

Rheumatoid arthritis

Precautions

- - Can cause weakening of the joints. Can increase the risk of injury during strenuous exercises.
- Lower-impact exercises are best.
- Stretching to help maintain flexibility, walking and swimming. If arthritis is centered in the hips or knees, climbing activities like stair-step machines should be limited so that excess strain is not placed on the hip or knee joints.

Contraindications

- Recommendations from the American College of Sports Medicine
- Severe inflammation of the joints, to three days of rest is needed
- Low-impact exercises can be initiated to maintain strength in the muscles.
- High-impact exercises like jogging should be avoided due to the increased stress it puts on joints.

Best Exercises

- Low-impact exercises such as using tension bands, gym equipment, light weights or yoga can be added to the routine.

If there is significant pain after exercising, the exercise that caused the pain should be stopped. If exercise is tolerated well, the program should be continued or even expanded.

The benefits of regular activity will soon show in reduced pain and better overall health.

Osteoarthritis

- Exercise make you feel better, reduce your joint pain, and make it easier for you to do your daily tasks.
- A common symptom of osteoarthritis is pain after activity, which may make you not want to exercise. But you can use heat and cold therapy or take pain medication to help relieve pain and make it easier for you to exercise and stay active.
- Exercise should be balanced with rest and joint care. If your joints hurt or you have redness or swelling, rest your joints, then try a little exercise. You might also think about using assistive devices, such as splints or braces, for a short time to protect your joints.
- Sharp or unusual pain may be a sign of injury. Talk to your doctor if you have new pain or if your pain is a lot worse.