

Physical Activity. The Arthritis Pain Reliever.

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The leading cause of disability.

Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States (1). Encompassing more than 100 diseases and conditions, it affects joints, soft tissues, connective tissues and sometimes - vital organs. Data now indicate that the numbers of adults impacted by this disease are higher than ever. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a state-by-state arthritis survey. The results indicate that 1 in 3 U.S. adults have arthritis compared to previous estimates of 1 in 6 (2, 3). Nearly one million Oklahomans have this disabling disease (2).

Do you have arthritis?

If so, you know that the impact of arthritis extends well beyond the data given above. People with arthritis may experience stress, depression, anger, and anxiety, which can intensify their pain. The (joint) pain cycle can cause you to become less physically active, placing you at higher risk of becoming overweight and acquiring heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and other chronic conditions.

Physical activity is important!

Whether it is walking, gardening, swimming or any other activity meaningful to us, we must work to continually condition our bodies to reduce pain, promote joint health, reduce weight and improve overall function and quality of life, as well as prevent the other conditions that could result from inactivity. Physical activity can be done alone or in a group. It can be recreational but at the same time accomplish personal health goals. Never forget that being physically active can be fun as well as healthy for your entire being.

Incorporating physical activity into your lifestyle will dramatically delay and reduce disability, suffering, and the cost of medical care. Live long and prosper! Be active in making your health better.

For more information about physical activity interventions:

Please consult your physician or the Arthritis Foundation, (918) 743-4526 (Tulsa) or (405) 936-3366 (Oklahoma City) or the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Arthritis Prevention and Education Program at (405) 271-9444, ext. 56410 or by email:

www.health.state.ok.us/program/apep or www.arthritis.org

References

1. CDC. Prevalence of disabilities and associated health conditions among adults--United States, 1999. MMWR 2001; 50: 120--2.
2. CDC. Prevalence of Self-Reported Arthritis or Chronic Joint Symptoms Among Adults - United States, 2001. MMWR 2002; 51: 948-950.
3. Helmick CG, Lawrence RC, Pllard RA, Lloyd E., Heyse S. Arthritis and other rheumatic conditions: who is affected now and who will be affected later? Arthritis Care and Research, 1995.