



ARTHRITIS-KEY PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGES

Osteoarthritis is the most common chronic joint condition in the United States, affecting both young and elderly Americans. According to the US Bone and Joint Initiative, medical expenditures that are likely attributable to osteoarthritis totaled \$62.1 billion in each year between 2008 and 2011. The US Bone and Joint Initiative also found that between 2010 and 2012, 3.8 million American adults with doctor- diagnosed arthritis reported that they were unable to work due to their arthritis. Earning losses due to osteoarthritis between 2008 and 2011 were an estimated \$80 billion per year. Osteoarthritis is thus a significant public health concern. Below are some public health messages related to osteoarthritis from the CDC.

1. Learn Arthritis Management Strategies

- Arthritis management strategies provide those with arthritis with the skills and confidence to effectively manage their condition
- Several organizations and foundations have terrific resources to help those with Arthritis and Chronic Pain to manage their conditions- Don't be afraid to use these resources and find others
- Great resources can be found here: [Arthritis Foundation](#), [CDC](#), [Osteoarthritis Action Alliance](#), [American Chronic Pain Association](#)

2. Be Active

- Research shows physical activity decreases pain, improves function and delays disability.
- It is recommended that people with arthritis undertake 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 times a week, or a total of 150 minutes per week. The 30 minutes can be broken down into three 10-minute sessions throughout the day.
- Details of the types of physical activity that are appropriate for individuals living with arthritis can be found at: [Physical Activity for Arthritis](#).
- The organizations listed in Section 1 also have resources to help those living with arthritis remain active
- Walk With A Doc is a great way to start getting some physical activity into your routine!

3. Watch Your Weight

- Research confirms that maintaining a healthy weight can limit disease progression and activity limitation.
- For every pound lost, there is a 4-pound reduction in the load exerted on the knee. Thus maintaining a healthy weight can help reduce pain.
- Healthy diet and exercise are both important for maintaining a healthy weight.

4. See Your Doctor

- Early diagnosis and professionally guided management is critical to maintaining a good quality of life, particularly for people with more inflammatory types of arthritis.
- Essential disease modifying drugs are beneficial in rheumatoid arthritis and other highly inflammatory arthritis conditions and are available only by prescription.

5. Protect Your Joints

- Sports or occupational based injuries to joints can increase the likelihood of developing osteoarthritis. Jobs that have repetitive motions, for example repeated knee bending, also place individuals at higher risk.
- Avoiding injuries to joints can reduce the likelihood of developing osteoarthritis.