

Arthritis Pain Reliever

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Host] In the United States today, over one in five adults, or more than fifty million Americans, live with the pain and discomfort of arthritis. But, it doesn't have to be this way. Many people use physical activity to manage their arthritis pain. If you personally don't know the pain and stiffness of arthritis, chances are you know someone who does. Arthritis pain prevents many people from living the life they want to live and from doing what they want.

[Announcer] CDC-TV Presents: Health Matters.

[Host] The barriers we know exist: pain, fear of pain or joint damage, and not knowing what exercise is safe, discourage many who experience discomfort or disability from taking advantage of our body's own natural 'arthritis pain reliever' – physical activity.

[Teresa Brady] Millions of Americans report that arthritis interferes with what they either want or need to do.

[Woman] Going up and down stairs was very painful. Even just getting dressed and putting your shoes on was a daily task that I could not do myself.

[Teresa Brady] Many of those people know that they should be physically active, but arthritis keeps getting in their way.

[Chad Helmick] A long time ago, doctors would meet people with arthritis and tell them to 'rest their joints' because we didn't have a lot of good treatments. That's not true at all. Actually, resting your joints stiffens them up.

[Teresa Brady] What we're really talking about when we're encouraging people with arthritis to be more physically active is doing moderate physical activity like walking, swimming, biking that get their heart rate up a little bit or get them breathing a little bit harder.

[Host] Aim to do moderate physical activity five days a week for thirty minutes a day. Exercising as little as 10 minutes at a time will allow you to achieve the recommended two-and-a-half hours per week and get real health benefits.

[Chad Helmick] You want to listen to your body so that, if you are too sore, a couple hours later you know to cut back . . . maybe do a little bit less duration or frequency.

[Teresa Brady] It's not running a marathon. It's not the 'no pain, no gain' idea. It really helps reduce some arthritis-specific symptoms, like pain, swelling, limitations. Things like fatigue and depression also improve with physical activity.

[Woman] Once I started exercising, it's now-- I do it every morning. I do weights and I do the stretching and I have to do that every day.

[Teresa Brady] Some people prefer to exercise on their own, at their convenience, and that's fine. Other people are a little worried about what kind of exercise might be safe for them. So, in that case, they can look for a community-based physical activity program.

[Chad Helmick] Most people will be seeing real benefits in four to six weeks. They'll be having less pain in their joints than they did earlier.

[Teresa Brady] Some people feel defeated by their arthritis or that arthritis has taken away the life that they want.

[Man] Am I a victim of it? Yeah. Did I ask for it? No. Did I do anything to cause it? No. But, you can't let that mentality stop you from moving forward.

[Teresa Brady] And by regaining that sense of control, and a variety of self-management strategies can help them take charge, they can get their life back.

[Woman] Since I started exercising and changed my diet, I'm able to go any place that I want to go on my own.

[Host] Find an arthritis exercise program tailored for you. You *can* take charge of your arthritis . . . and your life.

[Man] You can ignore it – which obviously's not very good.

[Woman] Arthritis will always be a part of me, but it's not going to control me or define who I am.

[Man] Or you can let it control you.

[Woman] Because sitting down and laying down and not doing anything and feeling sorry for yourself is the worst thing you could do.

[Man] Or you can do everything you can to try to control it.

[Woman] I do whatever I want to do, go where I want to go and . . . I'm free!

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