

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter

Tired Bones? Exercise can help

The do's and don'ts of exercising through joint pain

Did you know that just one pound of weight loss unloads four pounds of joint stress in people with knee osteoarthritis? It's one example of why it's so important to stay active and maintain a healthy weight — even with joint pain.

Though you might think exercise will aggravate your joint pain and stiffness, that's not the case. Lack of exercise can actually make your joints even more painful and stiff. The tricky part is knowing just how much exercise to do when you're hurting. Here are some tips to help you:



1. For mild to moderate pain in a specific joint area:

Before you work out, begin with some gentle, active range-of-motion exercises, such as shoulder rotations or head tilts. Avoid fast or jerky motions. Then if that doesn't hurt, move on to some low-impact activity like walking.

2. For moderate to severe pain in a specific joint area:

For a day or two, put your focus on another part of your body. For example, if you have knee pain, decrease the intensity of your leg workout. If the pain increases, do an upper body workout instead.

3. For constant joint pain (not muscle pain) after exercise:

If you pop ibuprofen to get through the day, try lighter activities like swimming, biking or water aerobics.

4. For moderate to severe joint pain that comes and goes:

If you're experiencing pain the day after you work out, cut back on the intensity of your exercise routine. Soreness usually signals that you worked out too hard or too long. Try taking a day off and doing a less intense workout.

After any prolonged exercise, take time to ice painful joints

Back Pain

At some point, most of us will suffer from back pain. It can happen because of something as small as sleeping in a strange position. Or, it can be from something more serious like an accident or injury.



With 63% of Americans now overweight or obese, back pain is on the rise due to the strain of that excess weight on the body. Back pain is one of the most common reasons people visit a doctor or miss work.

How to avoid problems

Fortunately, there are things you can do to help with back pain.

- Exercise on a regular basis to increase muscle strength and balance. Add total body strength training; a strong core can prevent injury.
- Use good posture and stay at a healthy body weight.
- Eat a healthy diet with plenty of calcium and vitamin D to strengthen your spine. This also helps prevent osteoporosis (a thinning of bone tissue and loss of bone density over time).
- Be careful when lifting heavy objects. Be sure to support your back by keeping it straight when you do have to lift heavy objects and always lift with your leg muscles.
- Don't smoke. Smoking restricts blood flow to the discs that cushion your vertebrae, lowers calcium absorption and prevents new bone growth.
- Moderation! Don't be a weekend warrior with sports or overdo it with chores around the house.
- Try to lower the stress in your life.

Lemony Grilled Shrimp Salad

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 7 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 24 extra-large shrimp, peeled and deveined (about 1 pound)
- Cooking spray
- 6 cups baby arugula
- 1 cup peeled jicama, cut into 2 x 1/4- inch strips
- 1 avocado, peeled and diced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar
- 1 ounce queso fresco, crumbled (about 1/4 cup)



Directions

- Preheat grill to high heat.
- Combine rind, paprika, 1/4 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, 1 teaspoon oil, and shrimp in a medium bowl. Thread 4 shrimp onto each of 6 (10-inch) skewers. Coat grill rack with cooking spray. Grill shrimp 2 minutes on each side or until done.
- Remove shrimp from skewers. Combine shrimp, arugula, jicama, and avocado in a large bowl; toss gently. Combine remaining 2 tablespoons oil, remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, remaining 1/4 teaspoon pepper, lemon juice, vinegar, and sugar in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add juice mixture to shrimp mixture, and toss gently to coat. Divide the salad among 4 large plates; sprinkle evenly with queso fresco.

Nutrition Facts

Calories 309, Fat 18.4g, Sat-fat 3g, Mono-fat 11.7g, Poly-fat 2.6g, Protein 26g, Carbohydrate 11g, Fiber 6g, Cholesterol 175mg, Iron 3.8mg, Sodium 430mg, Calcium 141mg

Recipe: <http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/lemony-grilled-shrimp-salad>

Wellness Corner

Hi everyone! Cerina in Connecticut here. Our monthly topic for September is important to me— not just the importance of exercise and how it helps with muscle and joint pain, but how important it is to have a consistent weekly exercise routine especially as we enter into the fall and winter months.

Most of us know that exercise is an essential part to a healthy life, however we tend to struggle with staying motivated and committed to a consistent workout regimen. I find that it's important to find a type of exercise you really love and feel motivated to do.

There is only so far you can go trying to motivate yourself to do something you don't like or want to do. But, if you find ways to truly want to do something, you can sustain your effort much longer.

