

# DIVISION OF POPULATION HEALTH PARTNER TOOLKIT

## ARTHRITIS AWARENESS MONTH

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May is Arthritis Awareness Month. It's a time to understand arthritis better – what causes it, its symptoms, and how it can be treated. Let's spread the word to patients, employers, clinicians, public health advisors, policymakers, and the public.

As part of CDC's commitment to improving the quality of life of adults with arthritis, we developed resources to support our partners in informing and educating people about arthritis and how to manage it.

This year, CDC is emphasizing the importance of staying active during Arthritis Awareness Month. Physical activity is key to managing joint pain caused by arthritis. Unfortunately, many people aren't aware of this, and some health care providers don't advise their patients about it.

To help tackle this issue, this toolkit offers resources you can use to encourage:

- People with arthritis to be active.
- Health care providers to talk to their patients about the benefits of being active for managing arthritis and other chronic conditions.
- Public health advisors and policymakers to support community programs that promote physical activity, especially in areas with fewer resources.

We encourage you to use these resources in your social media, newsletters, blogs, presentations, websites, and other communication channels throughout May and in the future.

Let's spread awareness and **ENCOURAGE ACTION!**

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## NEW PUBLISHED RESEARCH

### RACIAL & ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN PREVALENCE OF ARTHRITIS

CDC recently [published new research in Arthritis Care and Research](#) shedding light on racial and ethnic disparities in adult arthritis prevalence, severe joint pain, and provider counseling about physical activity. This paper reflects CDC's commitment to advancing research that helps us better understand and support people across the U.S. with arthritis.

Here are some key findings from our latest research:

- Severe joint pain is more prevalent among American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN, 39%), non-Hispanic Black (36%), and Hispanic (36%) adults with arthritis compared to White (23%) adults with arthritis.
- More than 40% of adults with arthritis do not receive counseling from their health care providers on the benefits of physical activity for arthritis management.

The research offers several recommendations:

- Educate clinicians on the benefits of physical activity for adults with arthritis, highlighting available in-person self-directed and online intervention programs and resources for arthritis management.
- Address social and environmental barriers that hinder individuals with arthritis from engaging in physical activity.
- Support evidence-based arthritis management and activity programs, including development of additional culturally relevant programs for AI/AN adults.

These findings and recommendations have been incorporated into the resources below.

Thank you for working with us to improve arthritis management for all individuals.

## GRAPHICS FOR USE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- **When to Use:** These graphics may be used with the suggested social media posts in the next section, in social media posts your organization creates on arthritis, on websites, in presentations or in other communications materials.
- **Sized for Platforms:** LinkedIn, Facebook (Post & Story), Twitter/X, or Instagram (Post & Story).



Double Click for Facebook Graphic



Double Click for Instagram Graphic



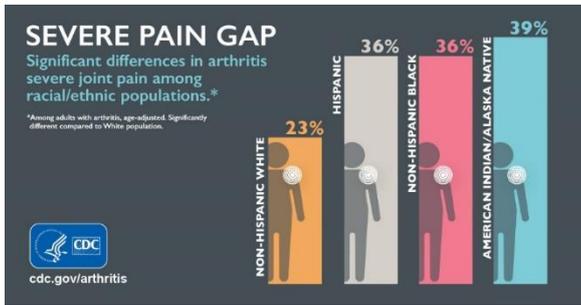
Double Click for X/ Twitter Graphic



Double Click for LinkedIn Graphic



Double Click for Stories Graphic



## SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

- **When to Use:** These sample social media posts can be used during Arthritis Awareness Month or other times of the year. They were developed as evergreen options that your organization can use at any time. We have included our suggestion of the social media graphic that best accompanies each post.
- **Post Length for Platforms:** LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter/X, or Instagram.
- **Intended Audiences:** General Public, Public Health Officials/Decision Makers, and Health Care Providers

### SUGGESTED HASHTAGS:

- #ArthritisAwareness
- #ArthritisAwarenessMonth
- #BeActive
- #JointPain
- #PainRelief

## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS TARGETING THE PUBLIC

### Channel: X/Twitter

Looking for ways to help reduce your arthritis pain?

