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If you experience the pain and stiffness of arthritis, there's something you can do about it. Get more physical activity.

Recent studies show that moderate physical activity three or more days per week can help to relieve arthritis pain and stiffness and give you more energy. Regular physical activity can also lift your mood and make you feel more positive.

Look inside to find out more about what moderate physical activity is, what types are suitable for people with arthritis, and other helpful information.

Make it fun with family and friends. Add variety.

Try taking your grandkids to the pool and swimming for 20 minutes. Then, take a 10-minute walk after dinner with a friend. Go for a 15-minute bike ride in the morning and a 15-minute walk in the afternoon with a neighbor. Whatever you do, make your goal at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day, three or more days a week.

In four to six weeks, you could be hurting less, moving more easily, and feeling more energetic.

So get moving, and keep moving.

After a little while, a regular program of moderate physical activity should make it easier for you to do all kinds of other everyday activities such as carrying groceries and getting in and out of the tub and the car.

If you don't let arthritis stop you now, chances are good it won't slow you down later in life.

Physical Activity.
The Arthritis Pain Reliever.
Call 1-800-568-4045
for more information.

A message from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The Arthritis Foundation
The Department of Health & Human Services

What to Take for Arthritis Pain?

Physical Activity.
The Arthritis Pain Reliever.

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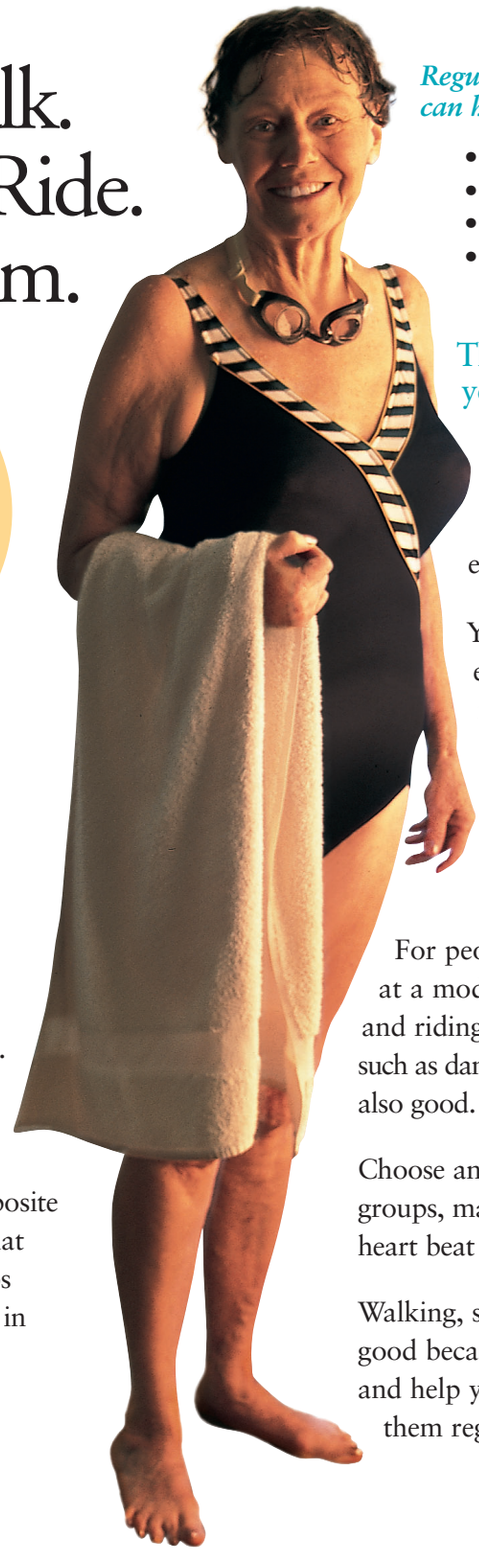
Take a Walk. Take a Bike Ride. Take a Swim.

Get More Active Today.

Get more out of life down the road.



Arthritis hurts. Moderate physical activity can help.

Like most of the 70 million Americans who have arthritis, you've probably tried all kinds of things to relieve your pain.

Research shows that becoming more physically active can help. For many years, everyone thought that people with arthritis should rest to spare their joints. In fact, just the opposite is true. Recent studies show that moderate physical activity helps people with arthritis feel better in several ways.

Regular moderate physical activity can help you:

- *Feel less pain.*
- *Move more easily and do more activities.*
- *Feel more energetic and positive.*
- *Keep your muscles, bones, and joints healthy.*

The sooner you start, the sooner you'll feel better.

If your joints hurt, you may not feel like being active. However, lack of activity can actually make your joints even more stiff and painful.

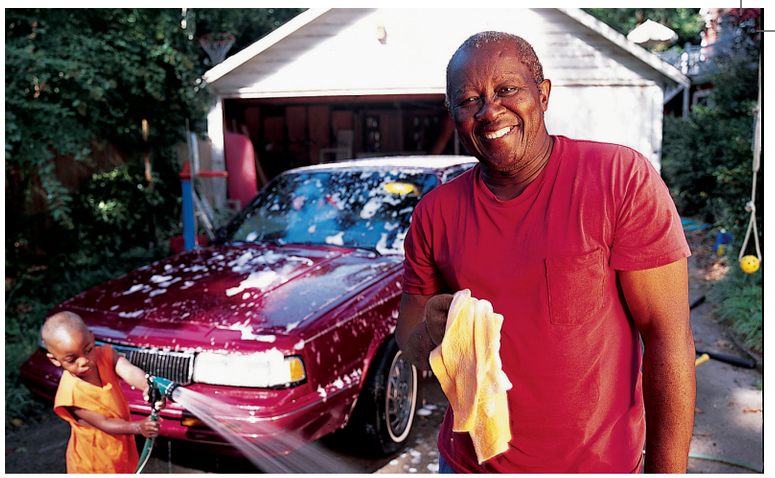
You may hurt a little at first, especially if you are not used to it. But, most people who stick with a program of regular physical activity begin to feel better within four to six weeks.

What types of physical activity are best?

For people with arthritis, low-impact activities at a moderate pace – like walking, swimming, and riding a bicycle – are best. Everyday activities such as dancing, gardening, and washing the car are also good.

Choose an activity that moves large muscle groups, makes you breathe a little harder and your heart beat a little faster.

Walking, swimming, and biking are particularly good because they will strengthen your heart and help you control your weight if you do them regularly.



- *Walking helps to improve energy and heart health.*
- *Swimming puts less stress on your joints and also strengthens your whole body.*
- *Bicycling increases your stamina. With a stationary bike, you can get all the fitness benefits of outdoor riding without the traffic and other outdoor hazards.*

Start slowly. Warm up and cool down.

If it's been a while since you've done regular physical activity, start slowly and gradually work your way up to 30 minutes a day, 3 or more days a week.

Start with 10 or 15 minutes at a time. Let your body be your guide. And don't overdo it. If you can't carry on a conversation, or if you feel severe pain during the activity, you're probably pushing too hard.

Start and end your activity at a slower pace to give your body a chance to warm up and cool down. For example, start and end your walk with 5 minutes of walking at a slower speed. Some activities may be more comfortable if you start with gentle stretching.