

Manage Joint Pain With Moderate Exercise and Help From Your Doctor

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Achy knees, stiff hips, pain in the wrists, elbows and ankles—there is a large variety of joint pain and it affects people differently. However, one thing remains true across the board—it lowers quality of life, often leading to loss of mobility, frustration at not being able to enjoy favorite hobbies, and sometimes even feelings of helplessness and depression. Though there is no known cure for [arthritis](#), patients have more options now than ever before to help manage pain and the disease. Below is some advice to consider.

Do



- [stay active](#)
- [practice weight control](#)
- [find a partner](#)
- [seek medical advice](#)
- [keep an open mind](#)

Don't



- [go overboard with exercise](#)
- [get discouraged if you don't see immediate results](#)
- [believe you simply have to live with it](#)
- [expect a magic pill](#)
- [be afraid to get a second opinion](#)

Do

Do stay active

Many people who suffer from joint pain think exercise will make things worse. In fact, exercise can help manage pain and strengthen muscle, which in turn reduces pressure on cartilage. Walking is one of the best exercises for people who suffer from arthritis, as are water-based exercises and other low-impact activities such as riding a bicycle.

Do practice weight control

It is important to maintain a healthy diet and body weight, as obesity is linked to some chronic diseases, such as [osteoarthritis](#). The extra weight can really put pressure on your joints leading to pain and damage.

Do find a partner

Try to find a buddy who will exercise with you and help you stay on track with a regimen. A partner will help motivate you and ensure you stick to a long-term plan.

Do seek medical advice

People can sometimes get wrong ideas and misinformation from friends or sources on the internet. It is important to consult with your doctor before starting any treatment plan and to help to better understand your disease.

Do keep an open mind

There are many treatment options available for joint pain. Treatments include better diet and exercise, [injections](#), medication, and surgery. Notable are the technological advancements in surgery, which are now allowing patients to receive personalized implants. It is important to realize what's good for one person may not be good for another, and often you will need a combination of treatments to help alleviate your joint pain.

Don't

Do not go overboard with exercise

Many people, especially younger patients, who suffer from joint pain tend to push themselves harder in their exercises routines. It is important to exercise, but going overboard can be detrimental as it can further wear down your joints. When you exercise, it is best to avoid heavy weights. Instead, use less weight and perform more reps. Avoid endurance sports like long-distance running. Walking, cycling, or swimming are all good alternatives to demanding exercise.

Do not get discouraged if you don't see immediate results

It can be very frustrating when you change your routine, become healthier, and/or try new treatments and are still in pain. Try to maintain a positive attitude. Often, you won't see results right away, but with time you will find a solution to help manage your pain. Maintaining a positive attitude can help you feel better—there really is power to positive thinking.

Do not believe you simply have to live with it

Many patients think that living with joint pain is just a normal part of getting older and that they must simply grin and bear it. This isn't the case. There are many treatment plans available to help manage joint pain and allow you to enjoy a good quality of life. Don't think you have to give up your walks with the dog, or gardening, or playing tennis. Medicine has advanced tremendously in the past few decades and it is allowing more patients to maintain a good quality of life.

Do not expect a magic pill

While there has been much advancement in our understanding of arthritis and joint pain, and with it more treatment options available, there is no one simple cure. Often, you will need to work on a plan with your doctor that encompasses

several treatment options. Some may work, and some may not be best suited for you, but through open communication with a doctor, you should be able to nail down a great plan to help.

Do not be afraid to get a second opinion

Many patients see a specialist and don't feel that they received all the information and help they need. They often get discouraged and leave it at that. If you are not satisfied with your medical care, don't be afraid to get a second opinion and consult another doctor. The worst thing you can do is ignore your pain and condition.

Summary



If you are suffering from joint pain, you are not alone. One in five Americans are afflicted with arthritis, including 300,000 children, and it is the leading cause of disability in the United States. Don't suffer in silence—work on a plan with your doctor, find someone to help you stay on track with a healthy lifestyle, and keep an open mind as you try different treatment options.

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