News Release: For Immediate Release
August 2004 National Healthy Bones Week

ADVICE ON PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF OSTEOPORISIS – JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

National Healthy Bones Week (1-7 August 2004) is an Australia-wide event that seeks to raise awareness of the impact of osteoporosis and to support consumers with information about prevention and management.

On **Wednesday 4th August**, as a special initiative to provide direct support to consumers Arthritis Victoria, in partnership with the Australian Rheumatology Association, Victorian Branch, is hosting a ***freecall Phone-In***, giving consumers an opportunity to **speak to a Bone and Joint Specialist** (rheumatologist or endocrinologist).

Dr Andrea Bendrups, 'Bone and Joint Specialist' and President of the Australian Rheumatology Association, Victorian Branch says, "***Often consumers are limited by geography but this freecall phone-in provides easy access to expert advice for anyone with osteoporosis or other musculoskeletal conditions. The service also gives consumers an opportunity to speak about their health in the privacy and comfort of their own homes. In providing the phone-in we are able to reach out to all Victorians– give us a call."***

Phone In Details:

Date: *Wednesday 4th August 2004* ***Time:*** *10am to 4.00pm*
Free call: ***1800 678 988*** *(land line only) – ask to speak to a rheumatologist*

The Healthy Bones message comes at a time when:

- **osteoporosis affects 2.1 million in the Australian community** (three quarters of whom are women);
- **healthcare costs of $1.9 billion per annum are attributable to osteoporosis** and
- **the condition places a heavy burden (68%) on hospitals and nursing homes.**

For further information regarding National Healthy Bones Week events, including seminars in regional and metropolitan Victoria, contact Arthritis Victoria toll free on 1800 242 141.

Media enquiries contact:

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Interviews can be arranged upon request

Arthritis VICTORIA
inc. OSTEOPOROSIS VICTORIA

Australian Rheumatology Association Victorian Branch