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Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT

April 2023

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What We Do

Helping You

Arthritis Australia

“Taking the first step”

Have you been told by your doctor or specialist that you need to be more active? “Taking the first step” is a two hour education session designed by Arthritis & Osteoporosis Tasmania to help people start to make changes. This session is not an exercise class.

Developed by a team of health professionals, with input from those who have been in such a situation, the content of the course (and accompanying booklet), provides information, tips and strategies to help participants gain confidence in learning ways to safely move more.

AONT conducted the first session of “Taking the first step” in December and gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Arthritis Tasmania in sharing this resource. The project was originally funded by the Healthy Tasmania Fund through the Tasmanian Government.

Long term volunteers Hilary and Ruth were assisted by our newest volunteer, practicing physiotherapist Yamini.

As the participants of “Taking the first step” were keen to have some follow up session to provide each other with support and encouragement, we have met up again twice this year.

Please call the office if you are interested in attending the next initial education session:

8948 5232, office hours 9:30 am to 2:00 pm

Membership Survey

Thankyou very much to all the members who completed and returned the survey sent out with the last newsletter.

While we can't make promises to increase any of our services, your feedback is valuable to our long term planning.

For those of you who have not returned the form, it's not too late! If you have difficulties getting out to post the survey, you are welcome to telephone the office and share your feedback with us that way.



Healthy Eating and Arthritis

This article is based on information sheets produced by Arthritis Australia. If you would like a copy contact us on 1800 011 041.

The best diet for arthritis is a healthy balanced one, which helps to maintain your general health and prevent or better manage other medical conditions.

Is there a diet to cure arthritis?

There is no diet that can cure arthritis. A **healthy balanced diet** is best. Be very cautious of special diets or supplements that claim to cure arthritis.

Choosing the right fats

Research suggests that eating foods with healthy fats may help reduce the symptoms of arthritis and they have other health benefits.

Healthy dietary fats include:

monounsaturated fats such as vegetable oils, avocados and many nuts and seeds;
omega-3 fats such as oily fish, fish oil supplements, linseed oil, canola oil and walnuts.



Unhealthy dietary fat is saturated fat such as that from red meat, poultry and full-fat dairy products.

Does weight affect arthritis?

Yes! Extra body weight increases the stress on many joints, particularly the knees, hips and lower back. Being overweight is clearly linked to the risk of developing **osteoarthritis**. If you are overweight, losing weight will decrease the stress on your joints, reduce pain and make it easier for you to move around.

Do certain foods cause arthritis?

There is very little evidence that specific foods have an effect on most forms of arthritis, other than for **gout**.

What can cause gout attacks?

Some foods which contain high levels of purines (which produce uric acid in the blood) may trigger gout attacks. These include red meat and offal, seafood including shellfish, scallops, sardines and anchovies.

Drinking alcohol can increase the risk of a gout attack, especially beer and spirits.

Advice about the best diet for gout can be obtained from an Accredited Practising Dietitian.

Should I avoid:

Nightshade foods such as tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants and capsicum? No! There is no evidence they have any effect on arthritis.

Should I avoid:

Acid producing foods such as citrus fruit, tomatoes? No! These are usually high in Vitamin C and are beneficial to the immune system.

Dairy products? No! There is no proof they cause arthritis. They are a rich source of calcium (particularly reduced fat versions) needed for strong bones to minimise osteoporosis.

Meat and meat products? No! While a vegetarian diet may help you to lose weight, you may miss out on important nutrients such as iron and Vitamin B12.

Seniors Rights on Show

Have you heard of the “Charter of Aged Care Rights? All people receiving Australian Government funded residential care, home care or other aged care services in the community have specific rights.



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

A six-week education and guided painting program is available to seniors* through Darwin Community Legal Service. The program culminates in a one-day exhibition of completed artworks “Seniors Rights on Show” on Thursday 15th June.

