



amputee
coalition®

ACNC27
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

FIRESIDE CONNECTIONS:

*where every story
finds its light* ♥



MARCH 15–17, 2027



**WESTGATE LAS VEGAS
RESORT & CASINO**

Save the Date!

SUMMER 2026

Amputee-Coalition.org

inMotion
LIVING WELL WITH LIMB LOSS AND LIMB DIFFERENCE

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inMotion
LIVING WELL WITH LIMB LOSS AND LIMB DIFFERENCE

Amputee-Coalition.org

GET OUT THERE

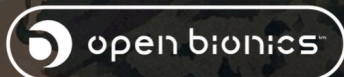
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Get out there with **Hero FLEX** and enjoy advanced, **lightweight socket comfort**, **cooling ventilation with soft custom 3D printed liner**, and integrated adjustment with **BOA™** tensioning dial. Combine your **Hero FLEX** with over **50 different terminal devices** to pursue your passions and achieve your potential. Learn more at openbionics.com.



openbionics.com



A “Fireside” Q and A with | Dr. Carmen Elliott, DHS, CAE

Every leader brings a unique perspective. As the Amputee Coalition welcomes its new President and CEO, Carmen Elliott, DHS, CAE, we wanted to introduce her to our community—not just through her professional background, but through the values and vision she'll bring to the organization.

Q: Welcome to the Amputee Coalition! What drew you to this role?

Carmen: Throughout my career, I've been passionate about organizations that make a meaningful difference in people's lives. The Amputee Coalition has an incredible history of advocacy, education, peer support, and community, and I was inspired by both its mission and the people behind it. This opportunity allows me to help strengthen an organization that has already transformed countless lives while working alongside a community that is resilient, innovative, and deeply committed to one another.

Q: Why did the Board choose you to lead the organization at this point in its history?

Carmen: That's a great question for our Board, but from my perspective, I believe they were looking for someone who could honor the organization's legacy while helping prepare it for the future. My experience has focused on strategic leadership, organizational growth, building strong partnerships, and creating sustainable systems that allow nonprofits and associations to expand their impact. Together, we'll continue building on the remarkable foundation that's already in place.

Q: What excites you most about joining the Amputee Coalition?

Carmen: The people. I've already been energized by the stories I've heard from individuals, volunteers, advocates, clinicians, and staff. The strength of this community is extraordinary. I'm excited to listen, learn, and work together to ensure that every person who has limb loss or limb difference knows they have a place here.

Q: As you begin listening and learning, what are your early priorities?

Carmen: My first priority is listening. I want to hear directly from the people we serve, our volunteers, partners, donors, and staff about what's working well and where we have opportunities to grow. Those conversations will help shape our priorities as we continue advancing advocacy, expanding access to resources, and ensuring the Amputee Coalition remains responsive to the evolving needs of our community.

Q: The Amputee Coalition celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. What does that milestone mean to you?

Carmen: Forty years represents thousands of lives touched through education, advocacy, research, and peer support. It's a moment to celebrate everything this community has accomplished while also looking ahead. We have an opportunity to build on that legacy, strengthen our impact, and ensure the next generation has even greater access to the support and resources they need.

Q: What message would you like to share with the Amputee Coalition community?

Carmen: Thank you for welcoming me. Whether you've been part of this community for decades or you're just beginning your journey, your experiences matter. I'm honored to join you, and I look forward to working together as we write the next chapter of the Amputee Coalition's story.



Thank you to the entire community for providing me with such a warm welcome!

Thank You!

Summer HEALTH & WELLNESS

STAYING SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND ACTIVE



Summer often means fuller calendars, more travel, outdoor events, and extra time being active. While the warmer weather can bring plenty of opportunities to get out and enjoy the season, it can also place additional stress on your body. Heat, humidity, and increased activity may affect your hydration, energy level, skin, and prosthetic fit. Taking a few simple precautions—and paying attention to how you feel—can help you stay safe and comfortable throughout the summer.

WATCH FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

It is easy to become overheated when you are busy, especially on hot or humid days. Headache, dizziness, nausea, weakness, muscle cramps, and heavy sweating can all be signs of heat exhaustion. When these symptoms appear, stop what you are doing, move to a cooler place, rest, and begin cooling down. Confusion, fainting, seizures, or a very high body temperature may be signs of heat stroke. Remember, heat stroke is a medical emergency, so call 911 if you or someone else experiences these symptoms.

KEEP HYDRATION WITHIN REACH

Your body can lose fluids quickly when you are sweating or spending time in the heat. Try to drink water regularly throughout the day instead of waiting until you feel very thirsty. Dry mouth, headache, fatigue, dizziness, dark-colored urine, and urinating less often may be signs that you need more fluids. Carrying a refillable water bottle can make it easier to stay on track while traveling or attending events. People who have fluid restrictions or certain medical conditions should continue following the guidance provided by their healthcare team.

GIVE YOUR SKIN EXTRA ATTENTION

Heat and sweat can build up inside a prosthetic socket, creating moisture and friction that may lead to irritation. Clean your residual limb each day with mild soap and water, dry it thoroughly, and take a few moments to inspect your skin. Watch for redness, blisters, sores, swelling, or areas that feel unusually tender. Clean your liners and other materials that touch your skin according to the instructions from your prosthetist or the manufacturer.

CHECK YOUR PROSTHETIC FIT

Sweating, activity, and changes in limb volume can affect how your prosthesis fits throughout the day. Bring extra prosthetic socks, sheaths, or other supplies when you will be away from home. Taking a short break to remove your prosthesis and dry your skin may help prevent irritation. Contact your prosthetist if you notice ongoing rubbing, looseness, pain, pressure, or skin changes that do not improve.