- 🚶 Take a brisk walk
- 🧘 Join a yoga class
- 🌿 Spend time in the garden
- 🎵 Groove to beat

Any kind of physical activity is better than none. Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/4aA9jhX>



Have arthritis pain? It's time to get moving! There are several programs to help you get active while managing your arthritis. Discover programs that can help you get moving at: <https://bit.ly/3UbVu3X>



## [Channel: Facebook](#)

Have arthritis pain? It's time to get moving!

There are lots of free or low-cost ways to fit fun activities into your day –from brisk walking 🚶 or yoga 🧘 to gardening 🌱 or dancing 💃. A little here and there can quickly add up to the recommended 150 minutes of activity each week.

Find out what kinds of activities can help reduce your arthritis pain at:

<https://bit.ly/4aA9jhX>



Arthritis pain relief does not have to come in a medicine bottle. Being physically active can help reduce arthritis pain and prevent or delay arthritis from getting worse.

150 minutes of physical activity is recommended each week, but any amount of activity is better than none.

Discover free or low-cost activities to help you safely get your arthritis pain under control at: <https://bit.ly/4aA9jhX>

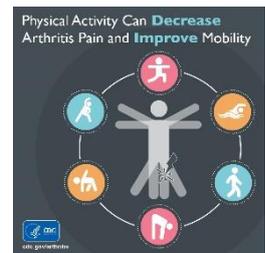


## [Channel: Instagram](#)

A little movement can go a long way towards helping people with arthritis feel better.

There are lots of free or low-cost ways to work fun and easy activities into your day – from brisk walking 🚶 or yoga 🧘 to gardening 🌱 or dancing 💃.

Check out [cdc.gov/arthritis](https://cdc.gov/arthritis) for more ways to help relieve your pain and prevent or delay arthritis from getting worse.



Arthritis pain relief does not have to come in a medicine bottle. Being physically active can help reduce arthritis pain and delay arthritis from getting worse.

Discover free or low-cost activities that are easy and fun at [cdc.gov/arthritis](https://cdc.gov/arthritis).

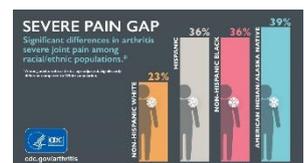


## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS TARGETING PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS

### [Channel: X/Twitter](#)

New research from @CDCgov finds people from several racial and ethnic minority groups report more severe joint pain. Low-impact activities can help reduce pain, but many are unaware or lack access to programs to help them safely get moving.

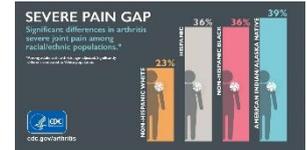
<https://bit.ly/4cWCTzY>



[Channel: LinkedIn](#)

New research from @Centers for Disease Control and Prevention finds people in several racial and ethnic minority groups report more severe joint pain than their White counterparts.

Low-impact physical activity is one of the best ways to help reduce arthritis pain, but many people lack awareness or access to programs to help them safely work physical activity into their lives. Read more about CDC-recognized lifestyle management programs at: <https://bit.ly/3UbVu3X>



## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS TARGETING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

[Channel: LinkedIn](#)

Patients value their clinicians' recommendations.

Health care providers can help patients take the first step towards pain relief by counseling them on the importance of physical activity to help reduce arthritis pain and delay its progression, as well as referring them to arthritis-appropriate programs to safely stay active.

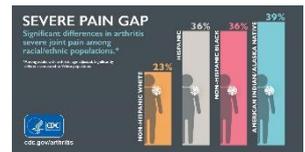
CDC offers arthritis patient care recommendations at <https://bit.ly/4cLQr1f>



Arthritis pain relief does not have to come from a prescription.

Research from @Centers for Disease Control and Prevention finds 2 out of 5 patients are not receiving provider counseling on the benefits of physical activity to manage their arthritis—one of the best ways to help reduce arthritis pain.

There are CDC-recognized, evidence-based arthritis programs available in-person and virtually to improve the quality of life of adults with arthritis. Discover how these programs can help patients at <https://oaaction.unc.edu/aaebi/>



## INFOGRAPHICS FOR OTHER USES (SUCH AS PRESENTATIONS, WEBSITES)

CDC has developed two long-form infographics for use on the web or in print. One provides an overview of arthritis and the other focuses on opioid use linked to arthritis. These infographics have also been cut down into bite-size communications for social and digital distribution.