The twice weekly sessions will commence on Tuesday 18th April. This is an opportunity to both learn about those valuable rights and get creative.

To book your free spot call 1800 812 953

* Please note Seniors are aged 65 years or more, 50 years or more for ATSI people.

New Patrons

We are pleased to announce that His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie and Ms Ruth Jones have accepted our invitation to continue the role of vice-Regal Patronage of the Arthritis Foundation.

Wanted: part time volunteer cleaner, once per week.

Our latest volunteer office cleaner has completed her tertiary studies and is now employed as a full time professional a long way from Darwin. Congratulations Tracy!

Do you think you could help us find some-one? Duties include cleaning the outside of the shop front windows (which get very dirty during the weekend markets!) and vacuuming the carpet. This usually takes about 30 to 40 minutes, preferably on a Monday morning before the office is formally opened. Cleaning products and gloves are provided.



If you know of anyone who would be interested in doing this for us, could you please ask them to contact us at the office on 8948 5232 to discuss further.

Please note: this a volunteer position

April Falls Month

<https://www.mater.org.au/group/news/mater-news/april-2021/five-balance-boosting-exercises-for-older-adults>

Balance and stability are important at any age, but as we get older the risks associated with a fall are greater and it can take longer to recover.

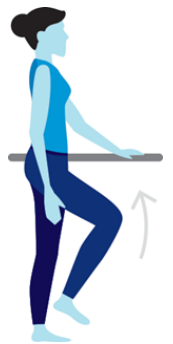
April Falls Month is a worldwide annual campaign to make people more aware of the problems of falls and how to minimise the risk of falls.

Five balance boosting exercises for older adults

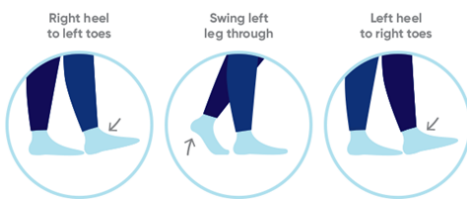
Perform the following exercises close to a solid surface such as a kitchen bench or table in case you lose your balance. Make sure the floors are clear of any trip hazards and you are wearing sturdy shoes.

1. Single-limb stance

Stand up straight behind a chair holding onto the back for support. Lift your right foot off the floor, balancing on your left foot. Hold the position as long as is comfortable, then repeat with the left foot. The goal is to be able to stand on each foot without support for one minute.



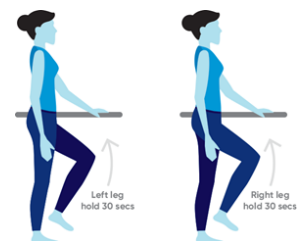
2. Heel-to-toe walk



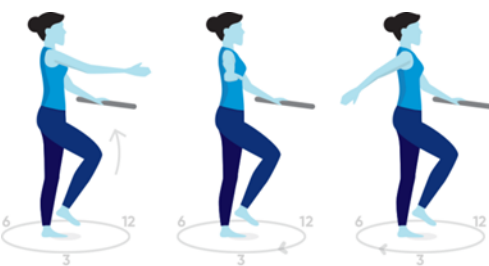
Start with your right foot in front of your left, with the heel of your right foot just touching the toes of your left foot. Move your left foot in front of your right, putting your weight on that heel as you put it down, shifting your weight onto your toes in a rolling motion. Walk like this for 20 steps.

3. Marching on the spot

Transfer your weight onto your right foot and slowly lift your left foot off the floor. Hold for 30 seconds. Lower your left leg to the floor and slowly lift your right leg. Repeat five times and gradually work up to more repeats.



