

**Goal:** help those living with arthritis maintain a healthy lifestyle

**Word Count in This Document:** 478

**Title:** Arthritis: Maintaining Your Quality of Life

Let's face it: most of us take even the simplest activities for granted. Living with arthritis can make those daily tasks difficult, but instead of making it harder on yourself, maintain your quality of life by sticking to a healthy diet, avoiding stress that can increase pain, and don't be afraid to ask for help. Living with arthritis can be hard, so don't make it even harder on yourself. Instead, follow some of these helpful guidelines to help ease symptoms and pain.

### **Eat Healthy, Live healthy**

Sticking to a low-calorie, low-fat diet as well as maintaining regular exercise helps reduce arthritic pain. Although there are no magic diets out there that can completely take away arthritis, increasing your fruit and veggie intake and taking [PUFA](#) (polyunsaturated fatty acids, such as omega-3 fatty acids) supplements have proven to ease pain. Although these supplements are typically associated with heart health, their anti-inflammatory benefits also aid in arthritic pain.

In addition to PUFA supplements, [fruits and veggies](#), including berries, mushrooms, citrus fruits, and dairy products, also have anti-inflammatory benefits. In fact, [vitamin C](#) can be extremely helpful in managing inflammation, even if it's half a grapefruit every morning for breakfast.

While maintaining a healthy balance of fruits and veggies in your daily meals and snacks is beneficial to inflammation caused by arthritis, so is regular exercise and activity. Unfortunately, even a few extra pounds can [worsen arthritis pain](#). Keep track of your weight and talk to your doctor about what's best for your overall health. Above all, [keep moving](#)—don't stay in one position too long. Instead, get up and stretch every 15 minutes.

### **Avoid Stress and Simplify Life**

Physical stress puts unnecessary pressure on your joints, increasing inflammation. Avoid positions and movements that put extra stress on your joints by simplifying daily tasks and [discover your strengths](#). For example, protect finger and wrist joints by using your shoulder or arm to push open heavy doors, or lead with your stronger leg going up stairs and your weaker leg going down to reduce [hip and knee pain](#).

The best and easiest thing you can do is simplify life as much as possible. [Plan ahead](#) to eliminate unnecessary activities; organize workstations and storage areas; store frequently used items in easy-to-reach areas; and keep duplicate household items in several locations around your home. In addition, try to use [labor-saving items](#), like electric can openers, and adaptive aids, like [shoe horns](#), to avoid any unnecessary bending, scooping, or reaching.

## **Never Hesitate to Ask for Help**

It's good to be independent, however you should never be afraid to ask for assistance when you need it. Unnecessary exertion increases inflammation and joint pain, which only hurts you in the long run. [Educating friends and family](#) members about the disease's limitations and gaining their support will only help you avoid stress and maintain a long and healthy lifestyle.