A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Take a Walk

Arthritis Awareness Month – May 2015
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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Arthritis is among the most common chronic conditions in the U.S., affecting more than 52 million adults.

Dr. Charles Helmick is a medical epidemiologist with CDC's Arthritis Program. He's joining us today to discuss ways to manage arthritis. Welcome to the show, Chad.

[Dr. Helmick] Thanks for having me.

[Dr. Gaynes] Chad, let's start with what are the most common symptoms of arthritis?

[Dr. Helmick] Well, the most common symptoms are pain, aching, and stiffness in and around a joint, and many times, you'll have stiffness in the morning that lasts 30 minutes or 60 minutes before you really get going for the day.

[Dr. Gaynes] At what age do most people begin experiencing the symptoms of arthritis?

[Dr. Helmick] Well, there're more than 100 types of arthritis and they can begin at any age, including in children. For the most common type, osteoarthritis, that generally begins around age 45 unless you've had injuries from sports or accidents.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the treatment options available for someone with arthritis?

[Dr. Helmick] Well, everybody knows about the medications for arthritis, and if your joint gets really bad, there's surgery, but one thing that can really help is joint-friendly activities done 150 minutes a week.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are some joint-friendly exercise activities that a person with arthritis can safely do?

[Dr. Helmick] Well, walking, biking, and swimming are all safe activities. You can learn more about those at cdc.gov/arthritis.

[Dr. Gaynes] Chad, is there anything that people can do to prevent or delay the onset of arthritis?

[Dr. Helmick] Maintaining a healthy weight reduces your chance of getting osteoarthritis of the knee and the hip, and if you avoid injuries by using break away bases in softball or baseball, that can help keep your joints healthy, too.

[Dr. Gaynes] Chad, where can listeners get more information about arthritis?

[Dr. Helmick] Listeners can go to arthritis.org.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Chad. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Charles Helmick about ways to manage arthritis.

An active lifestyle can help prevent or delay some forms of arthritis. If you've been diagnosed with arthritis, consider walking, biking, or swimming to improve your condition.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC.*

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.