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By signing this mandate form you (A) authorise **Arthritis Ireland** to send instructions to your bank to debit your account and (B) your bank to debit your account in accordance with the instructions from **Arthritis Ireland**. As part of your rights, you are entitled to a refund from your bank under the terms and conditions of your agreement with your bank. A refund must be claimed within 8 weeks starting from the date on which your account was debited. Your rights are explained in a statement that you can obtain from your bank.

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City / County*

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Type of Payment*: Recurrent ☐ One Off ☐

Creditor Name: Arthritis Ireland

Creditor ID: IE90SDD360028

Creditor Address: 1 Clanwilliam Sq, Grand Canal Quay, D 2

Unique Reference No. (URM) For Office Use Only

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For Arthritis Ireland Information Only:

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Date of First Payment*

****Arthritis Ireland will debit your account for the amount indicated above from the first day of each month until further notice.**

Note: If you are a PAYE tax payer or are self employed, gifts of €250 in one year (€21 per month) could be worth an additional 31% to us, at no extra cost to you.

Arthritis Ireland
1 Clanwilliam Square
Grand Canal Quay
Dublin 2

Helpline LoCall 1890 252 846
Email info@arthritisireland.ie
Web www.arthritisireland.ie



10 Steps to Easier Living with Arthritis





Arthritis Ireland

€3 per Month



Additional benefits:

As a friend of Arthritis Ireland you will receive:

- 12 Month subscription to our BIG NEWS magazine which is packed full of inspiring stories and ideas from our volunteers, fundraisers, branch members and friends. BIG NEWS will keep you informed on everything going on in Ireland's arthritis community.
- An up-to-date information pack on arthritis.
- A useful arthritis friendly gift.*
- A chance to have your say in the direction of Arthritis Ireland by having voting rights at our AGM.



To read more about how to manage arthritis and to learn about the many ways your support will make a BIG difference visit arthritisireland.ie

*Free gifts are subject to change and supply.

Become a friend today

€3 per Month

Yes, I would like to help manage the pain of arthritis

☐ **Monthly* payment of €3** (€36 per annum)

*Monthly payments by Direct Debit only. See reverse for details.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

DOB:

Do you have arthritis? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, what kind of arthritis?

CREDIT CARD (Once off annual payment of €36)

€36 per annum ☐ Other (€36 + donation) € €20 per annum OAP ☐

Please charge by: VISA/VISA DEBIT ☐ Mastercard ☐

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CHEQUES AND POSTAL ORDERS

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 If you would **not** like to have voting rights at our AGM please tick here. ☐

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Arthritis is a very common condition in Ireland affecting people of all ages and from all walks of life. Its symptoms often have a big impact on the daily lives of people. Although arthritis can be difficult to live with, there are many simple measures that can help anyone with arthritis manage their symptoms and cope with daily life. They rely on input from a number of people but the most important person is you - the person with arthritis.

This booklet will put you on the path to managing your arthritis by taking an active role in understanding and treating your condition. By doing this, you will experience less pain and stay more active than those who feel there is nothing they can do. The 10 key steps listed on the next page form a simple-to-follow check list for living well with arthritis. Read the rest of the information in this book to find out more about each of the steps - and good luck on your journey to better living!



Contents

Step 1 Take control by knowing your disease	4
Arthritis - what is it? • Osteoarthritis • Inflammatory arthritis	
Step 2 Don't delay, see your doctor	8
What to expect • Different types of tests	
Step 3 Work with your healthcare team and be an important part of it	10
Making the most of your healthcare team - some tips	
Step 4 Know about your treatment options	12
Physical therapies • Medicines • Complementary therapies • Surgery	
Step 5 Find new ways to stay active	18
Why exercise? • What is the right exercise for arthritis?	
Step 6 Learn techniques to help manage your pain	22
Some pain management techniques	
Step 7 Acknowledge your feelings and seek support	24
How to cope- some tips	
Step 8 Make food choices that count	26
Food and arthritis	
Step 9 Balance your life	28
How to pace yourself	
Step 10 Make contact with Arthritis Ireland	30

1

Step one

TAKE CONTROL BY KNOWING YOUR DISEASE

It is important to remember that with arthritis, knowledge is invaluable. Spending the time to understand your type of arthritis allows you to discover the best ways to improve your condition. Many people with arthritis say that learning about their arthritis and what they can do about it gives them back a feeling of control over their lives and their health. It is important to talk to your doctor but there's lots of additional information you can also get about your arthritis.

