

# ARTHRITIS AND EXERCISE

## Range-of-Motion Exercises

To help relieve pain, people with arthritis often keep their affected joints bent—especially those in the knees, hands and fingers. This may temporarily relieve discomfort, but holding a joint in the same position may potentially cause permanent loss of mobility and hinder the ability to perform daily activities.

Range-of-Motion exercises (stretching or flexibility) help maintain normal joint function by increasing and preserving joint mobility and flexibility. They consist of exercises that gently straighten and bend the joints in a controlled manner.

## Strengthening Exercises

These types of exercises are important, as strong muscles help keep weak joints stable and comfortable and protect them against further damage. Isometric and isotonic exercises can maintain or increase muscle tissue to support your muscles without aggravating the joints.

## Endurance Exercises

When paired with a healthy diet, endurance exercises are fundamental to controlling weight, which helps to reduce excess pressure on joints. Those affected with arthritis should begin a program at a comfortable level, avoiding overexertion. This may be achieved by carefully monitoring intensity and splitting exercise time into small time increments throughout the day.

**Disclaimer:** Consult your physician or physical therapist prior to beginning any exercise regimen.