The Osteoarthritis Action Alliance (OAAA) is a coalition of member organizations committed to elevating osteoarthritis (OA) as a national health priority and promoting effective policy solutions that address the individual and national toll of OA. As a leader in this public health effort, the OAAA promotes evidencebased interventions and the establishment of supportive policies, communication initiatives, and strategic alliances for OA prevention and management.



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# Weight Gain and Joint Pain

Why Is Your Weight Important? Extra weight greatly increases joint pain and damages the cartilage of the joints, especially in the hips and knees. But losing weight can help!



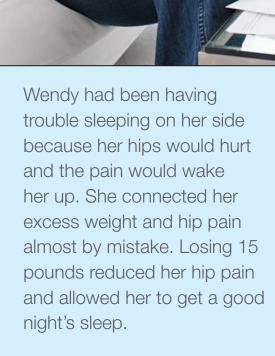
### **Risks**

- Together, extra pounds and pain can limit physical activity.
   This leads to more weight gain and other health problems.
   This can cause permanent disability and loss of income.
- Joint pain sometimes disrupts sleep, which can make your health worse.
- People affected by excess weight are more likely to need prolonged medical therapy including medications.
- People affected by excess weight are more likely to need costly knee or hip surgery and a long period of recovery.

### **Benefits**

- Losing weight can help you reduce joint pain, avoid joint surgery and become more active again.
- Even small amounts of weight loss can help.

Managing your weight through a healthy diet and increased physical activity can help you reduce your joint pain. But don't try to make too many changes at once. It can stop you in your tracks. Instead, pick just one thing you feel ready to focus on for the next few weeks. Choose a goal you believe you can achieve. Then work on it for 6 to 8 weeks to make it stick.





# Making Changes

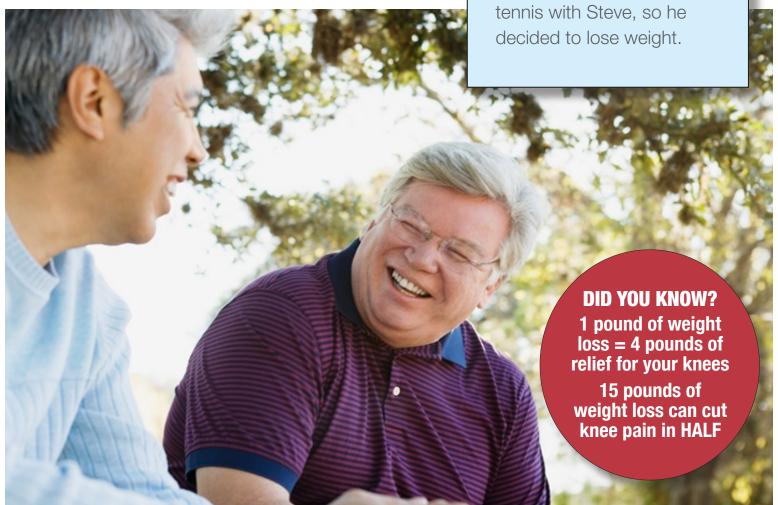
### TIPS TO GET YOU ON YOUR WAY

There are many ways to get started. Here are a few ideas to choose from or you can make up your own:

- Cut back on portion sizes.
- Eliminate foods from your home that promote overeating.
- Keep fresh fruit on hand for snacks.
- Go for a walk after dinner.
- Turn off the TV during dinner.
- Move the TV out of the bedroom.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Add a vegetable to either lunch or dinner (or both) each day.
- Pack your own lunch each day.
- Make a new friend who wants to walk several days a week.
- Buy a pedometer to track your steps taken each day.
- Buy a bicycle and use it to ride to work or on weekends.
- Plan a hiking vacation to a state or national park.
- Join a physical activity program.



Jerry knew that the pounds had been creeping up for several years, but he didn't make the connection between the extra weight and the pain in his knees. The connection dawned on Jerry when his friend and former tennis partner lost 30 pounds and started playing tennis again. Jerry realized he wanted to play tennis with Steve, so he decided to lose weight.



# Are You Ready to Make Changes to Manage Your Weight?

### WHERE CAN I FIND HELP TO MAKE LIFESTYLE CHANGES?

Managing your weight can improve your joint pain. Here are some websites that can help you adopt a healthier lifestyle:

Don't Overdo It.

Small Changes Lead to Big Health

Benefits!

- CHOOSE MY PLATE www.choosemyplate.gov Learn about healthy eating, meal planning and portion control.
- EAT RIGHT www.eatright.org
  Get tips on nutrition and weight loss or find a registered dietitian in your area.
- TRACK + REACT www.arthritistoday.org/tools-and-resources/tools/track-and-react/ This new web tool and app allows people with arthritis to track their physical activity, diet and symptoms.
- WALK WITH EASE www.arthritis.org/wwe
  Learn about this physical activity program for people with arthritis and other chronic conditions. It has been shown to reduce pain and improve health.
- OBESITY ACTION COALITION www.obesityaction.org

  Learn more about how obesity impacts your health, treatment options and weight bias.
- YOUR WEIGHT MATTERS www.yourweightmatters.org
  Take the Your Weight Matters Challenge today and talk to your healthcare provider about your weight.
- AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION www.nutrition.org
  Find valuable resources to help you live a healthier, more productive life, including scientific statements on topics like energy balance and the latest nutrition research.

## On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

Commit to making a change. Fill out the action plan below and keep it attached to your refrigerator or mirror so you can see it every day and stay motivated. Use the resources above to help you reach your goal.

### MY ACTION PLAN

day's Date is: My weight today is:												
My current measure of pain is: ① 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	(circle a number)	
I want to lose	pound	pounds in months.										
The reason I want to take off 10 pounds	s is (fill	in th	e reaso	n belo	ow): _							
The single change in my lifestyle that I	am tac	kling	right n	ow is:								