A great way to start is to call our helpline and order some of our information booklets or visit our website on www.arthritisireland.ie where you can get plenty of information and even connect with other people with similar issues on the forums. We would also encourage you to sign up for our email updates so you can receive all the latest news, details of events and general updates before anyone else. Just go to www.arthritisireland.ie and click on the 'get the ezine' button.

Contact Arthritis Ireland on
1890 252 846 or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie



There are actually over 100 forms of arthritis that fall into two main categories of arthritis.

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is by far the most common form of arthritis. It mainly affects people over the age of 40 but it can develop at any age. Osteoarthritis can affect any joint in the body but it usually occurs in large joints that support the weight of your body such as the hips, knees and lower back. It can also occur in the hands, particularly at the base of the thumb and the end joints of the fingers.

In a healthy joint, the ends of the bones are covered by a smooth layer of cartilage. The cartilage cushions the ends of the bones and helps the joint move smoothly.

In osteoarthritis, the cartilage breaks down and becomes thin. This can be the result of:

- an injury to the joint, such as a fracture or torn cartilage - which might have happened years before arthritis appears
- being overweight - this puts extra strain on weight-bearing joints and they may become worn under the pressure
- jobs involving repetitive movements, such as heavy lifting, kneeling and squatting



- family history - if your parents have/had osteoarthritis, you are more likely to develop it, especially in the hands.

The symptoms of osteoarthritis vary from person to person. The most common signs are:

- joint pain and tenderness
- stiffness of the joints
- symptoms that worsen after overactivity or underactivity. For example, many people find their symptoms worsen after doing lots of activity such as walking or gardening, or after periods of inactivity such as when getting out of bed in the morning or after sitting for long periods.

Other symptoms include:

- swelling of the joints
- muscle weakness, which may feel like the joint is unstable or will give way
- a grinding sensation in the joints
- a feeling that the joint might lock
- loss of mobility.

A cure for osteoarthritis is yet to be discovered however there are things you can do to manage the pain and limit further damage to the cartilage.

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet 'Living with
Osteoarthritis' or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

Inflammatory arthritis

Inflammatory arthritis is a term used to describe a group of conditions which affect your immune system. This means that your body's defence system starts attacking your own tissues instead of germs, viruses and other foreign substances, which can cause pain, stiffness and joint damage. They're also known as autoimmune diseases. The three most common forms of inflammatory arthritis are:

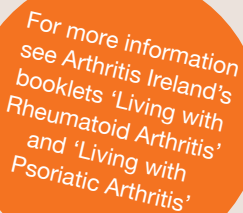
- rheumatoid arthritis
- ankylosing spondylitis
- psoriatic arthritis

These conditions are also called systemic diseases because they can affect your whole body. They can happen at any age.

There's no cure for these diseases at the moment, but the outlook for those diagnosed with inflammatory arthritis is significantly better than it was 20–30 years ago. Effective treatment begins much earlier and new drugs are available, which means less joint damage, less need for surgery and fewer complications.

The symptoms of inflammatory arthritis vary from person to person but often include:

- joint pain, especially with warmth, redness and swelling
- fatigue
- morning stiffness that lasts an hour or more
- limited movement or function of joints
- low-grade fever
- loss of appetite
- dry eyes and/or dry mouth



For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklets 'Living with
Rheumatoid Arthritis'
and 'Living with
Psoriatic Arthritis'



2

Step two

DON'T DELAY, SEE YOUR DOCTOR

Because arthritis can get worse if left untreated, you need to see your doctor as early as possible to get a proper diagnosis.

This will help you understand your arthritis and develop a plan for managing it. Early diagnosis and treatment can limit the effects of arthritis on your life and help you stay active and independent.

What to expect when you go to the doctor

When you first visit your doctor, you will be asked a number of questions about your symptoms including:

- How long have you experienced pain?
- Which joints are affected?
- When do you experience pain and what seems to cause it?

