

Exercise Tips for Arthritis

Decrease the stress on your joints

- Break up your activity into smaller amounts of time, e.g. three 10-minute walks rather than one 30-minute walk.
- Choose activities that are easier on your joints, e.g. water exercises, cycling and walking with poles.
- Wear shoes with good support.
- Start with what you know you can do with no pain. Slowly add more activity.

Keep your joints moving

- Move your joint through its range of motion daily.
- Stretch tight muscles, holding the stretch for 20 – 30 seconds. Repeat several times throughout the day.

Strengthen the muscles around your sore joints

- Use gravity, tubing or weights for resistance.
- Aim for 8 repetitions of an exercise and set goals to slowly increase to 15-20 repetitions, 1-2 times per day. Breathe and control your movements. Your muscle should feel tired by the last movement.
- Try 2-3 strengthening sessions per week. Take a day off after strengthening.
- Do not progress too quickly; make your activity harder every 2 weeks if it is going well.

Follow the 2 hour pain rule

- If you have joint pain more than 2 hours after exercise, you have done too much. Keep a record and stay active but do less the next time you exercise.

Remember to . . .

- Warm up before exercise and cool down afterwards.
- Consult a physiotherapist for specific exercise advice.
- Have fun! Choose activities you enjoy, exercise with a friend or join an exercise class.

Did you know . . . ?

- You should be active for 2.5 hours every week.
- You should aim for 10 min of activity at a time.
- During activity you want to feel that you are breathing harder and your heart rate is increasing.
- For best health, you should be active every day!

Source: Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, www.csep.ca



Community Resources

- Physical Activity Service **8-1-1**
- OASIS <http://oasis.vch.ca/>
 - Videos: <http://oasis.vch.ca/manage-your-oa/exercise/>
- The Arthritis Society www.arthritis.ca
- Choose to Move Program, YMCA: choosetomove@gv.ymca.ca
- GLA:D Canada <http://gladcanada.ca/>
- Find a physio www.bcphysio.org
- Your local recreation centre

Notes: