

COPING WITH ARTHRITIS

You are not alone! You can do well and enjoy good health despite having arthritis. Self-care and education are the keys to being successful in handling the pain and disability of arthritis.

WORK WITH YOUR MEDICAL TEAM.

Your medical team may include:

- Primary/family doctor,
- rheumatologist (a person who specializes in the treatment of arthritis),
- nurse,
- physical therapist,
- occupational therapist, or
- dietitian.

KNOW WHAT TYPE OR TYPES OF ARTHRITIS YOU HAVE.

Make a point to learn more about:

- medicine you are taking,
- exercise programs,
- relaxation and pain management,
- joint protection,
- tools to assist you with daily living,
- balancing rest and daily activity,
- diet and weight control, and
- managing stress.

ENJOY A "GOOD-HEALTH ATTITUDE"

- Be flexible and open to treatment choices.
- Focus on what you can do instead of what you can not.
- Focus on your strengths instead of weak spots.
- Find new ways to carry on and enjoy your favorite activities.
- Break down activities into small tasks that you can manage.
- Fit exercise and a balanced diet into your daily routine.



Arthritis



- Find ways to lower and manage stress.
- Balance rest with activity.
- Remember it is O.K. to ask for help! Develop a support system of family, friends, and health experts.
- Keep a sense of humor.

SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS DO HELP

Self-Help programs help people learn about arthritis, its treatment, exercise and relaxation, patient/health care provider communication, and problem solving.

People with arthritis find that self-management programs help them:

- understand the disease;
- reduce pain while remaining active;
- cope physically, emotionally, and mentally;
- have greater control over the disease, and
- build confidence in their ability to live an active, independent life.

For more information contact:

Missouri Arthritis & Osteoporosis Program: 1-800-316-0935
or Arthritis Foundation: 1-800-283-7800

This publication may be provided in alternative formats such as Braille, large print or audiotape by contacting 1-800-316-0935. TDD users can access the above phone number by calling 1-800-735-2966.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER
Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.