- What makes the joint feel better or worse?
- Does anybody else in your family have arthritis or joint pain?

What are the different types of tests

There is no single test for arthritis, and diagnosis can be complicated.

Your doctor will ask you about the difficulties you've been having, examine your joints and skin, test your muscle strength and take a full medical history.

They may then refer you for tests to get a better picture of what is going on.

These may include:

- A rheumatoid factor test which tests for an antibody that is found in most people who have RA. If the test is negative, your doctor may want to repeat it 6 months to a year later. However, you can have a negative test but still have RA.
- Anti-CCP, which stands for anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide antibody, is a blood test which helps your doctor confirm a diagnosis of inflammatory arthritis.
- Blood tests such as the Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate (ESR) and C-Reactive Protein (CRP), which measure the level of inflammation in your body.
- Other blood tests and a urine test to make sure that you are otherwise healthy before you are put on medication.
- Synovial fluid analysis - to rule out other diseases.
- X-rays, ultrasound and MRI scans - to help your doctor determine the degree of damage and to measure the progress of your disease.

3

Step three

WORK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM AND BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF IT

The best way to live well with arthritis is by working closely with your healthcare team.

It may include a variety of healthcare specialists, such as doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists, nurses, psychologists and complementary medicine practitioners.

Your doctor may also refer you to a rheumatologist (a specialist in conditions that affect the joints and the structures around them) who can provide you with the most up-to-date information and advice on all aspects of arthritis management and treatment. Your rheumatologist may develop a comprehensive arthritis management programme with you and will assess your ongoing response to treatment.

Remember, you are the most important member of your healthcare team. Make sure you establish and maintain good communication with all the other members.

Making the most of your healthcare team

To get the most out of a visit to your doctor or other health professional it is important to be prepared.

Here are some tips:

- Think about, and write down, the questions you want to ask before your visit.
- Always take x-rays and test results related to your condition to the consultation.

Arthritis Ireland's "My Health Organiser" is an interactive tool to keep you in control of your medical appointments. Featuring a diary, pain scale and tips on communicating with your doctor. you can order yours today by calling 1890 252 846.



- Consider taking a family member or friend with you as a second set of ears.
- Ask your doctor or health professional to explain any information that you did not understand.
- Feel free to ask questions, especially about the benefits, side effects and costs of treatments.
- Tell your doctor or health professional if you need time to think or to discuss something with family members.
- Write down any important information or instructions that you are given to help you remember.
- Ask your doctor or health professional where you can learn more about your condition or treatment.
- Write down a list of any other medicines, herbal remedies, creams or any other products you are using - including any you have bought from a supermarket, pharmacy or health food store. Any of these may interact with your arthritis medicines causing serious health problems or make other medicines (e.g. prescription medicines) less effective.

If you are unsure about treating your arthritis or planning for the future, discuss this with one of your healthcare team or seek a second opinion. They can also advise you about support services for people with arthritis and where to find more information.

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet "Let's Talk
Arthritis" or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

4

Step four

KNOW ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS

There are many treatments to relieve pain and stiffness and slow the development of your arthritis.

Work with your healthcare team to find a combination of treatments that best suits:

- your type of arthritis
- the joints affected
- the amount of pain or other symptoms you experience
- your lifestyle.

A treatment programme may include a combination of:

- physical therapies including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and podiatry
- medicines including prescription and non-prescription
- exercise
- complementary therapies
- healthy eating
- pain management techniques such as relaxation and meditation
- emotional and social support
- finding a balance between activity and rest.

This booklet will give you information on all of these, as well as where you can get further information and support.

Physical therapies

Physical therapies are often an important part of a successful arthritis treatment programme.

Physiotherapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists and other therapists offer a range of treatments that will help your joints function better.

When choosing any kind of therapist, look for an accredited practitioner or one who is a member of their professional association.

1. Physiotherapy/Physical Therapy

Physiotherapists can advise you on exercise, posture and non-medicine- based pain relief. They may also use techniques to keep your joints and muscles flexible.

