

Physical Activity and Arthritis

Managing arthritis symptoms

Physical activity is a key part of managing your arthritis. Keeping active can help relieve arthritis pain, and improve symptoms like joint stiffness or fatigue. Moderate activity can help you improve your quality of life. There are many great ways to get active. Talk to your doctor about physical activity and what might be right for you. Your doctor may recommend:

- **Aerobic Activity:** Low-impact aerobic activity – like walking, swimming, and biking – minimize the wear and tear of your joints.
- **Strengthening Activities:** Try activities like yoga, weight training, or working with resistance bands to strengthen your muscles, which can help protect your joints.
- **Flexibility Training:** Help increase your range-of-motion by participating in activities that improve your flexibility, like stretching and yoga.

When you are physically active, it is important to listen to your body. Start slow, monitor how you are feeling, and modify your activity levels on days your arthritis symptoms flare up. A good way to make sure you are at working out at a moderate pace is to use the talk test. That means you can talk through your activity. If you cannot hold a conversation, you are engaging in vigorous activity. If you are sore more than 2 hours after you are physically active you may need to reduce the intensity level of your activity.

If you are not sure where to start, or are looking for a little extra support, talk to your doctor or call or visit your local parks and recreation department and ask about the types of activities they

have that will fit your lifestyle. You can call the Arthritis Foundation's 24/7 Helpline at 1-844-571-HELP to get one-on-one support from experienced Arthritis Foundation social workers.

Physical activity and health improvement classes

The CDC recommends the use of Arthritis-Appropriate Evidence Based Interventions – a variety of programs that are proven to be safe and effective for people with arthritis. This includes activities ranging from aquatics to walking to education. Find a full list of [Arthritis-Appropriate Evidence Based Interventions](#) from the CDC.

The Arthritis Foundation has a [Resource Finder](#), where you can search for fitness classes, specialists, events and other resources closest to you. You can also find classes using [Juniper](#), [WellConnect](#), [Compass](#), or the [Senior Linkage Line](#).