



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Work Those Aching Joints*

World Arthritis Day — October 12, 2011

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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.

With the aging of the population, arthritis has become a major health problem.

Dr. Jennifer Hootman is an epidemiologist with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss ways to manage the pain associated with arthritis. Welcome to the show, Jennifer.

[Dr. Hootman] Thank you. Glad to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Jennifer, how common is arthritis in the U.S.?

[Dr. Hootman] Arthritis is one of the most common chronic diseases. It affects 50 million US adults. It's the leading cause of disability. And osteoarthritis is the most common type of arthritis, but there's other types, such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, fibromyalgia, and gout.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the symptoms of arthritis?

[Dr. Hootman] Arthritis typically affects the joints and the muscles and tendons and ligaments around the joints. There are some types of arthritis that are called inflammatory arthritis, such as rheumatoid arthritis, that also can affect other organs, such as the heart and the kidneys.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the treatments available for arthritis?

[Dr. Hootman] Well, there's a variety of medical treatments, including medications and surgeries and physical therapy. But there's lots people can do to self-manage their arthritis. They can lose weight if they need to lose weight. They can protect their joints from injury. They can take a class or course to learn about arthritis. And one of the most effective ways is to actually exercise and get more physical activity.

[Dr. Gaynes] Jennifer, what kinds of exercise or physical activity are best for managing arthritis pain?

[Dr. Hootman] Well, first, we recommend aerobic activity; that's anything that gets the heart rate up. And anything that is low-impact on the joints, like walking, swimming, or biking is what we recommend. We recommend that people accumulate about two and a half hours a week, or 150 minutes. They can do a little bit each day. They can do it in 10 minute bouts and each of those bouts add up over a week's time. We also recommend that they do muscle-strengthening

exercises. The stronger a muscle is around a joint, the less pressure on the joint. There's a variety of ways to strengthen muscles, including using their own body weight, using stretching bands, or even some machine weights at a gym.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about arthritis?

[Dr. Hootman] They can go to [fightarthritis.org](http://fightarthritis.org) where they can find tips on how to be physically active, and they can even log their activity on an activity logger.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Jennifer. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Jennifer Hootman about ways to manage the pain associated with arthritis.

One of the most effective ways to reduce arthritis pain and improve function is to exercise regularly. For best results, people with arthritis should engage in some form of aerobic activity for at least two and a half hours a week; even 10 minutes at a time can help. Remember: Physical activity. The arthritis pain reliever.

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](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.