Treatments that physiotherapists may use include:

- joint mobilisation
- hydrotherapy - exercise in water
- electrotherapy - the use of mild electrical impulses to treat pain and swelling
- muscle strengthening exercises and stretches.

Physical therapists focus on the manual treatment of the soft tissue - muscles, tendons, ligaments, fascia and use hands-on techniques to diagnose, prevent or treat underlying conditions and problems. It is proven as being very safe, non-invasive and is of course, drug free.

Each treatment is individually tailored. The therapist, after carefully noting your history will consider psychological, social and environmental factors in devising a treatment plan and in suggesting appropriate changes to lifestyle, work practice or exercise.

2. Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapists can advise you on how to take stress and strain off joints affected by arthritis.

They look at all aspects of your daily life, including your job, the work you do around your home, as well as your leisure activities. They can then show you ways to conserve your energy by simplifying daily tasks, and how to protect your joints when you are performing those tasks.

Occupational therapists can also advise you on:

- any special equipment you might need to help you get about, such as walking sticks or wheelchairs
- splints and braces you might need, particularly for your hands
- aids and equipment that can make daily activities such as showering and cooking easier on your joints.

3. Podiatry

Podiatrists treat problems in the feet. They can help you with footwear, nail care and orthoses (shoe inserts) if you have arthritis in your feet, legs or lower spine.

Medicines

Drugs can be extremely effective in reducing pain and can also slow down the effects of your disease. It is important that you feel in control of your medication and can discuss with your doctor what works best for you. Part of this is about understanding the types of drugs that might be used to treat your condition and how they work.

There are a wide range of drugs used to treat arthritis, however there are two main families of drugs.



1. Drugs which control the symptoms of your disease (Painkillers and NSAIDs)

■ Painkillers (analgesics)

These are pain-relieving drugs such as paracetamol that do not affect the arthritis itself, but help relieve the pain and stiffness.

■ Non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

These reduce inflammation. They can also give relief from pain and reduce joint swelling.

■ Creams, gels and ointments

These can be rubbed into the skin over a painful joint to relieve pain. Some creams and ointments relieve pain by simply warming or cooling the skin when rubbed in. Other creams, which appear to be more effective for pain, contain ingredients such as anti-inflammatory medicine or capsaicin (a substance found in cayenne and chilli peppers) to help relieve pain.

2. Drugs which affect the disease itself (DMARDs, Biologics and Steroids)

■ Disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs)

DMARDs tackle the root of the rheumatoid and other forms of inflammatory arthritis rather than just its symptoms. The aim of treatment with disease modifying drugs is to suppress all inflammation in your joints and get you to the point where you feel well again. They act slowly, taking weeks or even months to have their full effect. Rheumatologists



recommend that DMARDs be started as soon as possible in order to give patients with inflammatory arthritis the best results. One of the most commonly used DMARDs is methotrexate.

■ **Biologics**

Biologics are a group of medications that suppress the immune system and reduce the inflammation. They are a well established inflammatory arthritis treatment option for patients who have had an inadequate response to, or who have proved intolerant to DMARDs.

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet 'Drugs &
Complementary
Therapies' or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

■ **Steroids**

These can be very effective in reducing inflammation. They can be taken orally or injected into joints and around tendons.

DMARDs and biologics are the mainstay of medical therapy and are the only therapy proven to reduce joint inflammation and prevent joint damage.

Complementary Therapies

Many people with arthritis try a range of complementary or alternative therapies in addition to the conventional drugs prescribed by their doctor. Remember though, what works for one person may well not work for another. Examples of complementary therapies include acupuncture, massage, aromatherapy, naturopathy and herbal medicines.

It is important to research any complementary therapy you are planning to try and discuss them with your doctor.

Surgery

If medicines have not worked for you, and you are unable to go about your day-to-day life because of pain and loss of mobility, you may require joint replacement surgery. These are commonly performed operations and most people find that joint replacement surgery improves their quality of life.

If you are considering having surgery some of the key things to consider are:

- Is your pain severely affecting your quality of life?
- Is a joint severely damaged?
- Are you struggling to carry out daily activities, such as dressing, shopping and working?

