

Arthritis: General Info

2 Main Categories of Arthritis

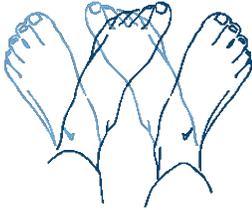
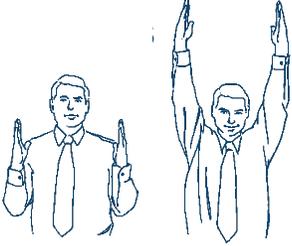
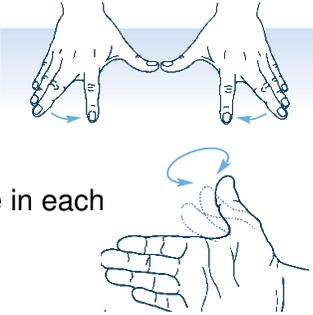
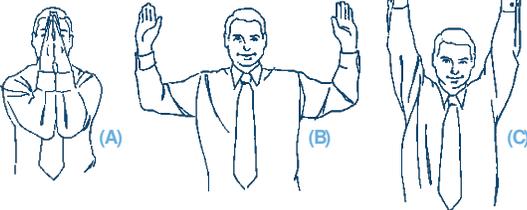
	Inflammatory Arthritis	Degenerative Arthritis
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rheumatoid arthritis • Psoriatic arthritis • Ankylosing spondylitis • Systemic lupus erythematosus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osteoarthritis • Degenerative disc disease
Who	Often starts at middle age (30-60 years) and gets worse over time.	Can start early but most people notice symptoms by 40-50 years old.
Cause	Body's immune system attacks the joints (autoimmune)	Degeneration of cartilage (covers and protects ends of bones; shock absorber and allows joints to move smoothly)
Onset	Most common way is slow onset of joint pain and stiffness starting in one joint, and spreading to many other joints. However, it can also start very dramatically and quickly.	Usually slowly with joints getting worse over a period of months to years.
Joints affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symmetrical: affects both sides of the body (e.g., both hands, both elbows) • Small joints of hands and feet • Wrist, elbow, shoulder, neck, spine, knee, hips • Any joint can be affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asymmetrical (e.g., one knee, one finger) • End joints of fingers • Neck, lower back, knees, hips
Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint pain, swelling, tenderness, redness of joints • Morning stiffness lasts over 60 min • Joints feel stiff even <i>after rest</i> • Decreased range of movement • Some get fever, weight loss, fatigue, anemia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiff, painful, swollen joints • Morning stiffness lasts over 20 min • Resting the joints usually provides relief
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) • Disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) • Steroids • Biologics • Steroid injections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analgesics • NSAIDs • Injections: steroids and viscosupplementation (hyaluronic acid)

Exercise and Arthritis

Exercise “feeds” your joints. Cartilage depends on joint movement to absorb nutrients and remove waste. Cartilage, ligaments, and bones also become stronger and more resilient with exercise. Benefits include: ↓pain, ↑ muscle strength and endurance, ↑bone strength, healthier joints, ↑range of motion, ↑fitness level, improved sleep, improved balance, ↓risk of falls, healthier body weight, ↑self confidence, and improved ability to manage stress.

The Arthritis Society. Arthritis. Retrieved from www.arthritis.ca

Arthritis: Exercises

<p>Ankle Circles Sit upright in chair with feet stretched out in front. Circle feet in one direction. Repeat in opposite direction.</p> 	<p>Forward Arm Reaches Sit or stand with elbows bent and thumbs pointing back toward your shoulders. Stretch arms overhead. If one of your arms is weak, use your other hand to assist the arm to overhead position.</p> 
<p>Heel/Toe Lift Sit forward on a chair with feet flat. Lift heels, keeping toes on floor, then lift toes. Hold three seconds then return flat.</p> 	<p>Shoulder Squeeze and Wrist Stretch Put palms and fingers together. Hold arms stretched out together in front. Pull hands in toward your chest, pressing palms together. Squeeze shoulder blades together.</p> 
<p>Knee Raises Sit on the edge of a chair with your back straight. Use your hands to lift your knee as high as you can without bending your back. Keeping your abdominals tight, slowly lower your leg back to the starting position. If you just had total hip replacement, wait three months before doing this exercise.</p> 	<p>Finger Walk and Thumb Circles Slide thumbs toward each other. Then slide each finger one at a time toward the thumb. Move the thumb in a large circle in each direction.</p> 
<p>Leg Lift with Ankle Movements Sit upright with back supported. Slowly straighten your knee. With the knee slightly bent, bend the ankle, toes pointing straight ahead. Then reverse to point them toward the ceiling. Repeat.</p> 	<p>Hip and Calf Stretch Stand with arm against a wall. Place one foot in front of the other and keep your feet apart (shoulder-width) and pointing forward. Keep shoulder and hips square and tighten abdominal muscles. Move forward, bending only at the ankles and keeping weight on the heel of the back foot.</p> 
<p>Shoulder Stretches Sit or stand with forearms pressed together in front of the body (A). Bring your elbows back to 90° (B), palms facing forward. Stretch arms overhead as far as possible (C).</p> 	<p>Walking Take a walk every day. Walking allows you to stretch your back and leg muscles and joints that can become stiff from sitting.</p> 

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