



www.arthritis.org
800-283-7800

Range-Of-Motion Exercises

EXERCISE CAN HELP YOUR ARTHRITIS

People with arthritis can often benefit from a balanced exercise program. The exercises that can help a person with arthritis are easy to do.

For many of us, getting started with exercise is the hardest part. But in a short time you will feel better. When you feel better you will enjoy exercise and your life much more.

THREE MAIN TYPES OF EXERCISES THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAM ARE:

- Range-of-motion exercises
- Strengthening exercises
- Endurance exercises

This guide will help you learn some range-of-motion exercises that could help reduce your arthritis pain. “**Range of motion**” is the normal amount your joints can be moved in certain directions.

Talk to your doctor before you start any type of exercise program.

Range-of-motion exercises help:

- Reduce the stiffness in your joints
- Keep your joints flexible

Before you start doing range-of-motion exercises:

- Check your joints, from head to toe, to see which ones are stiff.
- Exercise the joints that are most stiff.
- Talk to your doctor.

Remember the two-hour pain rule: Exercise might make your muscles sore. But it should relieve your arthritis pain. If the pain is worse two hours after you finish, then you may have exercised too much.

EXAMPLES OF RANGE-OF-MOTION EXERCISES

Do two sets of each exercise. A set is when you repeat an exercise more than once without a rest in between. You should do an exercise 3 to 10 times in each set.

DO THESE EXERCISES EVERY DAY.



Head turns

- Look straight ahead
- Turn your head to look over shoulder
- Hold three seconds
- Return to front
- Repeat to other side



Forward arm reach

- Put arms out in front, palms facing one another
- Raise one or both arms as high as possible (one arm may help the other, if needed)
- Lower your arms slowly

Back pat and rub

- Reach one arm up to pat back
- Reach the other arm behind lower back
- Slide hands toward each other
- Hold it three seconds
- Alternate arm position



Elbow bend and turn

- Touch fingers to shoulders, palms toward you
- Turn palms down as you straighten elbows out to side



Knee lift

- Sit straight up
- Lift one knee up three or four inches off chair
- Hold three seconds and lower
- Repeat with other knee (you may help by lifting with your hands under your thigh)

Remember:

- Always cool down after exercising!
- You can feel better.
- Keep a positive attitude about yourself and your exercise program.
- You will get better at doing these exercises the more you do them.
- The more you do them the better you will feel.

For more information: The Arthritis Foundation offers a wide variety of books, brochures and videos about different forms of arthritis, treatment and self-management techniques to help you take control of your arthritis. To order any of these products, become an Arthritis Foundation member or to subscribe to the Arthritis Foundation's award-winning consumer health magazine, *Arthritis Today*, call (800) 283-7800. Call or visit our Web site (www.arthritis.org) to find out how you can take control of your arthritis and start living better today!

This brochure has been reviewed by the AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RHEUMATOLOGY.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Arthritis Foundation is to improve lives through leadership in the prevention, control and cure of arthritis and related diseases.



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