

## **Freedom from Osteoarthritis Pain**

Arthritis can come in different forms and cause symptoms as unique as the individual living with the condition. However, as we age, our bodies tend to become more susceptible to a certain type of arthritis – osteoarthritis. According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), almost 1 of every 2 people will develop some type of osteoarthritis by the age of 85. With an estimated 30.8 million adults diagnosed with some type of osteoarthritis from 2008 to 2011 alone, it is safe to say that you may receive an osteoarthritis diagnosis in your lifetime.



### ***What is osteoarthritis?***

According to the [National Institute on Aging](#), osteoarthritis is indeed the most common type of arthritis in older adults. This type of arthritis is caused by a breakdown in cartilage in joints. That cartilage, now broken down by wear and tear, is the main form of protection from your bones rubbing together at joints. Without that protection, adults with osteoarthritis can find themselves in significant

pain, discomfort, or a feeling of stiffness. While any joint can be affected, it is common to find seniors with osteoarthritis in the knees, hips, or back. Needless to say, without successful treatment, osteoarthritis can certainly cause normally active seniors to decrease activity that causes them pain.

### ***Ways to combat osteoarthritis pain***

If you or your loved one is having pain or stiffness in certain joints, be sure to talk to your geriatrician. The sooner you can receive physician support and guidance, the quicker you can work to reducing your pain and increasing your quality of life. That said, there are other lifestyle changes that you can also do, with your doctor's blessing, that may help decrease pain and stiffness.

While it may seem like a feat at first, daily exercise is actually one of the best ways to combat osteoarthritis pain and stiffness. Research throughout the past decade has shown that low impact exercise can not only lead to weight loss, which helps decrease

the pressure on stressed joints, but also lead to decreased pain and stiffness in joints. Try starting with a simple walk around the block or step up your commitment level with swimming or a group exercise class geared especially for osteoarthritis.

Sometimes, older adults may be unable to start with a walk around the block or their home. In these cases, range of motion exercises can be done seated or even in bed. [Our Visiting Angels](#) caregivers are available to encourage our clients to complete their exercises, giving them that extra boost of confidence and support to get it done. Beyond these official range of motion exercise, our caregivers encourage our clients to participate in as much independence in personal care and daily tasks as possible, which gives our seniors the chance to exercise and stretch through the day. For example, buttoning a shirt is excellent range of motion for fingers and drying dishes at the sink is great for balance, strength and range of motion for the upper extremities. Our team knows the importance of supporting our seniors while keeping them as active as possible. After all, a dedication to daily exercise or range of motion activities can result in the benefit of decreased pain. It is certainly worth it!

Ready to read more about senior issues that pertain to you or your loved one? Curious about other senior topics and challenges? [Check out our Family Resource Center](#) for insightful articles, caregiver tips and other important resources.

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