



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Arthritis Awareness

Arthritis Awareness Month — May 2016

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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.

As the U.S. population ages, so does the frequency of certain chronic diseases, such as arthritis. Dr. Kamil Barbour is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. He's joining us today to discuss ways to manage arthritis. Welcome to the show, Kamil.

[Dr. Barbour] It's good to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Kamil, what is arthritis and how many American adults are affected?

[Dr. Barbour] Arthritis is inflammation of the joints. The main symptoms are joint pain, stiffness, and swelling. There are over 120 types of arthritis. By far, the most common type is osteoarthritis. Other, less common types, include rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and gout. Now, in the U.S., there are about 52 and a half million that are affected by arthritis.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the most common risk factors for arthritis?

[Dr. Barbour] Older age, being female, being obese, and sustaining a joint injury are the most recognized risk factors. For instance, the states with the highest frequency of arthritis tended to be in Appalachia and the South where obesity is also highest in the nation.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, what are some ways a person can manage arthritis pain?

[Dr. Barbour] One of the most surprising recommendations for those with joint pain is exercise. That's why we encourage low-impact physical activity, such as walking, swimming, and biking which have been shown to be generally safe and appropriate.

Dr. Gaynes] What are some ways to help prevent arthritis?

[Dr. Barbour] We don't know how to prevent many types of arthritis, such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. The two main things you can do to try to prevent osteoarthritis is to maintain a healthy weight and to avoid joint injury. High impact sports, such as baseball, basketball, soccer, and tennis can increase your risk of joint injury.

[Dr. Gaynes] Kamil, here can listeners get more information about arthritis?

[Dr. Barbour] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/arthritis.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Kamil. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Kamil Barbour about ways to manage the pain of arthritis.

Remember, arthritis can be *prevented* by maintaining a healthy weight and *controlled* by low-impact physical activity and weight loss. If you have arthritis, ask your health care provider to suggest a strategy that's safe for you.

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.