PLAN FOR ACTIVE DAYS

When possible, schedule outdoor activities during the cooler morning or evening hours. Wear lightweight clothing, look for shaded or air-conditioned areas, and give yourself permission to take breaks. Keeping water, sunscreen, cooling supplies, and prosthetic care items nearby can help you respond quickly when the temperature—or your comfort level—changes.

LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR BODY NEEDS

Summer is a great time for movement, connection, and new experiences, but staying active does not mean pushing through warning signs. Slow down when you need to, rest somewhere cool, and ask for help when something does not feel right. Small choices around hydration, cooling, skin care, and rest can help you feel more comfortable and confident while enjoying everything the season has to offer.

DISCOVER A RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

Help Advance Limb Loss and Limb Difference Research



Research plays an important role in improving care, expanding knowledge, and shaping the future of the limb loss and limb difference community. One of the most impactful ways to contribute is by participating in research studies. By taking part in a study, you can help researchers better understand the needs of our community and support future advances in care, technology, rehabilitation, and quality of life.

Explore current research opportunities to find studies that match your interests and eligibility. Your participation today can help improve outcomes for people who have limb loss or limb difference for years to come.

A PUBLICATION OF THE DETAILS

Published four times a year by

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A few current opportunities include:

- Bionic and Robotic Prostheses: Identifying Bioethical Concerns from Key Groups to Improve Development and Clinical Translation Approaches
- Perspectives on Prosthetic Data Sharing and Privacy
- Analysis Of Access and Barriers to Care in Families with Child Amputees
- How do Adults with Lower Extremity Amputations Experience Participation in Team-Based Adaptive Sports as a Form of Leisure Participation
- The lived experience of children with congenital upper limb differences as they navigate the social context: A phenomenological study
- Perceptions of Mattering in Adaptive Sports
- Evaluation of an Implantable Intramuscular Device to Control a Myoelectric Prosthesis
- Virtual Reality Treatment of Phantom Leg Pain
- Upper Limb Prosthesis Use and Performance Survey
- Understanding How Powered Componentry Impacts Transfemoral Amputee Gait

LEARN MORE

Visit the Volunteer Research Opportunities web page at
Amputee-Coalition.org/volunteer-research-opportunities
for the most up-to-date listings.

Fireside Connections: Where Every Story Finds Its Light

Get ready to reconnect, recharge, and experience the energy of the **Amputee Coalition National Conference! ACNC27 returns to the Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino March 15–17, 2027**, bringing our community together for three unforgettable days of learning, celebration, and connection.

Next year's theme, Fireside Connections: Where Every Story Finds Its Light, reflects what makes this conference so special—the stories we share, the relationships we build, and the moments that remind us we are part of something bigger.

Registration, hotel reservations, and scholarship applications will open in October. Session and interactive clinic proposals are being accepted now through September 1, offering community members and professionals the opportunity to help shape the ACNC27 experience.

Wondering about registration prices, scholarships, hotel accommodations, meals, travel, mobility equipment, or Certified Peer Visitor Training? We have gathered the answers to help you plan ahead and feel ready when registration opens. The countdown to ACNC27 has officially begun. Read the frequently asked questions, mark your calendar, and start planning your return to Las Vegas!



RECOMMENDED TRAVEL



Arriving on
Sunday, March 14



Departing after
4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17

Save the Date!

ACNC27 IS HEADING BACK TO LAS VEGAS!



PLAN AHEAD FOR ACNC27

Your Conference Questions Answered

We're excited to welcome you back to Las Vegas, Nevada, for the 2027 Amputee Coalition National Conference (ACNC27). As we prepare for registration to open this fall, we've gathered answers to some of the most frequently asked questions to help you plan ahead.

When does conference registration open?

Conference registration opens this October. Watch your email and follow the Amputee Coalition on social media for the official registration announcement.

When should I book my hotel?

Our official room block at the Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino will also open in October. This year, we're introducing an updated reservation process to help make booking accessible accommodations even easier. More details will be shared when reservations become available.

What are the registration prices?

Person Living with Limb Loss or Limb Difference

- Early Bird (through January 4): \$299
- Regular Registration: \$399

Family Members and Care Partners

- Early Bird (through January 4): \$199
- Regular Registration: \$299

Register early to receive the best available pricing.

I'm traveling from outside the United States. Can I attend?

Yes. International attendees are welcome. Please note that the Amputee Coalition cannot provide invitation letters or assist with visas or travel documentation. Attendees are responsible for obtaining any necessary travel documents.



Why is the conference being held in March?

After listening to attendee feedback following our 2026 conference, we moved the conference to March to better meet the needs of our community.

The new timing offers:

- More comfortable weather in Las Vegas
- Better opportunities to enjoy the destination outside conference hours
- Alignment with Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month activities
- A stronger kickoff to the year's advocacy and community initiatives

Why are we returning to the Westgate?

Our goal is always to provide the best possible conference experience. Attendees consistently praised the Westgate's accessibility, staff support, accommodations, meeting spaces, and dining experience. Returning allows us to build on that success while continuing to improve areas identified through attendee feedback.

For 2027, we're already working with the hotel on enhancements, including:

- Easier transportation between meeting spaces and guest rooms
- An improved accessible room reservation process
- Reduced long carpeted walking routes where possible
- Additional accessibility improvements throughout the conference

Will mobility equipment be available?

We're currently working to finalize mobility equipment rentals and transportation options for attendees. Additional details will be announced before registration opens.



Are scholarships available?

Yes. Scholarship applications will open alongside registration this October. We'll once again offer:

- Registration Scholarships covering conference registration and official conference events
- Full Support Scholarships that include registration, hotel accommodations, and travel assistance for eligible applicants

Important Dates:

- Applications Open: October 1
- Applications Close: December 6
- Award Notifications: December 18

Will there be CPV Training?

