

- Maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, talk with your medical provider.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Follow your medical or mental health providers' directions regarding medications.

- Avoid high impact sports. Knees and hips are vulnerable to wear and tear, so choose exercises and activity like walking, swimming and resistance training

Green Flags — All Clear

What this means...

If you:

- Stay as active as your condition allows
- Do exercises to help strengthen your muscles
- Can do your daily activities

- Good work!
- Your symptoms are under control and potentially stimulate cartilage growth

Keep up the great work!

Yellow Flags — Caution

What this means...

If you have any of the following:

- Joint pain that interferes with your daily activities
- Pain that does not go away with common pain relieving medication
- Increased muscle weakness, particularly muscles around your knee or ankle
- Increased swelling in your joints
- Reduced ability to move your joints

- You may have an Arthritis flare-up or your Arthritis treatment plan may need to be changed
- You may benefit from a physical therapist evaluation

Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or healthcare provider if your symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags—Stop and Think

What this means...

If you have:

- Sudden loss of mobility, including an inability to walk or bear weight
- Have a fall associated with pain
- Have a fever, noted redness or new joint

This indicates you need to be seen by a healthcare professional right away.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: **CALL 9-1-1.**

If you notice a Red Flag, call 9-1-1. Emergency!

Osteoarthritis Fast Facts



- Osteoarthritis is a joint disease that mostly affects cartilage
- People with Osteoarthritis often have joint pain and reduced motion
- It affects only joints and not internal organs.
- It usually develops over time. Risk factors include being overweight, aging, joint injury, joints that are not properly formed, a genetic defect in joint cartilage and stresses on the joints from certain jobs and playing sports.
- Osteoarthritis can occur in any joint; however, it occurs most often in the hands, knees, hips, and spine.
- Warning signs include stiffness in a joint after getting out of bed or sitting for long time, swelling or tenderness in one or more joints, or a crunching feeling or the sound of bone rubbing on bone.
- There are four main treatment goals: improve joint function, keep a healthy body weight, control pain, and achieve a healthy lifestyle.
- Treatment plans can involve: exercise, weight control, rest and joint care, nondrug pain relief techniques to control pain, medicines, complementary and alternative therapies, and surgery.
- If you have not been exercising:
 1. Walk as much as you can.
 2. Start by walking every other day, and then, when you can, walk every day.
 3. After several weeks of regular daily walking, increase your time by 5–10 minutes per week.
- Three kinds of programs help people learn about Osteoarthritis and self-care and improve their good health attitude:
 1. Patient education programs
 2. Arthritis self-management programs
 3. Arthritis support groups.
- Arthritis self-management programs can help people understand the disease, reduce pain while staying active, cope with their body, mind, and emotions, have more control over the disease, and live an active, independent life.
- Maintain a good health attitude:
 1. Focus on what you can do instead of what you cannot do
 2. Focus on your strengths not the weaknesses
 3. Take your daily activities and break them down into small tasks
 4. Think about physical activity and healthy eating daily
 5. Think about ways to manage stress
 6. Balance activity with rest periods
 7. Develop a support network of family, friends, and your health team

Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care

At Aging and Long Term Care, we believe every adult deserves to live with dignity. We connect seniors, adults with disabilities and family caregivers to a full range of free and other community resources designed to offer you choice, improve your quality of life and respect your independence.

For more information, call Information and Assistance

Upper Valley Yakima County: 509-469-0500

Lower Valley Yakima County (Grandview): 509-402-0334

Benton County: 509-735-0315

Franklin County: 509-412-1013

Kittitas County: 509-925-8765

Walla Walla County: 509-529-6470

Columbia County: 509-382-4787

Garfield County: 509-843-3563

Asotin County: 509-758-2355

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