

New York State Arthritis Fact Sheet

What is arthritis?

The term “arthritis” describes more than 100 diseases and conditions affecting joints, the surrounding tissues, and other connective tissues, such as tendons and ligaments. Symptoms of arthritis typically include pain, swelling, stiffness and aching in and around the joint. Arthritis can develop suddenly or gradually over time.¹

Arthritis in New York

- Arthritis is common in New York State adults, affecting an estimated 3.5 million New Yorkers and almost one quarter (22.6%) of the state’s adult population.²
- Of adults with arthritis, 2.2 million (61.9%) are women and 1.3 million (38.1%) are men.² Nearly half (48.4%) of NYS adults aged 65 and older have arthritis. Approximately 30% of NYS adults ages 45 to 64 have arthritis.²
- Arthritis is among the most common causes of disability in NYS. More than half (51.0%) of NYS adults with arthritis have limitations in their daily activities.²

Arthritis risk factors¹

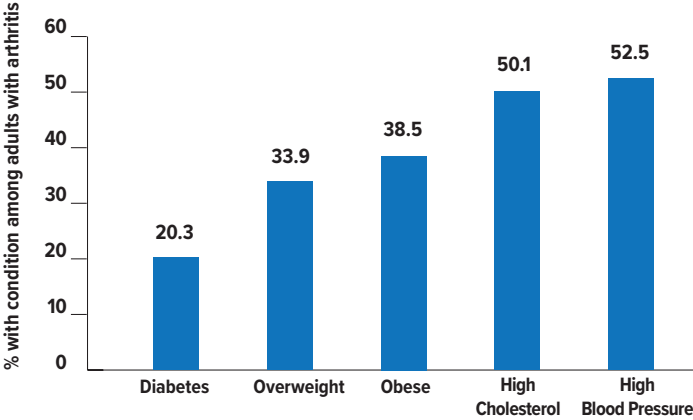
Adults can decrease the risk of getting arthritis or making arthritis worse by changing behaviors and characteristics, called risk factors, that they can control.

Risks You Can Control	Risks You Cannot Control
Obesity	Age
Joint injuries	Gender
Occupation	Genetics
Infection	

Arthritis and other chronic conditions

- Arthritis commonly occurs with obesity, heart disease and diabetes (*Figure 1*) and can cause complications in the management of other chronic diseases.^{3,4,5} Arthritis-related joint pain and mobility limitations may be a barrier to adopting healthy behaviors, such as engaging in physical activity, for fear of causing further joint pain or damage.⁶

Figure 1. Commonly occurring co-morbidities among adults with arthritis, 2017 NYS BRFSS



2017 New York State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (NYS BRFSS)

Arthritis and self-management

- Evidence-based self-management programs have been proven to improve knowledge and self-care. These interventions help participants reduce pain, depression and frustration; improve physical activity; and increase energy and confidence to gain control of arthritis and other chronic conditions.



- Developed by the Self-Management Resource Center, the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program is offered in communities across NYS. It is a highly successful self-management education program backed by more than 20 evaluations.⁸
- Despite their value, community-based self-management programs are greatly underutilized. In NYS, only 11.4% of adults with arthritis have participated in such programs.²

Arthritis and physical activity

- Scientific studies have shown that regular, moderate physical activity can reduce pain and improve function, mood, and quality of life for adults with arthritis.^{6,7,8}
- Physical activity can also help with the management of other chronic conditions that are common among adults with arthritis, such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.^{3,4,5,9}
- National guidelines recommend that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week, or 30 minutes per day, five days a week.¹⁰
- The CDC Arthritis Program recommends four community-based physical activity interventions, taught by trained instructors and proven to improve quality of life for people with arthritis: 1) Active Living Every Day, 2) Fit and Strong!, 3) Enhance Fitness and 4) Walk with Ease.¹¹
- Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, NYS adults with arthritis are more likely to report physical inactivity (31.2%) as compared to those without arthritis (21.6%).²

Arthritis and weight

- Among NYS adults who have received a doctor's diagnosis of arthritis, 72.4% are overweight or obese.²
- Arthritis is common among obese adults (38.5%) and may be a special barrier to increasing physical activity – a recommended intervention for arthritis and obesity.⁵
- Low impact activities, such as walking, swimming and biking, are safe and effective for obese adults with arthritis and can have a role in both weight and pain reduction.^{13,14}
- Losing as little as five percent of total body weight can reduce stress on the knees, hips and lower back and slow progression of the disease.¹⁵

Arthritis and daily activity

- Of NYS adults with arthritis, 35.3% report having trouble working due to their arthritis.²
- The percent of NYS adults who report having trouble working due to their arthritis is highest among those who attended college or technical school.²
- Of NYS adults with arthritis, 51% report limitations in daily activities due to joint symptoms.²

NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) Arthritis Program

The NYSDOH Arthritis Program aims to improve the quality of life and health outcomes among New Yorkers with and at risk for arthritis through the following activities:

- Increase access, use, and availability of arthritis-appropriate, evidence-based physical activity and self-management programs statewide.
- Implement strategies to improve clinical-community linkages by encouraging health care providers to counsel patients with arthritis on the importance of physical activity and refer them to arthritis-appropriate, evidence-based programs.
- Promote walking and other types of moderate physical activity among adults with arthritis.
- Conduct arthritis surveillance among NYS adults through the NYS BRFSS.
- Implement comprehensive health communications and social media campaigns to increase awareness about arthritis burden and management.

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For more information, please visit:

health.ny.gov/arthritis



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