Yes. Certified Peer Visitor (CPV) Training will once again be offered as a pre-conference event on Sunday, March 14. Registration details and application information will be released this fall.

What meals are included?

Your conference registration includes:

- Monday breakfast buffet
- Monday buffet lunch
- Monday evening Exhibit Hall celebration with heavy hors d'oeuvres
- Tuesday breakfast buffet
- Tuesday plated lunch during Main Stage programming
- Wednesday breakfast buffet
- Wednesday plated lunch during Main Stage programming

Attendees are responsible for their own dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, providing an opportunity to explore Las Vegas and enjoy everything the city has to offer.

What if I'm interested in exhibiting or sponsoring ACNC27?

Great. Our 2027 Exhibitor and Sponsor Prospectus will be released later this summer and will include:

- Sponsorship opportunities
- Exhibitor packages
- Small business opportunities
- Important deadlines
- New ways to engage with attendees

We can't wait to welcome you to ACNC27 - Fireside Connections: Where Every Story Finds Its Light. Stay tuned. Registration opens this October, and we look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas.

Can I still submit a presentation or clinic?

Absolutely. Applications to present a session or lead an interactive clinic are currently open. Submissions close September 1, and applicants will be notified by October 1. Please visit our website for more information.



KEY DATES



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Session & interactive clinic proposals due
September 1, 2026



OPENING DAY

Scholarship applications open	October 1, 2026
Conference registration opens	October 1, 2026
Hotel reservations open	October 1, 2026



CONFERENCE WEEK

Recommended arrival	Sunday, March 14, 2027
Conference dates	March 15–17, 2027
Recommended departure	After 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17, 2027

CPV TRAINING |

Get started on CPV Training
Before ACNC27!



Do You Love Helping Others?

Apply Today!

There's still time to become a Certified Peer Visitor (CPV) and make a meaningful difference in the lives of people navigating limb loss or limb difference. If you've been thinking about getting involved, now is the perfect time to take get started.

Our next virtual CPV training is just around the corner, making it a great opportunity to get started! Through the training, you'll gain the skills, resources, and confidence to provide one-on-one encouragement and support to individuals and families who can benefit from someone who understands their journey. Your lived experience can offer hope, connection, and reassurance where it's needed most.

Apply to one of our remaining virtual CPV trainings of 2026:

Monday and Tuesday | August 24 & 25 | 4:00 – 8:00 PM Eastern

Saturday and Sunday | September 12 & 13 | 12:00 – 4:00 PM Eastern

Tuesday and Wednesday | September 22 & 23 | 4:00 – 8:00 PM Eastern

Saturday and Sunday | October 3 & 4 | 12:00 – 4:00 PM Eastern

Saturday and Sunday | October 17 & 18 | 10:00 – 2:00 PM Eastern

Saturday and Sunday | November 14 & 15 | 12:00 – 4:00 PM Eastern

For more information, please visit the link below or scan the QR code:

<https://acsupport.amputee-coalition.org/acton/media/46977/cpv-training>

SEBCM NEWS |

28x28 Update: Moving for Change

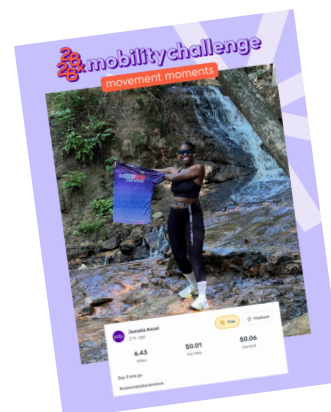


Throughout Disability Pride Month, So Every BODY Can Move's 28x28 Mobility Challenge brought the community together around one goal: making movement a human right. From July 1–28, participants committed to moving for 28 minutes each day while raising awareness and support for access to prosthetic, orthotic, and mobility devices needed for physical activity and well-being.

This year, 1,182 participants walked, rolled, ran, rode, swam, hiked, exercised, and shared everyday movement moments from across the country. Together, the community logged more than 62,000 miles and raised over \$194,000 in support of growing the So Every BODY Can Move (SEBCM) movement.

The impact extends far beyond the 28x28 Mobility Challenge itself. The awareness, engagement, and funds raised strengthen 47 state coalitions and counting, equipping local advocates with the resources and support needed to build their coalitions, engage policymakers, and advance legislation.

This work is helping modernize insurance coverage and redefine what is considered medically necessary so people with disabilities can access more than one device to live active, healthy, and independent lives.



SEBCM | 2026 Challenge Highlights

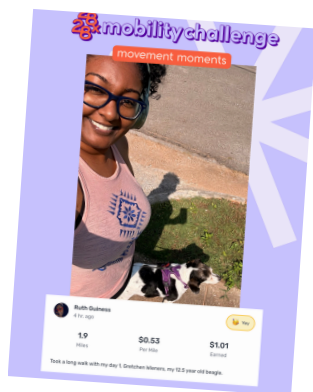


Throughout the 28x28 Mobility Challenge, advocates from across the country shared the personal stories behind the movement, including Shane Harvey, a below-knee amputee and member of the SEBCM California coalition. For years, Shane ran and played sports with a prosthesis not designed for those activities because his insurance would not cover an activity-specific one. After purchasing a running blade out of pocket, Shane moved closer to his goal of competing in the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympic Games. But his advocacy is about something even bigger: ensuring future generations do not face the same financial and physical barriers to movement. Stories like Shane's are why SEBCM is working to pass legislation in 28 states by the LA 2028 Paralympic Games, creating a pathway toward legislation in all 50 states and ultimately, federal reform.



