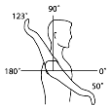


Get a Grip On Joint Pain!

Got aches? You're in good company. Millions of Americans have some sort of long-term (chronic) pain. Millions more suffer from short-term (acute) pain. Pain affects us all, whether it's minor aches and pains or a chronic, longer lasting condition. While we all occasionally have a little twinge here or a little ache there, it's important to know when we can treat it ourselves and when it might be something more serious.

JOINT PAIN

- Joint pain can range from mildly irritating to debilitating. It may go away after a few weeks (acute), or last for several weeks or months (chronic). Most joint pain can be managed with medication, physical therapy, and alternative treatments.
- Activities that make pain worse should be modified, but you should stay active. Avoiding activity usually leads to increased joint stiffness and deconditioning, but doing too much can make your pain worse.
- The 2-hour rule is a useful guideline to evaluate excessive activity. If you hurt 2 hours after an activity, it means you've done too much.
- Moderate exercise can help improve your health without hurting your joints. Exercises should include:



Range-of-motion, which moves a joint through its normal range of movement, such as raising your arms over your head or rolling your shoulders.



Strengthening exercises will help to help build strong muscles that support and protect your joints.



Aerobic (endurance) exercises, to help with your overall fitness. Examples include walking, swimming, and riding a bike. Try to work your way up to 20-30 minutes, three times a week. You can split that time into 10-minute blocks if that's easier on your joints.

Other activities, no matter how small, can help. If an activity interests you, check with your doctor about whether it's right for you. Gentle forms of yoga and tai chi might be a few activities to try.

TIPS TO TRY WHEN EXERCISING WITH JOINT PAIN:

- **Apply heat before exercising**. Heat can relax your joints and muscles and relieve any pain before you begin.
- **Move gently**. Move your joints gently for 5-10 minutes at first to warm up.
- **Go slowly**. Exercise with slow and easy movements. If you feel pain, take a break. Sharp pain may indicate something is wrong.
- **Ice afterward**. Apply ice to your joints as needed after activity, especially with joint swelling.

ABOUT THE BACK AND BACK PROBLEMS:

- The lower part of the back holds most of the body's weight. Even a minor problem with the bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, discs, or nerves in this area can cause pain when you stand, bend, or move.
- **See a health care provider** if your symptoms are severe, limit your activities, and don't go away within a few days.
- **Exercise** – A gradual return to normal activities, including exercise, is recommended. Even with mild to moderate low back symptoms, the following things can be done without putting much stress on your back: walking short distances, riding a stationary bicycle, or swimming. It is important to start any exercise program slowly and build gradually, following the advice of your health care provider.

Musculoskeletal Injuries



Causes



Overexertion



Fatigue



Prolonged static posture



Frequent or repetitive stretching



Heavy lifting

Prevention



Change positions frequently.



Set up a properly positioned workstation.



Learn the right way to do physical work.

- For example, lift with your legs, not your back!



Maintain fitness and flexibility.



Treatment Suggestions



Try chiropractic care to correct spinal misalignment.



Massage therapy promotes a relaxed state that relieves musculoskeletal pain.

Did you know?

An effective safety & health program in the workplace could save \$4-6 for every \$1 invested in it!