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## Investigating a Common, but Poorly Understood Type of Spine Arthritis—Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis (DISH)

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## Investigating a Common, but Poorly Understood Type of Spine Arthritis—Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis (DISH)

Arthritis-related musculoskeletal disorders are leading causes of pain and disability worldwide. **Diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH)**—the second most common type of arthritis—is characterised by irreversible formation of bridges (bone and calcified material) between the bones of the spine. DISH can lead to back pain and stiffness, and in severe cases, it can result in pinched nerves or cause difficulty swallowing food. It is estimated that ~15–25% of North Americans over 50 years of age live with this debilitating disorder (~2–3 million Canadians). However, the cause of the disorder is unknown and there are no effective treatments.

This poor knowledge and unmet clinical need underscore the value of my research that is designed to facilitate the development of treatments for DISH. By collaborating with patients, researchers, and clinicians, our multidisciplinary team is focused on identifying the early biological features of DISH and characterising its progression over time.



**Dale E. Fournier**

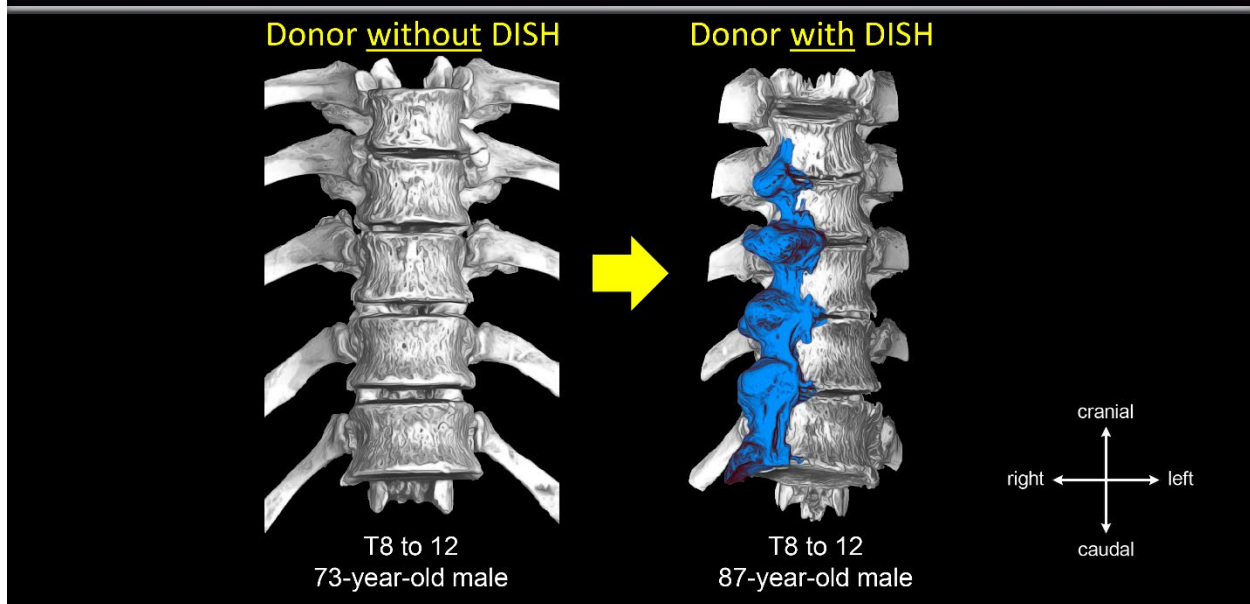
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### Diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH) of the spine



*Anterior view of the spine. Pseudocoloured in blue are characteristic bridges of DISH.*