Shane Harvey

Thank you to everyone who participated, donated, sponsored, volunteered, advocated, or cheered the community on. Every mile moved and every dollar raised helped move this work forward. Together, we are building a future where every BODY has access to the mobility care they need to live the life they choose and achieve their goals.





*“This technology has
changed my life.”
- Kevin*

WHAT IS PROCLAIM™ DRG THERAPY?

Proclaim™ DRG Therapy relieves pain at the source by interrupting pain signals before they reach the spinal cord. Relieving the burden of chronic pain, Proclaim™ DRG Therapy has been clinically proven to provide significant pain relief, improve physical function, and enhance quality of life.¹

Eligible patients can trial the therapy to see if it provides meaningful pain relief and allows for improved ability to perform daily activities.



**PROCLAIM™ DRG THERAPY
REDUCES PAIN AN AVERAGE OF
81.4% AT 12 MONTHS.¹**

A RESILIENT JOURNEY TO RELIEF

In 1979, Kevin suffered a severe foot injury while serving in the Navy. The injury never healed properly and left him in extreme pain. To find relief, Kevin underwent an amputation of his right leg below the knee. During recovery, he experienced Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) type II – “throbbing, burning pain, like a thousand wasps stinging in a concentrated area.” With neuroma complications, his pain became worse than ever.

“I really needed a treatment that would work,” Kevin said. “This pain was ruining my life and the lives of those around me.”

After consulting his neurosurgeon, Kevin learned he was a candidate for Proclaim™ DRG Therapy, a neurostimulation technology that targets the dorsal root ganglion (DRG) and interrupts pain signals before they reach the spinal cord.

“I felt good about getting the [DRG] system placed, but in recovery I told my wife, ‘It’s not working, Judie.’ Then I heard, ‘Alright, let’s turn this on,’ and the pain was gone.”

Since then, Kevin’s life has become much more active. “Judie and I hike the mountains, bike the trails, work my wood shop, and ski the slopes. I am also part of the local National Ski Patrol team.”

“It was exhausting living with that kind of pain. I think the Proclaim™ DRG neurostimulation system has given me back my life and kept me out of a wheelchair. This technology has changed my life. That’s way cool.”



READY TO LEARN MORE?

SCAN THE QR CODE TO EXPLORE PROCLAIM™ DRG THERAPY AND DISCOVER IF IT’S RIGHT FOR YOU.

This testimonial relays an account of an individual’s response to the treatment. This patient’s account is genuine, typical, and documented. However, it does not provide any indication, guide, warranty or guarantee as to the response other persons may have to the treatment. Responses to the treatment discussed can and do vary and are specific to the individual patient.

These materials are not intended to replace your doctor’s advice or information. For any questions or concerns you may have regarding the medical procedures, devices and/or your personal health, please discuss these with your physician.

*Quality of life observed in other endpoints in the ACCURATE study

1. Deer TR, Levy RM, Kramer J, et al. Dorsal root ganglion stimulation yielded higher treatment success rate for complex regional pain syndrome and causalgia at 3 and 12 months: a randomized comparative trial. Pain. 2017;158(4):669-681. doi:10.1097/j.pain.0000000000000814 These materials are not intended to replace your doctor’s advice or information. For any questions or concerns you may have regarding the medical procedures, devices and/or your personal health, please discuss these with your physician.

Risk Information: The placement of a neurostimulation system requires surgery, which exposes patients to certain risks. Complications such as infection, swelling, bruising, and possibly the loss of strength or use in an affected limb or muscle group (e.g., paralysis) are possible. Additional risks such as undesirable changes in stimulation may occur over time. Be sure to talk to your doctor about the possible risks associated with neurostimulation.

Rx Only

Indications for Use: Spinal column stimulation via epidural and intra-spinal lead access to the dorsal root ganglion as an aid in the management of moderate to severe chronic intractable* pain of the lower limbs in adult patients with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) types I and II.**

*Study subjects from the ACCURATE clinical study had failed to achieve adequate pain relief from at least two prior pharmacologic treatments from at least two different drug classes and continued their pharmacologic therapy during the clinical study.

**Please note that in 1994, a consensus group of pain medicine experts gathered by the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) reviewed diagnostic criteria and agreed to rename reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD) and causalgia, as complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) types I and II, respectively. CRPS II (causalgia) is defined as a painful condition arising from damage to a nerve. Nerve damage may result from traumatic or surgical nerve injury. Changes secondary to neuropathic pain seen in CRPS I (RSD) may be present, but are not a diagnostic requirement for CRPS II (causalgia).

Contraindications: Patients who are unable to operate the system, who are poor surgical risks. Patients who have failed to receive effective pain relief during trial stimulation.

Warnings/Precautions: Diathermy therapy, implanted cardiac systems or other active implantable devices, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT), electrosurgery devices, ultrasonic scanning equipment, therapeutic radiation, explosive and flammable gases, theft detectors and metal screening devices, lead movement, operation of machinery, equipment and vehicles, pediatric use, pregnancy, and case damage.

Adverse Effects: Unpleasant sensations, changes in stimulation, stimulation in unwanted places, lead or implant migration, epidural hemorrhage, hematoma, infection, spinal cord compression, or paralysis from placement of a lead in the epidural space, cerebrospinal fluid leakage, tissue damage or nerve damage, paralysis, weakness, clumsiness, numbness, sensory loss, or pain below the level of the implant, pain where needle was inserted or at the electrode site or at IPG site, seroma at implant site, headache, allergic or rejection response, battery failure and/or leakage. User’s Guide must be reviewed for detailed disclosure.

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‡ Indicates a third-party trademark, which is property of its respective owner.

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Expecting More | Navigating Pregnancy and Parenthood with Limb Loss and Limb Difference

No two pregnancies are the same, and that was one of the most reassuring messages shared during "Expecting More: Navigating Pregnancy and Parenthood with Limb Loss and Limb Difference" at ACNC26.

