

# Park, Recreation, Fitness, & Sport Professionals Make a Difference!

Increasing physical activity among adults with arthritis



## Arthritis Matters

**A**rthritis is the most common cause of disability in the United States, affecting 54 million adults. Arthritis costs our nation \$128 billion each year in medical expenses, lost earnings, and reduced productivity.

**Physical activity is highly recommended for adults with arthritis.** It can decrease pain, delay the onset of disability, and improve physical functioning, mood, and independence. It also enhances quality of life, aerobic capacity, and muscle strength.

**People with arthritis can safely engage in physical activity.** A variety of evidence-based physical activity programs have been tested and proven appropriate, safe and effective at relieving symptoms for adults with arthritis (see back page for recommendations).

**Unfortunately, far too few adults with arthritis are active enough.** Almost 44% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis report no leisure time physical activity, a considerably higher proportion compared with adults without arthritis. Low levels of physical activity place individuals with arthritis at further risk of inactivity-associated conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and functional limitations.

## Get Involved

### Now...

- Include at least one evidence-based, arthritis-appropriate physical activity program in your menu of activities.
- Provide literature on arthritis and physical activity in all park, recreation, fitness, and sport facilities.
- Offer more low-impact and low-intensity exercise equipment for individuals with arthritis.
- Advocate for the development of sidewalks to create safe pathways to parks and recreation facilities.
- Install benches or rest areas in parks and recreation facilities to support greater use by adults with arthritis.
- Use tools such as audits or walkability checklists to determine if trails or paths are accessible to arthritis patients.

### Over time...

- Enhance arthritis and exercise expertise of park, recreation, fitness, and sport professionals by supporting professional development programs or training.
- Include arthritis-specific information in all exercise certification programs and undergraduate exercise professional training curricula.
- Provide more sources of appropriate arthritis-friendly physical activity training for fitness professionals, peer leaders, etc.

# Physical Activity Programs for Adults With Arthritis

The Arthritis Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends many programs proven to improve the symptoms, function, and quality of life of adults with arthritis.

## GROUP EXERCISE PROGRAMS

Active Living Everyday	<a href="http://www.activeliving.info/">www.activeliving.info/</a>
Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program	<a href="http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/arthritis-friendly/aquatics.php">www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/arthritis-friendly/aquatics.php</a>
Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program	<a href="http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/benefits/osteoarthritis-exercise.php">www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/benefits/osteoarthritis-exercise.php</a>
Arthritis Foundation Walk With Ease Program	<a href="http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/walk-with-ease/">www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/walk-with-ease/</a>
EnhanceFitness	<a href="http://www.projectenhance.org/EnhanceFitness.aspx">www.projectenhance.org/EnhanceFitness.aspx</a>
Fit and Strong!	<a href="http://www.fitandstrong.org/">www.fitandstrong.org/</a>

## HEALTH COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Physical Activity: The Arthritis Pain Reliever	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/physical-activity-overview.html">www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/physical-activity-overview.html</a>
Buenos Días, Artritis	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/campaigns/hispanic/index.htm">www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/campaigns/hispanic/index.htm</a>

## SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program	<a href="http://www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/small-group/chronic-disease-self-management/">www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/small-group/chronic-disease-self-management/</a>
Tomando Control de su Salud (Spanish Chronic Disease Self-Management Program)	<a href="http://www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/small-group-spanish/tomando-control-de-su-salud">www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/small-group-spanish/tomando-control-de-su-salud</a>

For more information and resources, visit these helpful web sites:

A National Public Health Agenda for Osteoarthritis	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/docs/OAagenda.pdf">www.cdc.gov/arthritis/docs/OAagenda.pdf</a>
	<a href="http://www.oaaction.unc.edu/policy-solutions/">www.oaaction.unc.edu/policy-solutions/</a>
CDC Intervention Programs	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions.htm">www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions.htm</a>
Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Walkability Checklist	<a href="http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/walkability_checklist.pdf">www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/walkability_checklist.pdf</a>
Healthy Aging in Parks	<a href="http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/healthy-aging-in-parks/">http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/healthy-aging-in-parks/</a>
The Fitness Professional's Guide to Training Clients with Osteoarthritis	<a href="https://www.acefitness.org/continuingeducation/courses/support_items/OLC-TCO-10/Session3.pdf">https://www.acefitness.org/continuingeducation/courses/support_items/OLC-TCO-10/Session3.pdf</a>

**Note:** This information comes from a full report, *Environmental and Policy Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Adults with Arthritis*, that contains additional recommendations for six critical sectors: Community and Public Health; Health Care; Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design; Business and Industry; Park, Recreation, Fitness, and Sport; and Mass Media and Communication. The report, references, and additional resources to help implement the recommendations can be found at [www.arthritis.org/physical-activity](http://www.arthritis.org/physical-activity).

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