- **When to Use:** These infographics can be used on websites, in presentations, and other digital communication platforms.

# WHAT IS ARTHRITIS INFOGRAPHIC

**ARTHRTIS**

**What is Arthritis?**  
Arthritis includes more than **100** different conditions that affect joints and the surrounding tissue.

The most common form of arthritis in the United States is **Osteoarthritis**. **Gout and Rheumatoid arthritis** are also common forms of arthritis.

Arthritis is a leading cause of disability in the United States.

**Symptoms include**

- Pain
- Aching
- Stiffness
- Swelling
- in or around the joints

**Who does arthritis affect?**  
Arthritis affects people of all ages but **9 in 10 adults** with arthritis are **45 years and older**. **Arthritis affects about 1 in 5 adults** in the United States—**That's 53.2 million people.**

**How can people who have arthritis manage symptoms?**

- Get an early and accurate diagnosis by talking to your doctor if you have joint pain and other arthritis symptoms.
- Increase physical activity, which helps reduce joint pain and stiffness.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Join a self-management education workshop.
- Take steps to minimize or prevent injuries to joints.

**CDC** Learn More: [www.CDC.gov/arthritis](http://www.CDC.gov/arthritis)

[Click here for full infographic](#)

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Double Click for Infographic

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Double Click for Infographic

# ARTHRITIS PAIN AND PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS INFOGRAPHIC

**Arthritis Pain and Prescription Opioids**

Arthritis is a leading cause of chronic pain.

More than **1 in 4** adults with arthritis report **severe joint pain**. (**15 M people**)

Severe joint pain can limit daily functions and seriously reduce quality of life.

**Arthritis Pain and Opioid Prescriptions**

Opioid use is common among people with arthritis.

In **2022 8.5 M** people in the U.S. reported misuse of prescription pain relievers in the past year.

**How can arthritis pain be managed without opioid prescriptions?**

- Physical activity is an effective pain reliever for arthritis and can reduce pain by up to 40%.
- Arthritis pain relief from non-opioid medications is similar to opioids. Pain management should include both clinical and behavioral strategies.
- Join a proven, community-based physical activity program or self-management education workshop (Walk with Ease, PEARLS).

Physical activity is proven to reduce arthritis pain. Try low-impact activities.

- Walking
- Swimming
- Biking

**CDC** Learn More: [www.CDC.gov/arthritis](http://www.CDC.gov/arthritis)

[Click here for full infographic](#)

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Double Click for Infographic

# SAMPLE NEWSLETTER OR BLOG LANGUAGE

## ARTICLE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

### Encourage Arthritis Patients to Stay Active

Arthritis Awareness Month can be a great time to **talk to your patients with arthritis about the [benefits of staying active to ease arthritis pain](#)**.

Many people aren't aware of how important physical activity is for managing joint pain caused by arthritis. As a health care provider, you play a vital role in educating patients about how staying active can reduce arthritis pain and slow its progression. You can also suggest proven arthritis-appropriate programs to help patients safely maintain an active lifestyle.

Engaging in joint-friendly physical activities not only reduces arthritis pain but also improves joint function, mood, and quality of life for adults living with arthritis.

Here are some options and [resources](#) to help you counsel arthritis patients:

- **[Low-impact physical activities](#)**: Walking, biking, swimming, and water activities are all good ways to ease arthritis pain and are safe for most adults. Talk about these exercise options with your patients and determine which ones are most appropriate for them.
- **[Weekly physical activity](#)**: Encourage patients to aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week. This could include brisk walking for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
- **[Community-based physical activity classes](#)**: Recommend [classes at local YMCAs](#), [parks](#), and recreation or community centers that teach arthritis-friendly exercises.
- **[Self-management education workshops](#)**: Advise that these workshops help people develop skills and confidence in managing their symptoms.
- **[Weight Management](#)**: Stress the importance of maintaining a healthy weight. Research shows that patients who receive weight counseling from a health care professional are more likely to try weight loss.

By discussing these options, you can help patients find ways to manage their arthritis pain through physical activity. Visit the [CDC website](#) for more information and resources.