Presented by Adrienne Hill, Rebecca Spragg, Sophia Marinucci, Ariel Cabana, and Whitney Doyle, the session blended clinical expertise with the experiences of parents who have been there. Rather than focusing on obstacles, the conversation centered on preparation, flexibility, and practical solutions that help parents feel confident throughout pregnancy and into life with a new baby.

Pregnancy Changes More Than Your Baby Bump

Many attendees were surprised to learn how early pregnancy can begin affecting prosthetic fit and mobility. As your body changes, your center of gravity shifts, hips widen, posture changes, and hormones increase muscle and ligament laxity. Changes in volume and nerve compression may affect how your prosthesis fits and functions.

ACNC26 EVENT RECAP

The presenters emphasized that it's completely normal to need multiple adjustments throughout pregnancy, including:

- Socket and alignment adjustments
- Changes in sock management
- Temporary secondary suspension systems
- More frequent visits with your prosthetist

The biggest takeaway was simple: don't wait until you're uncomfortable. If something feels different, speak up early.



Document Everything

One topic many people hadn't considered was how pregnancy can affect future insurance coverage. If your prosthesis follows a two- to five-year replacement schedule, pregnancy-related body changes don't automatically qualify you for a replacement.

The panel encouraged attendees to document changes with their prosthetist throughout pregnancy by:

- Tracking weight changes
- Recording residual limb measurements
- Taking photos of limb volume changes
- Keeping notes about changes in prosthetic fit or comfort

Having this documentation can make a significant difference if additional adjustments or replacement become medically necessary later.

Think Beyond the Delivery Day

Preparing for a baby also means preparing for everyday life after the baby arrives. The presenters encouraged attendees to walk through daily routines before delivery and ask practical questions like:

- Does my wheelchair or mobility device fit through every doorway?
- Is my prosthesis waterproof, or do I need another plan for bath time?
- Can I safely reach the baby bathtub, or would a tub on the floor work better?
- How will I carry the baby while moving around the house?
- Will lifting a growing baby and car seat change the demands on my prosthesis?

One important reminder was to discuss these new physical demands with your prosthetist—even if they don't ask first. The added weight of carrying a baby or infant car seat can place new stress on prosthetic components, and reinforcing or adjusting them ahead of time may help prevent equipment failures.

Practice Before Baby Arrives

Rather than waiting until the baby is home, the panel suggested practicing everyday tasks ahead of time. Some ideas included:

- Try several strollers before purchasing one.
- Practice installing and lifting different car seats.
- Consider a rotating car seat if it makes transfers easier.
- Look at bedside bassinets for nighttime feedings.
- Consider over-the-shoulder bottle holders and nursing pillows with straps.
- Buy a few baby outfits one size larger to make dressing easier.
- Choose clothing with snaps or features that simplify diaper changes.

Small adjustments can make everyday routines much easier during those first few months.

Build Your Team Early

The discussion also emphasized planning beyond medical appointments.

Before your baby arrives, consider:

- Reviewing your insurance benefits.
- Understanding your FMLA, maternity or paternity leave, workplace accommodations, and disability benefits.
- Talking with coworkers who recently had children about what they learned.
- If possible, staggering maternity and paternity leave so support lasts longer.
- Asking your primary care provider for referrals to physical and/or occupational therapy if additional support would be helpful during pregnancy or postpartum recovery.

Just as importantly, keep your healthcare team connected. Your obstetric provider, prosthetist, primary care physician, physical therapist, and occupational therapist each play an important role throughout your pregnancy and recovery.

Remember: Ask For Help When You Need It!



Give Yourself Permission to Accept Help

The final conversation focused on something many new parents overlook—support. Recovery often includes increased swelling, fatigue, and changes in limb volume for several weeks after delivery. Planning for those early weeks can make a tremendous difference. The panel recommended:

- Spacing visits from family and friends over the first six weeks instead of the first weekend.
- Setting up meal trains or other practical support ahead of time.
- Clearly communicating your needs with loved ones.
- Remembering that people who have watched you adapt for years may assume you don't need help—not because they don't care, but because they've seen how capable you've always been.

Sometimes simply telling people what would be helpful gives them permission to show up in meaningful ways.

The Biggest Takeaway

Perhaps the most powerful message from the session was that there is no single "right" way to navigate pregnancy or parenthood.

Every family will find different routines. Every parent will make different choices. Every body will adapt differently.

Preparing ahead, asking questions, documenting changes, staying connected with your healthcare team, and giving yourself permission to adjust along the way can make the journey a little smoother.

Because preparing for a baby isn't about having every answer—it's about giving yourself the confidence, support, and flexibility to enjoy one of life's greatest adventures.



Super, Sepsis, and Antibiotics

What Everyone Should Know

September is Sepsis Awareness Month!

Sometimes the biggest health threats aren't the ones we hear about every day. At ACNC26, Dr. Karin Molander, Katy Grainger, and Emily Wheeler led an eye-opening conversation about superbugs, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and sepsis—topics that affect millions of people each year but often go unrecognized until it's too late.

For many attendees, the session wasn't just about antibiotics. It was about understanding how a seemingly minor infection can become something much more serious and why paying attention to your body matters.

Why Superbugs Matter

Antibiotics have changed medicine, making everything from routine surgeries to joint replacements much safer. But over time, some bacteria have become resistant to the medications designed to kill them. These drug-resistant bacteria, often called superbugs, are becoming more common around the world.

Globally, antimicrobial resistance is associated with nearly 5 million deaths each year, and experts estimate that number could rise dramatically if new treatments aren't developed and antibiotics continue to be overused or misused.

