

EXERCISE

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

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.

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.

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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



Back pat and rub

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



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



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.

The Arthritis Foundation is not responsible for any injury that might happen while doing these exercises.