## ARTICLE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

### Move To Improve: How To Stay Active with Arthritis

Arthritis can lead to severe joint pain and may limit your normal activities, but there are several ways you can reduce arthritis pain without medication. Research has shown being physically active is one of the best ways to treat arthritis.

Physical activity can help your arthritis by:

- Reducing pain
- Improving range of motion and function
- Increasing energy
- Improving mood
- Supporting weight management
- Preventing or improving other conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

**How much activity should you aim for?** Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week-- like brisk walking. This can be broken up into smaller segments such as 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Even if you can't reach this goal, staying as active as you can is good for your health. Remember, any amount of physical activity is better than none!

**What kinds of activities should you do?** You should choose physical activities that are gentle on your body and joints to reduce the risk of injury. These activities can include:

- Brisk walking
- Yoga
- Gardening
- Dancing
- Swimming

Explore physical activity programs in your community that are designed to reduce arthritis symptoms and teach you how to safely increase your activity level. Many of these programs are free or low-cost and available at local YMCAs, parks, and recreation or community centers. Learn more about them [here](#).

Remember, your doctor is a reliable source of information about physical activity. If you have concerns or questions, talk to your doctor about the right level of activity for your abilities and health goals. For more tips on staying active, go to the [CDC website](#).

## FREE CME/ ABIM MOC/ CE ACTIVITY FOR PROVIDERS

Thanks to a collaboration between the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) and Medscape Education, health care providers can participate in a free, [convenient Lifestyle Management Programs for Arthritis: Expand Your Knowledge on Evidence-Based Interventions](#) CME activity.

**Audience:** Primary care physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, community health workers, rheumatologists, orthopedic surgeons, sports medicine physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners (NPs), physician assistants (PAs), and other healthcare practitioners (HCPs) who provide care to patients with arthritis.

**Goal:** For learners to be better able to assess their learning needs related to non-pharmacologic interventions for patients with arthritis and be better able to incorporate arthritis appropriate evidence-based interventions (AAEBIs) into their patients' treatment programs.

**Course Credits:** Participants are awarded up to 0.25 CME/ ABIM MOC/CE credits.

NACDD developed several outreach materials to help increase awareness of this opportunity to clinicians.



**LIFESTYLE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS FOR ARTHRITIS**

Expand Your Knowledge on Evidence-Based Interventions

0.25 CME / ABIM MOC / CE **FREE**

Developed through the partnership between the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and Medscape Education.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS  
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.



Double Click for  
Provider Content

## **PODCASTS**

### **FOR PROVIDERS & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS**

#### **TAI CHI FOR ARTHRITIS PROGRAM**

Audrey Williams, a Public Health Advisor with CDC's Arthritis Management and Well-Being Program, discusses the benefits of Tai Chi for arthritis management.

Listen to this podcast at: <https://tools.cdc.gov/medialibrary/index.aspx#/media/id/744626>

You can subscribe to future podcast on arthritis management at <https://bit.ly/3TuqY2E>.

## **VIDEO**

### **FOR PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS**

#### **CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR ARTHRITIS**

This video discusses Chronic Disease Self-Management Education Programs and their ability to help manage arthritis, as well as other chronic health conditions.

View this video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcUhEnC72rE>

## **KEY WEBSITES**

- PUBLIC: CDC Physical Activity for Arthritis - <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/physical-activity/index.html>
- PUBLIC: Arthritis Foundation Helpline - <https://rheumatology.org/osteoarthritis-guideline>
- PUBLIC: The Weight & Osteoarthritis Connection: <https://oaaction.unc.edu/resource-library/prevent-oa/weight-management/>
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: No-cost CME activity available to HCP on arthritis-appropriate interventions - <https://chronicdisease.org/empowering-healthcare-providers-to-educate-patients-on-arthritis-interventions/>
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: CDC Treating & Managing Arthritis - [https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/healthcare/treating\\_arthritis.html](https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/healthcare/treating_arthritis.html)
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: CDC Arthritis & Joint Pain Management - <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/pain/joint-pain-management.htm>
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: Treatment Guidelines for Osteoarthritis - <https://www.arthritis.org/diseases/more-about/guidelines-for-osteoarthritis-treatments>
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: Exercise is Medicine - <https://www.exerciseismedicine.org/>
- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS: Osteoarthritis Guideline - <https://rheumatology.org/osteoarthritis-guideline>