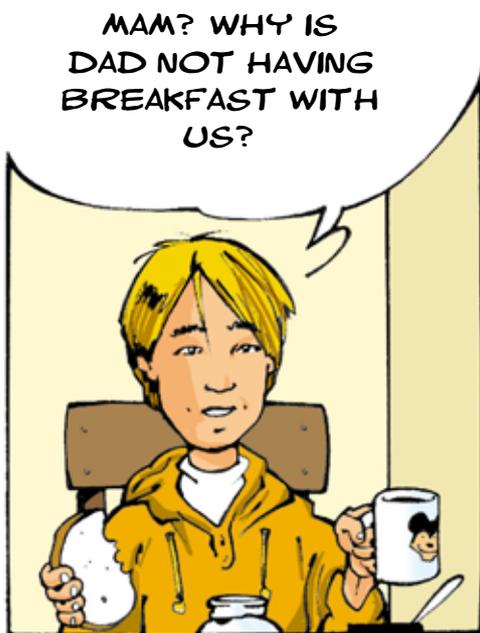
MAMMA, MAMMA,  
I GOT CAUGHT IN  
THE ROPES AT THE  
PLAYGROUND AND  
A CAT SHOWED US  
WHAT TO DO...



YAAAAAY,  
I DID IT!



# JUST LIKE TAI CHI



... AFTER A NIGHT'S SLEEP,  
HE NEEDS TO MOVE THEM GENTLY  
TO "UNFREEZE" THEM.



I'M OK TODAY,  
NOT TOO  
MUCH PAIN...



... I CAN EVEN  
TAKE YOU  
TO SCHOOL.



IT IS GOOD FOR ME  
TO MOVE, YOU KNOW I  
CAN WALK, BUT I DON'T  
FIND IT EASY TO RUN!



THAT EVENING...

LOOK AT THEIR  
SLOW MOVES.  
DO THEY HAVE A SIMILAR  
DISEASE AS YOU?



NO, THAT'S TAI CHI,  
A MARTIAL ART.  
WHAT I HAVE IS  
AN-KY-LO-SING  
SPON-DY-LI-TIS!



MAM, MAM, I SAW PEOPLE  
PRACTICING TAI CHI AND  
BECAUSE OF THAT I CAN  
REMEMBER THE NAME OF  
DAD'S DISEASE: ANKYLOSING  
SPONDYLITIS!



*Andy is ten years old and his father has ankylosing spondylitis, a painful condition that affects the back. This disease can impact family life, as shown in the two graphic stories in this booklet.*



### **Ankylosing spondylitis, a disease that affects family life**

Ankylosing spondylitis mainly affects the joints of the pelvis and back but can also affect the main joints of the limbs (hips, knees, ankles, elbows, wrists) and often the Achilles' tendon.

The main symptoms of the disease are pain, stiffness and fatigue. It develops in flare-ups followed by remissions. In the long term, the inflammation can cause the joints to ossify, causing loss of mobility and disabling spinal deformities. It may be accompanied by inflammation of the eyes, skin and intestines.

The first symptoms most commonly appear between the ages of 20 and 35. Although its intensity and development vary from one patient to the next, its symptoms and the restrictions and limitations it causes do affect family life in most cases.

It is important to tell your family and friends about this disease. The purpose of this booklet is to help explain the disease to children and enable you and them to talk about it.

For further information visit:

[www.spondylitis.ca](http://www.spondylitis.ca)

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