

What is Arthritis?

Arthritis is not just one condition. The term ‘arthritis’ is an informal way to refer to diseases of the joints, or joint pain, but there are more than 100 types of arthritis and related conditions.¹

Osteoarthritis is the most common form, but other arthritis-related conditions include rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, gout, bursitis, lupus, Lyme disease, and many others. In Michigan and the US, arthritis is common, and it is costly, but it *can* be managed.

Arthritis is Common

- A third of Michigan adults have some form of arthritis. Nearly half of these report that it limits their activities.²
- Arthritis and related disability are expected to increase as the population ages: it is projected that nearly 2.7 million Michigan adults will have arthritis in 2030, and nearly 1.4 million will have arthritis-related activity limitations.⁵⁻⁶
- Almost half of people with arthritis in Michigan are younger than 65 years of age.² Children are affected by arthritis as well.
- Women are more likely to have arthritis than men (35 % vs. 25%).²
- Arthritis risk increases with age, and with decreasing household income.²
- People who are overweight are more likely to have arthritis.²

Arthritis is Costly

- Arthritis is a leading cause of disability in the United States.³
- Osteoarthritis is the most costly condition billed to private insurance in the US.⁴
- Among working age Michigan residents with arthritis, 42% report that arthritis limits their work.²
- Arthritis is more common among people who also have other chronic conditions, like diabetes, depression, or cardiovascular disease.²
- Michigan adults with arthritis are nearly three times more likely than those without arthritis to describe their health as fair or poor.²
- Between 2 and 6 percent of all outpatient care visits in the US is due to arthritis.⁷

Arthritis Can Be Managed

There are things everyone with arthritis can do to manage symptoms and prevent or delay disability:

- **Learn Arthritis Management Strategies.** The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, which is called *Personal Action Toward Health (PATH)* in Michigan, has been shown to reduce pain and decrease health distress. This workshop teaches skills that help people manage their arthritis symptoms.⁸

Michigan Arthritis Fact Sheet

- **Be active.** Physical activity for people with arthritis can significantly reduce pain, improve function and delay or prevent disability.⁹ Exercise programs like Enhance®Fitness can help people with arthritis get safe, comfortable physical activity.¹¹
- **Watch your weight.** Maintaining a healthy weight can slow down the progression of arthritis, and reduce activity limitation. Losing just 5% of your body weight can reduce arthritis-related pain and disability.¹⁰
- **See your doctor.** Early diagnosis and management is critical to maintaining a good quality of life, and essential medications that can slow the progression of arthritis are available only by prescription.¹¹

Take action to make life with arthritis better!

The Arthritis Program at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services supports programs to help people manage their arthritis. Learn more about PATH and EnhanceFitness at the [State of Michigan Arthritis webpage](http://www.Michigan.gov/arthritis) (www.Michigan.gov/arthritis).

References

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11. Available at [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Key Arthritis Messages](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/key.htm). (<http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/key.htm>)