Your doctor will refer you to an orthopaedic surgeon who can advise you on whether surgery is required. To make a fully informed choice about surgery, find out about the possible risks of surgery, waiting lists, costs and recovery time.

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet 'Surgery and
Arthritis' or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

5

Step five

FIND NEW WAYS TO STAY ACTIVE

Research has found that regular exercise is one of the most effective treatments for arthritis.

Physical activity helps broadly in two ways. Firstly, exercise will help your arthritis by:

- decreasing the pain in your joints and muscles
- maintaining and increasing the flexibility of your joints and muscles
- strengthening muscles - this will help take the load off your joints, and make the joints more stable
- decreasing or relieving muscle tension - tension adds to the pain of arthritis and in the long term can lead to poor posture and joint deformity
- improving your posture and balance - this will take weight off affected joints, and reduce your risk of falling.

For more information see Arthritis Ireland's booklet "Physical Activity and Arthritis" or visit www.arthritisireland.ie

Secondly, regular exercise will improve your overall health. This means you will be able to do more in life, feel more in control of your arthritis and be better able to manage pain. In particular, exercise will:

- improve your heart and lung fitness
- help control weight and reduce body fat - this will also reduce the load on weight-bearing joints such as feet, knees and hips

- decrease stress
- strengthen bones
- improve your sleep
- decrease fatigue and tiredness
- create a feeling of general well-being.

Types of exercises that are beneficial for arthritis

Not all forms of exercise are appropriate for every kind of arthritis.

Before you start to exercise, it is important to ask your doctor and healthcare team to help you develop a programme that will suit your type of arthritis, general health and lifestyle.

Generally, you will need to do a mix of three types of activities:

- flexibility exercises
- strengthening exercises
- aerobic exercises.

Check out Arthritis Ireland's "Take Control with Exercise" DVD and book, a tried and tested exercise programme for people with arthritis. For more information www.arthritisireland.ie





Flexibility

These are exercises designed to maintain or improve the range of movement of the joints and muscles.

Mobility exercises are especially important for stiff joints and muscles, although all your joints will benefit from being put through their range of movement each day.

Examples include moving each joint as far as it will comfortably go, muscle stretches and yoga.

Strengthening

These exercises are designed to increase the power of the muscles. Strong muscles help to support and take pressure off sore joints. Strengthening exercises also help strengthen bones and improve balance.

Examples include exercises using weights, dumbbells and resistance bands.

Aerobic

These are the exercises that will benefit the heart, lungs and your general well-being. These are usually activities that use the larger muscles in the body, rather than exercising a specific area, and may make you 'puff' a little. Examples include brisk walking, swimming and cycling.

Examples of exercises that are good for arthritis

There are many activities that can be beneficial for people with arthritis. The best activities are those you find enjoyable and are convenient. Low-impact exercises, with less body weight or force going through your joints, are usually most comfortable. Examples of low-impact activities include:

- walking - a simple way to increase fitness
- exercising in water, such as hydrotherapy (with a physiotherapist), swimming or water exercise classes
- strength training
- tai chi, yoga and pilates - good for flexibility and strength, as well as relaxation and stress management
- cycling
- dancing - excellent for flexibility and fitness and also helps build stability in the joints
- chair-based exercises.

Arthritis Ireland has a vibrant network of walking groups nationwide. Visit www.arthritisireland.ie to find one in your community.

Hydrotherapy or “water exercise” is a popular exercise for people with arthritis. The buoyancy of the water takes pressure off painful joints and you may find you can move more freely than you can on land. Warm water can also be soothing for sore muscles and stiff joints.

“Aerobic exercise burns off calories, speeds up the body’s metabolism, helps maintain a strong heart and helps muscles work more effectively”

6

Step six

LEARN TECHNIQUES TO HELP MANAGE YOUR PAIN

You may have to accept that sometimes medicines, physical therapies and other treatments cannot relieve all of your pain.

Pain may limit some of the things you do, but it doesn't have to control your life. There are many techniques you can use to cope with pain so you can go on living your life the way you want to. Your mind plays an important role in how you feel pain. Thinking of pain as a signal to take positive action can help turn it to your advantage. Also you can learn ways to manage your pain. What works for one person may not work for another, so you may have to try different techniques until you find what works best for you.

