

caring for your joints



It's your move...

Your musculoskeletal system consists of muscles, bones, tendons, ligaments, soft tissues, and cartilage. They work together to support your body's weight, help you move, and maintain your posture. Aging and poor habits can lead to problems in your musculoskeletal system, however, what you do daily can impact your joint health and prevent pain and injuries.

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Stay Active, Strong, & Flexible!

- **Low-Impact aerobic exercise** allows fluid to push into the cartilage, helping to prevent stiffness in your joints. Try walking, biking, rowing, or swimming. Work your way up to 30 minutes most days of the week.
- **Strength training** helps build stronger muscles and ligaments taking pressure off your joints. Make sure you work all the major muscle groups, including your core, at least two times per week.
- **Stretching** and range of motion exercises help keep the muscles flexible, strong, and healthy. The best time to stretch is when your muscles are warm, preferably after 10 minutes of activity. Engage in stretching and flexibility activities (yoga, Pilates, tai chi), at least 2 to 3 times per week.



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Nourish Your Body

- **Stay hydrated** by drinking at least 64 ounces of water every day. Lack of hydration causes your body to take water from other sources, including cartilage.
- **Veg out!** Aim for a half cup of a cruciferous vegetable every day, such as broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, or kale. New research found that an antioxidant found in these vegetables blocks an enzyme that causes joint pain and inflammation.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Excess weight puts extra stress on the joints, especially the knees and hips. Focus on controlling your portion sizes and staying active.

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Sit less and straighten up

- **Be mindful of your posture.** Poor posture when sitting, standing, or lifting, can lead to strain or injury to your muscles and joints.
- **Avoid sitting for the entirety of your workday.** Take a movement break like walking or stretching every 30 to 60 minutes to prevent joint stiffness.



exercise of the month

Energizing Breath

- Sitting tall, place one hand on stomach and begin to deepen and lengthen the breath.
- **Inhale** and visualize drawing in energy through the bottoms of the feet all the way out through the crown of the head.
- **Exhale** and visualize sweeping away tension from the crown of the head all the way out through the bottoms of the feet.
- Continue for 5 - 10 deep breaths.

*Regular movement is fundamental to good health. Moving or changing postures every **30 minutes** is recommended.*



Disclaimer: Always perform stretch and strength exercises using **slow, controlled** movements. If you experience pain, discontinue the exercise. Consult a health care professional for alternative options. HealthSource Solutions is not responsible for injuries resulting from these activities.