

Getting started is the hardest part—but don't let your arthritis be in charge! Any amount of physical activity helps. Get started on a regular routine of physical activity so you can begin to feel less pain, move more easily, and have more energy. Get physically active and show arthritis who's boss.

Some activities that you can try:



Walking



Biking



Swimming



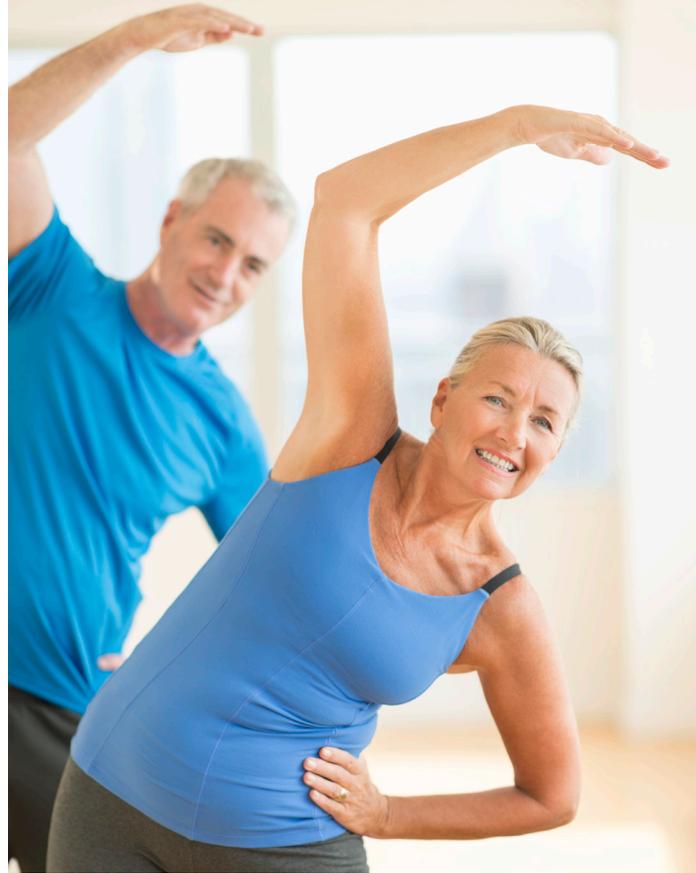
Dancing



Water aerobics



Yard work such as raking or trimming the shrubs



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**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention



**Department
of Health**

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.
THE ARTHRITIS PAIN RELIEVER.

Physical Activity.
The Arthritis Pain Reliever.

Don't let arthritis stand in your way.

Is arthritis keeping you from living the life you want? Then take charge by finding ways to be more physically active!

Studies show that physical activity can decrease arthritis pain and improve function by 40%. Regular physical activity can also make you feel less tired and stiff, improve your quality of life, and reduce your chance of developing other chronic conditions in the future.

It may not be easy at first—especially when your joints hurt or you haven't been active for a while. But any amount helps! As long as you commit to moving even just a little more than you do now, you can start to gain the benefits of physical activity.

**Take a walk. Take a bike ride.
Take a swim. Take charge of your
arthritis with moderate-intensity
physical activity.**

More than 54 million US adults are living with arthritis. Many of them are finding that moderate-intensity physical activity improves the way they feel. You can do it, too. **Here are suggestions on how to get started.**

Sit less and move more.

As your health allows, choose moderate-intensity activities that are joint-friendly and keep your heart rate up. Try to get a total of 150 minutes a week. For example, you might be active for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Or you can break it up into even smaller chunks throughout the week.

Joint-friendly physical activities put less stress on your body and reduce the risk of injury. Examples include walking, biking, swimming, and dancing. In general, if you're doing a moderate-intensity activity, you can talk but not sing during the activity. Low-intensity activity can also help people who may not be able to do moderate-intensity activities.

As part of your weekly physical activity, plan to add strength-building exercises 2 days a week to improve your arthritis. Also include flexibility exercises and balance training to maintain your range of motion and lower your risk of falling. Ask your doctor to help you create a safe physical activity plan that works for you!

Start slowly. Warm up and cool down.

It may have been a while since you've done regular physical activity. Start with 10 to 15 minutes at a time and slowly work your way up to 150 minutes a week.

You may feel sore or stiff for the first 6 to 8 weeks as your body gets used to a new physical activity program. If it hurts too much, you can change the intensity or type of activity you're doing, as well as how often and how long you're doing it.

Don't give up on making physical activity a daily part of your life over time. Some activity is better than none!

If you can't carry on a conversation—or if you feel severe pain—during an activity, you're probably pushing too hard. It's also important to start and end each activity at a slower pace for a few minutes to give your body a chance to warm up and cool down. Some activities may be more comfortable if you start with gentle stretching.

Make it fun.

Choose activities that you enjoy and will do regularly to make being active part of your life. Join a group exercise program in your community. Take your kids or grandkids to the pool for a swim. Take a walk after dinner with a friend. Go for a bike ride in the morning and a walk in the afternoon with a neighbor. And remember that strength-building exercises can also improve your arthritis.

Stay as active as your health allows and change your activity level depending on your arthritis symptoms.

Remember: Some physical activity is better than none!



Did you know?

Regular physical activity doesn't just relieve arthritis pain in your knees, hips, and ankles. It also helps you feel less tired and stiff. It even gives you more energy and improves your mood.