For people who have limb loss or limb difference—particularly those living with diabetes, healing wounds, or recovering from surgery—infection prevention is especially important.

ACNC26 EVENT RECAP

Sepsis Can Start Small

One of the most powerful moments of the session came from Katy Grainger, who shared her own experience surviving sepsis.

Her story reinforced something many people don't realize: sepsis doesn't always begin with a major injury.

Sometimes it starts with something as simple as a small cut, an insect bite, a blister, a surgical incision, or another minor wound that becomes infected.

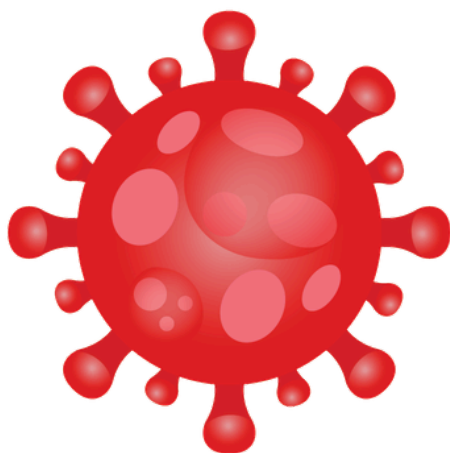
One of the presenters emphasized something that stuck with many in the audience: sometimes the first sign is simply that someone seems "a little off." They may seem unusually tired, confused, have chills, feel generally unwell, or just not be acting like themselves. Those subtle changes—especially when paired with any type of infection or recent injury—should never be ignored.

In the United States, at least 1.7 million adults develop sepsis each year, and more than 350,000 die or are discharged to hospice as a result. Early recognition and treatment save lives.

Trust Your Instincts

The session wasn't about creating fear. It was about recognizing when something deserves a closer look.

If you or someone you love has an infection—or even a small wound—and suddenly seems much sicker than expected, don't wait to see if it improves.



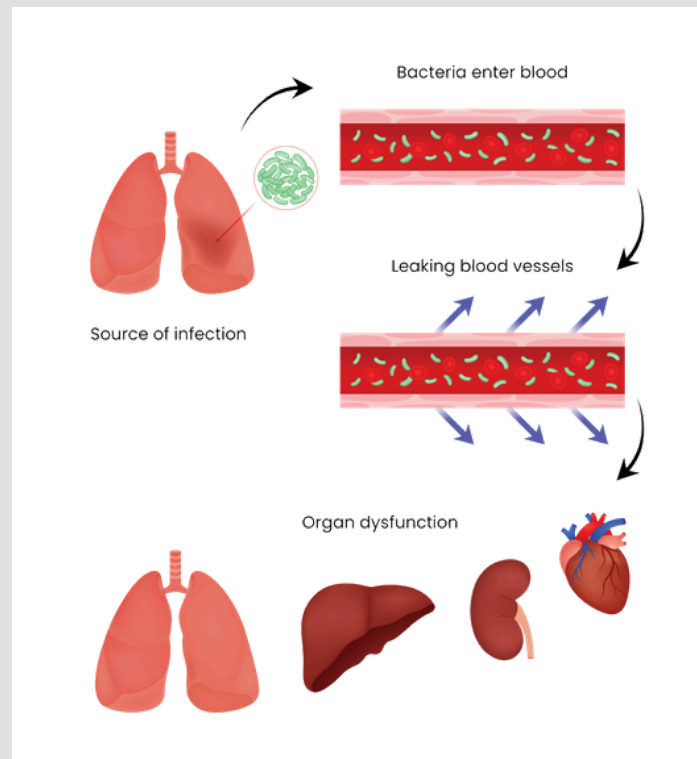
—SEPTEMBER IS—
SEPSIS
AWARENESS MONTH

When in doubt, seek medical attention.

If you're at higher risk because of diabetes, a weakened immune system, recent surgery, limb loss, or another chronic health condition, don't hesitate to ask your healthcare team whether sepsis protocols should be considered. Starting treatment early can make a significant difference.

Five Takeaways from the Session

- Superbugs are making some infections harder to treat, making prevention and responsible antibiotic use more important than ever.
- Even a small cut, blister, bite, or wound can sometimes lead to a serious infection.
- Sepsis doesn't always look dramatic at first—sometimes a person simply seems "off," unusually tired, confused, or much sicker than expected.
- If an infection is getting worse or something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts and seek medical care.
- If you're at increased risk, ask your healthcare team about sepsis protocols and whether sepsis should be considered as part of your evaluation.



The session reminded attendees that awareness isn't about expecting the worst—it's about recognizing when something isn't right and acting early. For many in the room, it was one of those presentations that changed the way they'll look at infections going forward, not only for themselves but for the people they love.

**To learn more, please visit
the Sepsis Alliance at:**

<https://Sepsis.Org>

Sepsis is your body's life-threatening response to an infection. It can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death—especially if not recognized and treated right away.



KNOW THE SIGNS

Sepsis can look different in each person. Common signs may include:



FEVER OR CHILLS

Temperature higher or lower than normal



CHANGES IN HEART RATE OR PULSE

Unusually fast OR unusually slow, or a weak pulse



DIFFICULTY BREATHING

Shortness of breath



CONFUSION OR DISORIENTATION

New or worsening confusion



EXTREME TIREDNESS

Feeling very weak or fatigued



CLAMMY OR SWEATY SKIN

Skin may feel cool or mottled



REDUCED URINE OUTPUT

Urinating much less than usual



INFECTION THAT IS GETTING WORSE

Redness, swelling, pain, or drainage from a wound or other infection site



Some people may not have a fever. Trust your instincts. If you or someone you care about shows signs of sepsis, **seek medical help right away.**



ACT FAST. IT CAN SAVE A LIFE.

Sepsis can get worse very quickly.