Here are some things you can do to manage your arthritis pain:

- Make sure you are making the most of your medicines and physical therapies. Visit your doctor regularly to make sure you are getting the best treatment for your arthritis symptoms.
- Take care of your body. Exercise to improve your fitness and strength, eat a healthy diet, and get a good night's sleep every night.
- Use heat and cold treatments for extra pain relief. A warm bath or shower, or a heat pack placed over a painful joint for 15 minutes, can provide effective pain relief. An ice pack may reduce swelling and relieve pain in the same way. Ask your doctor or physiotherapist which type of treatment (hot or cold) is best for you.

- Find some distraction techniques that work for you. These may include exercising, reading, listening to music, or seeing a movie. Anything that focuses your attention on something enjoyable, instead of your pain, will help you.
- Learn some relaxation techniques. When you are stressed, your muscles become tense, making pain feel more severe. Relaxation techniques such as meditation or deep breathing help decrease muscle tension.
- Ask your physiotherapist about transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). A TENS machine applies very mild electric pulses via small electrodes (pads) to block pain messages going from the painful area to your brain. TENS can be very useful for longer-term pain but does not work for all people. You should see a physiotherapist to trial a TENS machine, and to learn how to use it correctly.
- You may find massage and acupuncture useful to help control pain and improve relaxation.

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet 'Coping with
Pain' or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

“Because the water supports your weight,
the range of movement in your joints
should increase and pain decrease”



7 Step seven

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS AND SEEK SUPPORT

It is natural to feel frustrated, angry, scared, depressed and to feel a sense of loss and shock at the prospect of having arthritis.

Many people with arthritis fear what the future might hold and are frightened by the impact arthritis might have on their everyday life.

How to cope

People with arthritis often feel irritated about their limitations. This is a natural reaction. Unfortunately, it is likely there will be some activities you may no longer be able to do - like running a marathon. Part of learning to live well with arthritis is to accept that certain things are no longer possible.

To help you cope with the changes that arthritis brings you need to:

- Find new activities and challenges that you can do with arthritis and that will give you satisfaction
- Think about this process of adjustment as “just another part of growing” - it is about learning new skills and adjusting to experiences
- Work on developing a positive mental attitude
- Getting a good night's sleep restores your energy and improves your ability to manage your pain both physically and emotionally
- Talk to people who have gone through what you are experiencing. Their experiences may not be identical but they can tell you about things that helped them.
- Talk to your friends, your doctor, a counsellor or a psychologist if you have strong feelings of loss or unhappiness. You are not alone and do not have to make these adjustments all by yourself. There are always people who can listen to you and help. Most people find talking through their experiences helpful.
- Regular exercise serves to benefit both the body and the mind

For more information
see Arthritis Ireland's
booklet 'Coping with
Emotions' or visit
www.arthritisireland.ie

“Talk to your doctor or a physiotherapist about getting started to help you avoid an injury by over-doing it”

8

Step eight

MAKE FOOD CHOICES THAT COUNT

Healthy eating

There are many myths about food and arthritis. Unfortunately, most of it is wishful thinking. No diet has been proven by research to cure arthritis and there is very little scientific evidence that specific foods have an effect on arthritis. For example, it is unproven that 'acidic' foods such as tomatoes can cause arthritis or make it worse.

However, this does not mean that a particular diet will not work for an individual. It is always important to take notice and play an active part in your disease control. For example, if you notice that you feel worse on a regular basis after eating a specific food, forgo it for a period and see if it makes a difference. It is a good idea to make notes on your experience and show this to your doctor.

A healthy, balanced diet is important for maintaining your general health and well-being.

If you are overweight, a healthy diet will also help you reduce your weight, which will lessen the pressure on weight-bearing joints such as knees, ankles, hips and spine. This will help reduce the amount of pain you experience.

Some people with certain forms of arthritis can lose their appetite. If this happens to you, try eating more meals in smaller portions throughout the day. This will help provide the sustenance you need.

