

Tips for Better Exercise

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Things to Remember

- Any activity is better than none.
- Physical Activity should be done in addition to regular daily activities.
- Physical Activity can be done in segments of at least 10 minutes duration, preferably spread throughout the week.
- More health benefits are gained with more activity.
- The benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks.

(Key Points from *The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*)

- 1) **Protect your joints:** Use larger or stronger joints to carry things, such as your knees or your whole hand instead of just your fingers. Avoid excess stress on your joints. Stay close to your recommended weight to help relieve damaging pressure on hips and knees.
- 2) **Get moving:** Exercise helps lessen pain, increases range of movement, reduces fatigue, and helps you feel better overall. Your doctor, a physical therapist, or other specially trained health professional can recommend range-of-motion and strengthening exercises that are good for arthritis.
- 3) **Stretch your legs:** Stretching is a simple way to keep joints and muscles flexible. It relieves stress and can help enable you to maintain your daily activities.
- 4) **Make a pack:** When joints are hot and inflamed, applying something cold can decrease pain and swelling by constricting blood vessels and preventing fluids from leaking into surrounding tissues.
- 5) **Enjoy your exercise:** Take the work out of working out! Sign up for a class that makes exercise fun. Visit moarthritis.org for local Missouri classes.
- 6) **Visit www.arthritis.org** for more tips from the Arthritis Foundation.

For Substantial Health Benefits follow these 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans:

Adults should do 150 minutes (2 hours, 30 minutes) of moderate intensity aerobic activity OR 75 minutes (1 hour, 15 minutes) of vigorous activity OR an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous aerobic activity each week. Adults should do muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days per week.

Older Adults (65 and older) should do 150 (2 hours, 30 minutes) of moderate intensity aerobic activity OR 75 minutes (1 hour, 15 minutes) of vigorous activity OR an equivalent combination of moderate vigorous aerobic activity each week. Older adults should do muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days per week.



Assess your Joint Health

Only a doctor can diagnose arthritis. However, by asking yourself the following questions provided by the [Arthritis Foundation](http://www.arthritis.org), you may be able to get a better idea of your joint health.

What's Your Risk?	Yes	No
1.) Are you 45 years of age or older?		
2.) Have you ever had an injury to your knee severe enough to put you in bed; to force you to use a cane, crutch, or brace; or to require surgery?		
3.) Are you more than 10 pounds overweight?		
4.) Have you in the past, or do you currently, participate in greater than 3 hours per day of heavy physical activities, such as bending, lifting, or carrying items on a regular basis?		
5.) Did you have hip problems that caused you to limp as a child?		
What are your symptoms?		
6.) Has your doctor ever told you that you have arthritis?		
7.) During the past 12 months, have you had pain, aching, stiffness, or swelling in or around a joint?		
8.) In a typical month, were these symptoms present daily for at least half of the days in that month?		
9.) Do you have daily pain or stiffness in your hand joints?		
10.) Do you have pain in your knee or hip when climbing stairs or walking 2-3 blocks (1/4 mile) on flat ground?		
11.) Are you now limited in any activities because of joint symptoms (pain, aching, stiffness, loss of motion)?		
12.) Because of joint symptoms, rate your ability to do the following (using the below scale):		
0 - Without ANY difficulty		
1 - With SOME difficulty		
2 - With MUCH difficulty		
3 - UNABLE to do		
a. Dress yourself, including shoelaces and buttons		
b. Stand up from an armless, straight chair		
c. Get in and out of a car		
d. Open a car door		

If you answered yes to any of questions 1-5, you are **AT RISK** for arthritis.

If you answered yes to two or more of questions 6-11, you might have **SYMPTOMS** of arthritis.

Please add the numbers shown next to each of your answers for question 12 (a+b+c+d). If you scored a **6 or more** on question 12, **please contact your doctor or other healthcare professional for an evaluation.**

Visit moarthritis.org for more information.