If you suspect sepsis,



CALL 911

or get emergency care immediately.

Early treatment makes a big difference.



THE FACTS



Sepsis affects millions of people each year. In the United States, at least 1.7 million adults develop sepsis annually.

Source: CDC (2024)



At least 350,000 adults in the U.S. who develop sepsis die during hospitalization or are discharged to hospice each year.

Source: CDC (2024)



Sepsis is a global health problem. It is a leading cause of death in hospitals worldwide.

Source: World Health Organization (2020)



REDUCE YOUR RISK

- Wash your hands often.
- Keep cuts and wounds clean.
- Stay up to date on vaccines.
- Seek care for infections early.



SEPSIS CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE.

People of all ages can get sepsis. Older adults and people with chronic conditions or weakened immune systems may be at higher risk. You know your body best—don't wait.



TIME MATTERS

The sooner sepsis is treated, the better the chances of survival and recovery.

Media and Limb Loss

Why Representation Matters

Before someone ever meets a prosthetist or begins rehabilitation, they have often already formed expectations about what life with limb loss will look like. Those expectations rarely come from a healthcare provider. Instead, they are shaped by Google searches, social media, advertisements, clinic websites, and the stories portrayed in the media.

At the 52nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists (AAOP) in Nashville, Tennessee, researchers explored how those images influence the rehabilitation journey. Their findings sparked an important conversation about representation, expectations, and the stories people encounter after limb loss.

Presented by Lisa M. Abernethy, MSPO, CPO, LPO (Baylor College of Medicine O&P Program), Alexandra Capellini, MD, MSCR (University of Michigan), Trevor LeMaster, CPO, MSOP (New Life Brace and Limb), and Silvana Seidita, MSOP (Prosthetic Laboratories), the session examined whether the way limb loss is portrayed online reflects the community it represents.

The Images We See Shape Expectations

The researchers analyzed prosthetic manufacturer websites, clinic marketing materials, and social media, then compared those images with real-world population data.

Although representation has improved over time, it still does not fully reflect the diversity of people living with limb loss. Older adults, women, people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and individuals using more common prosthetic components appeared less frequently than expected based on the actual population. At first glance, those differences may not seem significant. However, they can have a lasting impact on someone beginning their rehabilitation journey. For many people, the first images they see help answer a deeply personal question: "What will my life look like?"

Between Two Extremes

One theme surfaced repeatedly throughout the presentation. People searching online are often presented with one of two narratives. They either see an elite Paralympic athlete accomplishing extraordinary feats or someone taking their very first steps after limb loss. Both stories have value, but neither reflects the reality for most people.

Most individuals build lives somewhere in between. They go to work, raise families, travel, spend time with friends, volunteer, exercise, pursue hobbies, and manage the routines of everyday life. Those stories matter because they offer a picture that feels both hopeful and attainable.

When Inspiration Becomes Expectation

The researchers also explored how different images influenced the people viewing them. Among the 106 survey participants, only 17 percent of respondents with limb difference felt the images accurately reflected their own experiences. At the same time, 63 percent agreed that the general public often views people with limb loss as helpless.

Another finding stood out. After viewing an image of a Paralympic sprinter, 81 percent of participants with limb difference reported wishing they could physically accomplish more.

The presenters emphasized that inspirational stories can be powerful motivators. However, they can also create unrealistic expectations if people begin to believe that those achievements represent the standard they should meet during rehabilitation. Recovery is not one-size-fits-all. Every person's goals, abilities, and circumstances are different, and success cannot be defined by a single activity or level of performance.

Representation Shapes More Than Rehabilitation

The discussion extended beyond the rehabilitation process itself.

Survey participants, regardless of whether they had limb difference, generally agreed that people without limb loss often have an incomplete understanding of what daily life with limb loss actually involves. Those perceptions can influence workplace expectations, social interactions, healthcare conversations, and even the way friends and family offer support. The images people see shape more than individual expectations. They also shape how society understands disability and limb loss.

Looking Forward

The session concluded with an encouraging message. Representation is improving, but there is still more work to do. Showing people of different ages, backgrounds, activity levels, and life experiences creates a more complete picture of what life with limb loss can look like. It allows people entering rehabilitation to see possibilities that feel realistic while helping the public develop a broader understanding of the limb loss community. There is no single path after limb loss. There is no single way to move, work, raise a family, participate in sports, or build a meaningful life.

The more authentically those stories are told, the more likely someone beginning their own journey will see themselves reflected in them. Not through an idealized image, but through the many different ways people continue to thrive on their own terms.

It Takes a Team

Supporting Success in Adaptive Sports

Adaptive sports create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to stay active, challenge themselves, and experience the connection that comes from being part of a team. For some, that means trying a new activity for the first time. For others, it means competing on the national or international stage.

At the 52nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists (AAOP) in Nashville, Tennessee, one educational session focused on what happens behind the scenes to help athletes reach those goals. The Role of O&P and the Interdisciplinary Team in Adaptive Sport, led by Eric M. Lamberg, EdD, PT, CPed, with James Pierre-Glaude, PT, DPT, EdD, ATC, OCS, CSCS; Kiley L. Armstrong, MS, MPO, CPO; Danielle Potemri, MPO, CPO; and Theresa Berner, MOT, OTRL, ATP, explored how collaboration helps athletes stay healthy, improve performance, and continue participating in the sports they love.

Using the American Amputee Soccer Association (AASA) as an example, the presenters showed that success rarely depends on a single piece of equipment or one healthcare professional. Instead, it comes from a team of people working together to support the athlete.

Looking Beyond the Prosthesis

The session encouraged clinicians to shift the way they approach conversations with athletes. Rather than beginning with, "What device are you using?" a more meaningful question might be, "What are you hoping to do, and how can we help you get there safely?"