Try changing your thinking to "I get to exercise" instead of "I have to exercise", or "I choose to exercise" because you enjoy the benefits those actions create. When you focus on the benefits of your actions, resistance melts away.

Over the years I struggled with staying consistent with my workouts. I was an athlete for most of my life which came to a stop in my early 20's. It wasn't until I was introduced to CrossFit 2yrs ago when I started to have a solid, consistent workout routine. I found something that challenges me, pushes me beyond my limits, and got me in the best shape possible. I not only improved my physical strength and endurance, but mental toughness. I can now proudly say I can do my first kipping pullup and handstand. Here I am doing a handstand pushup and a deadlift.

The point here is that its imperative to incorporate exercise into your life and find something that you absolutely love to do. Whether that is yoga, dancing, weight training, Zumba, or jogging, find something that you love. This way you will look forward to working out. CrossFit is not for everyone, it just happened to be right for me.

Always be mindful to any injuries or conditions you may have and consult with your doctor prior to starting a new workout routine.

If you have trouble finding the time or motivation to workout here are few tips you can take.

1. Block out time in your schedule to workout
2. Try new and fun classes
3. Workout early morning or during lunch
4. Turn your commute into your workout
5. Make your workouts fun so that you make it a priority
6. Find a workout buddy
7. Include the kids
8. Make any space in your home a gym



Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Needs!

Food Choices to Help Ease Arthritis Pain

Many people claim that certain foods can reduce pain and joint inflammation. Growing evidence suggests that following a healthy diet and adding specific foods and spices could help.



Foods to Try

- **Broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage.** These veggies are full of a compound called sulforaphane, which may help slow cartilage damage in joints due to osteoarthritis (OA). Other foods rich in sulforaphane include kale and cauliflower.
- **Fatty fish.** Fatty fish like salmon, tuna, trout and mackerel are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help fight inflammation and boost heart health. Choose wild-caught fish whenever possible.
- **Garlic.** Garlic is a member of the allium family, which also includes onions and leeks. These items contain a compound called diallyl disulfide that may help with a number of diseases, including arthritis.
- **Tart cherries.** The ingredient in cherries that helps with joint symptoms is the same one that gives this fruit its red color anthocyanin. A recent study found that subjects who drank tart cherry juice experienced improvements in the pain and stiffness of OA.
- **Vitamin C.** It's reported that people who take vitamin C supplements are 11 percent less likely to develop knee OA than those who don't take the supplements.

Foods to Avoid

Some people find that certain foods aggravate their arthritis.

- For example, people have reported that eating foods in the nightshade family – such as eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes and most peppers – increases their pain, although studies haven't confirmed this.
- Foods high in saturated and trans fats – such as red meat, fried food and packaged baked goods – should be avoided. They can lead to weight gain, which can make symptoms worse.
- Avoid sugary sodas. A recent study revealed that OA of the knee tended to get worse in men who drank a lot of soda.

3 Mindful Ways to Transform Negative Thoughts

Recognizing our thoughts and where they're taking us is the first step to changing our relationship to them.



How we relate to our thoughts has a big impact on how our day unfolds, and also how we approach triggers in our lives. By taking a few mindful moments, we can gain some space between us and our reactions, and have some freedom from what triggers us—we don't have to respond the same way every time. It's a practice in breaking our habitual negative responses by first tuning in to how a thought or action makes us feel, and how it generates certain storylines in our minds. We can step back for a moment and recognize: hey, that's not a tried and true fact—it's just a thought.

Try these three simple approaches and see if you can work on changing your relationship to certain patterns of thinking. Let your experience be your guide.

1. **Recognize the Thought:** If the thought is *I'm not good enough, life is never going to get better*, or some form of complaining or blaming or something like that, take a moment to recognize that the thought is forming in your brain.
2. **Relax the Body, Release the Thinking:** When you're experiencing negative thoughts, your body is also reacting. You're going through some form of a fight-flight-freeze response, so take a moment to relax your body. Through mindful breathing you can use the out-breath to release tension in your body, as well as any negative thinking. You can even imagine negative thoughts leaving your body with the out-breath.

3. **Name a Positive:** Now that you have a little space between you and your negative thoughts, consider for a moment: *What's actually good right now?* What's going on that's good in life? Could it be that you're safe, you're body is working okay in this moment, you actually have some friends you can count on, you have a job—whatever it might be, see if you can name a few of those, recognize them, and also just linger in that a little bit.

Practice these three things over and over again as an experiment. What you practice and repeat starts to become more automatic.