



October 2017

October 12-20: National Joint Health Week

Tips for Keeping Your Joints Healthy

Body Joints Defined:

- A joint is where two or more bones meet.
- The most vital job of a joint is to allow movement. Joints also provide stability and bear weight.
- A joint may move a lot (shoulder), or have very little or no movement (bones of the skull).
- In general, the more stable a joint is the less it moves.



How to Keep Joints Healthy:

Abuse it and you can lose it. Cartilage that is injured does not grow back on its own. So value and protect your joints.

- Maintaining a healthy body weight is the most important thing you can do to preserve the health of your joints.
- Strengthen the muscles around your joints and in your core.
 - ◊ If muscles are weak, the joints themselves absorb more of the shock from movement and activities.
 - ◊ When muscles are strong, they absorb this impact instead of the joints.
 - ◊ Strong muscles also help joints maintain proper alignment and movement.
- Flexibility – stretching, done correctly, can help maintain flexibility and joint range of motion, as well as helping keep joints lubricated.
- Work on good posture – maintaining proper posture keeps joints aligned properly, so excess stress is not put on them.
- Avoid Injuries – this is easier said than done. But try to make smart decisions about what activities you do and how you do them.

What Type of Exercise Is Best?

- Aim for a well-balanced exercise routine that includes aerobic, strength, flexibility and balance exercise.
- When choosing aerobic exercise, keep in mind that weight-bearing types help maintain strong bones. Should your weight bearing exercise be high or low impact? It depends.
 - ◊ Choose exercise based on your past injury history and the current health of your joints.
 - ◊ Remember, high-impact exercises such as running can cause further damage.
 - ◊ Mix it up—try to do a variety of different weight-bearing exercises.
 - ◊ If running, switch up the surface you run on (roads, track, and trails).
- If just starting an exercise program, build up the time and intensity of your exercise slowly.
- Be sure to include rest days.



Word Window-Definitions Low-Impact vs. High-Impact Exercises

Low-Impact Exercises. A workout is low-impact if at least one of your feet remains in contact with the ground at all times.

- Walking, hiking, rollerblading and *most* step aerobics and cardio dance workouts are low-impact.
- Exercises such as water aerobics, swimming, cycling and the elliptical machine are low impact as well, but may be described as "no impact" since both feet stay on the ground at all times and/or your body is supported.

High-Impact Exercises. In these workouts, both feet leave the ground at the same time.

- This happens during running, hopping, jumping rope, skipping, jumping jacks, plyometrics, some step aerobics (if you jump on or off the step or run around the room), and some cardio dancing that involves leaping.

Diet and Supplements to support joint and bone health

- **Calcium** – Adequate amounts of calcium rich foods and drinks help keep bones strong. Limit caffeinated beverages especially if your calcium intake is low – they can contribute to bone loss.
- **Vitamin D** – Plays an important role in the absorption of calcium. You can be getting adequate calcium, but if deficient in Vitamin D you won't absorb the calcium and your bones may suffer.
- **Protein** – Helps maintain and build muscle. Focus on proteins from lean meats and vegetable sources (legumes, nuts, seeds, etc.).
- **Vitamin C** – Some studies show antioxidants may help with joint health.
- **Glucosamine/Chondroitin** - It is thought glucosamine may stimulate cartilage formation and that chondroitin may keep it from deteriorating.
 - ◊ Research results are mixed on the use of these supplements. They may help osteoarthritis once it has started, but at this point the overall evidence is inconclusive.
 - ◊ Shark cartilage - no evidence shark cartilage is beneficial in treatment of joint health.



Healthy Halloween Treats!

Instead of loading up the kids (and yourself) with more candy and sweet Halloween treats, try these healthy and tasty alternatives.



Jack-o'-Lantern Fruit Cups

Add color and fun to your Halloween with these smiling jack-o'-lantern faces carved into navel oranges. Slice off the tops of the oranges, scoop out the pulp, use a paring knife to cut out jack-o'-lantern faces, and fill with grapes and/or mixed berries.

Spooky Spider Eggs

Deviled eggs (like these) get extra creepy-crawly when they're topped with spiders. To make eight scary spider eggs, cut 12 black olives in half vertically. Place one half in the center of each egg to form the body, then slice each remaining olive half into four sections to create legs.



Slithering Snake Dip

Eek! What is lurking in your humus? A slithering snake made from black olives! Carve beady eyes from string cheese and add a carrot tongue. Even those who hate serpents will love this little guy.

Banana Ghosts and Orange Pumpkins

Boo! Turn bananas into spooky ghosts with chocolate chip eyes and mouths made from chocolate covered raisins. Make a pumpkin patch out of peeled clementines or tangerines. Just use a sprig of celery in the center for the stem!



Can Fiber Prevent Knee Pain?

People who ate a lot of fiber - plentiful in beans, nuts, produce (vegetables and fruits), and whole grains - had a 30 to 61 percent lower risk of osteoarthritic knee pain in a recent Tufts University study of some 5,000 adults.

- Top fiber eaters got 22 to 27 grams per day; skimpers took in 9-14 grams. The recommended intake is 21-38 grams per day; a half-cup of canned chickpeas contains 8.1 grams.
- Researchers say the compounds in fiber-rich foods may reduce pain-provoking inflammation.