That simple change puts the athlete's goals at the center of the conversation.

For one person, success may mean making a local recreational team. For another, it could be qualifying for international competition. Someone else may simply want to return to a favorite activity after limb loss.

Whatever the goal, the focus remains on helping the athlete succeed instead of defining them by the equipment they use.

Every Sport Has Different Demands

No two sports ask the body to move in exactly the same way, and prosthetic or orthotic care has to reflect those differences.

Sprinting, jumping, cutting, swimming, cycling, and skiing each place unique demands on the body. Those differences influence everything from component selection and alignment to training plans and injury prevention.

Adaptive soccer provides a good example. Field players compete using forearm crutches instead of a prosthesis, placing greater demands on the shoulders, arms, core, and cardiovascular system. Goalkeepers with upper limb differences face an entirely different set of physical challenges.

Because every athlete moves differently, every athlete benefits from an individualized approach.

Recovery Is Part of Training

Performance may happen during competition, but progress often happens during recovery. The presenters emphasized that athletes who prioritize recovery are often able to train more consistently, lower their risk of injury, and stay involved in their sport longer. Recovery strategies discussed during the session included:

- Mobility and flexibility exercises
- Manual therapy
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Proper nutrition and hydration
- Compression
- Aquatic therapy
- Mindfulness and stress management

Recovery is more than bouncing back after practice or competition. It's an essential part of preparing for the next opportunity to move.

Adaptive and Inclusive Sports: What's the Difference?

The session also clarified two terms that are often confused.

Adaptive sports are designed specifically for athletes who have disabilities and may include modified rules, specialized equipment, or classification systems.

Inclusive sports bring athletes who do and do not have disabilities together to participate in the same activity or competition.

Both approaches expand access to sports and create meaningful opportunities for people to stay active, build confidence, and connect with others.

It Truly Takes a Team

Supporting an adaptive athlete involves far more than what happens on game day. Healthcare professionals may assist with prosthetic or orthotic design, rehabilitation, injury prevention, equipment recommendations, athlete classification, travel preparation, and ongoing communication with coaches and trainers. When those pieces work together, athletes can spend less time worrying about logistics and more time focusing on their sport.

Whether someone is stepping onto the field for the first time or representing their country on the international stage, the goal remains the same: helping athletes participate safely, confidently, and for years to come.

As adaptive sports continue to grow, so does the need for collaborative care that recognizes the whole athlete. When clinicians, coaches, equipment specialists, and athletes work together, the result is about more than improved performance. It creates opportunities for people to pursue the sports, activities, and experiences that matter most to them.



Thank You To Our Partners And Sponsors

We're grateful for the partners who help strengthen the work of the Amputee Coalition and support our national programs throughout the year. Their commitment helps us share resources, elevate community voices, and expand the reach of inMotion.



AtriCure – Patron National Sponsor: AtriCure champions education and outreach, helping ensure individuals and families have the information they need when navigating healthcare decisions. <https://www.atricure.com/>



Phantom Neuro – Patron National Sponsor: Restoring intuitive, multi-degree-of-freedom control for individuals with upper and lower limb differences, improving physical function, mental health, and independence. <https://phantomneuro.com/>



AOPA – Conference Sponsor: AOPA's partnership strengthens our national conference experience, creating space for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of practical knowledge across the O&P profession. <https://aopanet.org/>

JOIN US IN CREATING A STRONGER FUTURE: Partner with the Amputee Coalition

The Amputee Coalition is committed to serving more than 5.6 million people in the U.S. who have limb loss or limb difference. Through vital programs and services, we provide support, education, and advocacy to ensure that every individual has access to the resources they need to thrive.

Contact us today for partnership opportunities!



HOME-BASED RESEARCH STUDY ON PHANTOM LIMB PAIN

Join our research study using home-based Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation with Somatosensory Training for phantom limb pain

- 13 weeks, 23 online sessions
- Earn up to \$345 for your participation

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Recruitment:

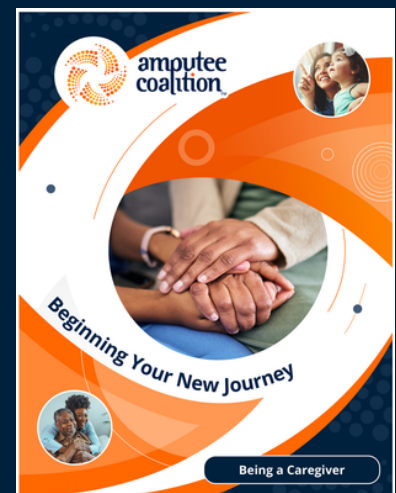
- ≥ 18 years old
- Have a limb amputation
- Experiencing pain over the amputated limb

Contact us to learn more:

617-952-6158
 epichardo@mgb.org

NATIONAL LIMB LOSS RESOURCE CENTER®

Where can you go when you have questions about limb loss or limb difference? Here at the National Limb Loss Resource Center®, we provide comprehensive information and resources free of charge. Information is developed and reviewed by the Resource Development team and the Scientific and Medical Advisory Committee (SciMAC) who are experts in the field of limb loss and limb difference. This ensures accuracy of the information being provided.



Connect with a resource center specialist to request materials or discuss your needs with a Healthcare Navigator. Our knowledgeable team is the place to turn to when you have questions about your journey in limb loss and limb difference. You can reach them by calling toll-free 888-267-5669 or by completing our secure online intake form at Amputee-coalition.org/service/find-support-services

Call toll-free at 888-267-5669 to speak with an information specialist
8 AM - 5 PM Eastern, Monday-Friday.

inMotion
LIVING WELL WITH LIMB LOSS AND LIMB DIFFERENCE