Foods that affect and reduce inflammation

Omega 3 oils

Although most foods have no effect on arthritis, studies show that eating foods rich in omega-3 fats can help reduce inflammation in some forms of arthritis. While these effects are modest compared to medicines, omega-3 fats do not have serious side effects. They also have other health benefits, such as reduced risk of heart disease and heart attack. Omega-3 fats have not been studied in all forms of arthritis. Current research suggests omega-3 fats are helpful for people with inflammatory arthritis, such as rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and psoriatic arthritis, as well as lupus (systemic lupus erythematosus). Fish oils have not been thoroughly tested in other forms of arthritis, such as osteoarthritis, so it is unclear whether they are useful for these conditions.

Foods rich in omega-3 fats:

- fish: oily fish, such as sardines and salmon, have greater amounts of omega-3 fats. Try to eat fish at least two to three times a week.
- fish oil supplements
- ground linseeds and linseed oil (also omega-3 (EPA plus DHA) daily. This is also called flaxseed)
- walnuts
- canola oil (also called rapeseed oil)



For more information about healthy eating see Arthritis Ireland's booklet 'Healthy Eating and Arthritis' or visit www.arthritisireland.ie



9

Step nine

BALANCE YOUR LIFE

When you have arthritis, you need to find the right balance between work, activity and rest.

Many people find arthritis to be an exhausting disease particularly if they are in pain. If you find this to be the case, listen to your body and be guided by it. Rest when you are tired and don't force yourself to work or exercise through pain.

Learn how to pace yourself. Carefully plan and organise your activities so you make the most of your energy. Here are some simple tips to help you pace your activities:

- Try to plan your day so that you can alternate periods of activity with periods of rest.
- When you know you have a large task to do, such as preparing a meal or cleaning a room, plan ahead and break the job into smaller tasks. Then work on completing the tasks one at a time, and follow each with a rest break.
- Try to prioritise jobs. Do the hardest jobs when you are feeling your best.

- Take advantage of 'good days' to do the things you may have been putting off. Remember not to overdo it on these days as it could result in pain and fatigue the following days.
- Simplify tasks. For example, buy pre-cut vegetables and meat to make cooking simpler. Find out about appliances that can make tasks easier (see below).
- If you are having a bad day, be ready to change your plans and not force yourself to work through pain.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Visit an occupational therapist to discover ways you can save time and energy.

Learn about equipment that can make daily tasks easier
There are many appliances that can make your daily activities simpler and less tiring. These aids and equipment aim to protect your joints by reducing the effort you have to put in. Examples include:

- adapted cutlery and cooking utensils to allow easy gripping
- tools to help with opening jars or bottles, and turning on taps
- equipment to make dressing and showering easier (such as long- handled sponges for reaching your feet, long-handled shoe horns)





10

Step ten

MAKE CONTACT WITH ARTHRITIS IRELAND

At Arthritis Ireland we understand that little things make a big difference when you live with arthritis. Difficulty with simple things such as climbing the stairs, cutting vegetables or lifting a child can often be painful and sometimes impossible. That is why we are working single-mindedly to help people like you, offering you a whole range of supports that can make a big difference to how you live with your arthritis.

Call us on 1890 252 846 and talk to someone who understands, someone who will listen, chat and point you towards the people, resources and programmes that can make a big difference to your life.

Arthritis Ireland runs Living Well with Arthritis self-management programmes to enable people to manage their condition more effectively and take back control of their life. Visit www.arthritisireland.ie or LoCall 1890 252 846 to find out about a course near you.

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Arthritis
AUSTRALIA

Become a friend of

Help manage the pain of arthritis



While some people with arthritis lead active, productive lives, many more are not so lucky. Unfortunately, there is no cure for arthritis but there are many ways to limit the effect on a person's life.

Your support of just €3 per month, will not only provide you with the information you need to manage your arthritis but it will also help to provide the information and support services in communities throughout Ireland needed to:

- 1.** Ensure that NO child faces the prospect of growing up with arthritis alone through our JA programme
- 2.** Help people deal with the sense of loss and depression that arthritis can bring through our peer support and national Helpline service
- 3.** Help people maintain their mobility and independence through our national exercise programme
- 4.** And help people to break the constant cycle of pain through our self-management programmes