

# Ideal Person with Osteoarthritis

## Know you goals

Exercise Frequency  
Your ideal weight

## Goal

5 days a week  
\_\_\_\_\_ lbs.

## Lifestyle Modifications

- Exercise at least 30 minutes for at least 5 days a week.
  - See reverse side for exercise with arthritis
- Achieve your ideal body weight. Yours is \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. Even losing 5 pounds has been shown to improve symptoms of arthritis.
- Stop smoking
- Sleep for at least 8 uninterrupted hours a day
- Improve flexibility through stretching or yoga

## Routine Laboratory Testing

- None

## Treatment

- Therapeutic Heat and Cold: Finding the most effective treatment for you may require a certain amount of trial and error. Do not apply either heat or cold for more than 20 minutes at a time. Your skin should be allowed to return to normal temperature between applications. And do not combine either heat or cold with the use of creams, as it can cause burns.
- Heat is usually used to relax muscles and sometimes to warm them up before exercising. You can heat up your sore joints with heating pads or hot packs or by sitting in a hot tub or heated pool.
- Applying cold to a sore joint reduces the pain by numbing the area. Use ice or reusable cold packs. Never apply ice directly to your skin because it can burn the skin; wrap ice and cold packs in a towel. Although applying cold can be helpful for short-term pain relief, you have to be careful because the lack of feeling may cause you to overuse the sore joint or muscle.

## Medications (checked if prescribed)

## Dose

- |                                                                                          |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ○ Tylenol                                                                                | 1 gram four times a day  |
| ○ Ibuprofen                                                                              | _____                    |
| ○ Capsaicin Cream                                                                        | 3 to 4 times a day       |
| ○ It takes up to a month to start working, but it is very effective if you keep with it! |                          |
| ○ Glucosamine Sulfate                                                                    | 1,500 mg once a day      |
| ○ Chondroitin                                                                            | 400 mg three times a day |
| ○ Combination products are available for Glucosamine and Chondroitin                     |                          |
| ○ Try for 4 months. If no response at that point, stop the medication                    |                          |



## **Exercising with Osteoarthritis**

**Two types of exercise are used to reduce symptoms of osteoarthritis:**

- 1.) Strengthening Exercise:**
  - **It builds muscles around the joint in order to stabilize the joint**
  - **It decreases the pain in the joint and improves its ability to move**
  - **Program:**
    - **Step 1: Warm-up with stretching and moving the sore joint around**
    - **Step 2: Lift the body part against gravity, 3 sets of 6 to 10 repetitions**
    - **Step 3: Progressively increase the weight with either free weights or elastic bands**
    - **Step 4: Cool Down by stretching and moving the sore joint around**
- 2.) Reconditioning Exercise:**
  - **The ideal exercise is low impact, continuous movement for 30 minutes 3 to 5 times a week**
  - **The best is water aerobics classes**
  - **Fitness walking, stationary bikes set on no resistance, or treadmill walking with no elevation are also acceptable options**

**When starting an exercise program, start with strengthening exercises 3-4 days a week and reconditioning exercise 1-2 times a week. Work up on reconditioning exercise as you are able to tolerate so that you are alternating strengthening exercise and reconditioning exercise on alternating days.**