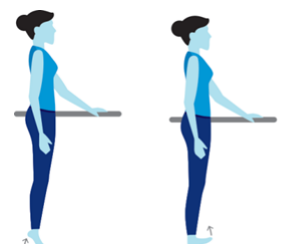
4. Clock reach



Stand up straight with your hand to the left on a chair for support. Think of yourself at the centre of a clock with the 12 in front of you and the six directly behind. Lift your right knee and extend your right arm forwards towards the 12, then out sideways to the 3. Pause there before taking your arm back as far as you can towards the 6. Slowly return your arm back to the 3 then to the 12 and then lower it. Turn to face the opposite direction and repeat with the left foot and arm. Do two repetitions of this exercise on each side.

5. Heel-toe raisers

Stand up straight with your feet together. Using slow and controlled movements rock forwards on your toes then back onto your heels. This really tests your balance. Do it slowly so you don't stumble. If this is too difficult try doing it with your feet shoulder-width apart. As you progress move back and forth more quickly and hold for a few seconds in the heel and toe positions.



Out and About - Community Engagement

Defence Welcome to the Top End Expo

at the Darwin Convention Centre, 11th February

The focus of our stand was Healthy Bones, aimed at young families to encourage healthy lifestyle habits, the recipe for strong bones being:

- Calcium rich foods, including dairy, pulses, green leafy vegetables, canned fish and dried apricots & dates
- Sun-safe Vitamin D
- Weight-bearing physical activity: walking, running, jumping



Katherine Seniors Expo

hosted by COTA at the Henry Scott Recreation Centre, 15th March



Promoting the National Arthritis infoline service was a good reason for Ruth Garden to combine a family visit to Katherine, accompanied by Mr Skeleton

The message to visitors to our stand was that arthritis information and support is only a phone call away. Calling the 1800 number anywhere in Australia takes you to the nearest state or territory Arthritis office.

Need information about arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions?

"The service we have received is remarkable, it really helped our situation!"

Talk to a local

NATIONAL INFOLINE
Arthritis
1800 011 041

Presentation to One Tree Defence Childcare Unit

Palmerston 22nd March

This interactive session focussed on the role of healthy eating and physical activity as essential to building strong bones. The children were delighted to join in a simple board game, and to keep a little flyer each to take home to share with their families. Most of the children enjoyed meeting Mr Skeleton and complimentary posters were left at the Centre.



Exercise Physiology for Osteoporosis and Arthritis Management

Regular physical activity and exercise plays an important role in bone and joint health. An Exercise Physiologist can assist in managing osteoporosis and osteoarthritis.

What is an Exercise Physiologist?

Accredited exercise physiologists (AEPs) specialise in clinical exercise interventions for persons at high-risk of developing, or with existing chronic and complex medical conditions and injuries. These interventions are provided by exercise delivery including health and physical activity education, advice and support; and lifestyle modification with a strong focus on achieving behavioural change.

AEPs are university qualified allied health professionals and are recognised as specialists in their field displaying a diverse range of knowledge and skills, working across a variety of areas in health, exercise, and sport. The aim of an AEP intervention is to prevent or manage chronic disease or injury, and assist in restoring one's optimal physical function, health or wellness.



The benefits of exercise for bone health



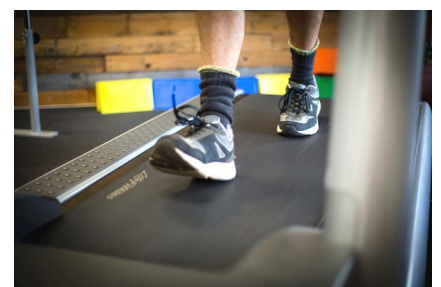
Regular physical activity and exercise is important at all stages of life to manage bone health. Numerous studies have shown that weight-bearing exercise can help to slow bone loss, and several show it can even build bone. Activities that put stress on bones stimulate extra deposits of calcium and nudge bone-forming cells into action. The tugging and pushing on bone that occur during strength and power training provide the stress. The result is stronger, denser bones.

Exercise also helps to reduce the risk of falls which is an important consideration for those living with osteoporosis as the risk of a fall-related fractures increases significantly with poor bone density.

The benefits of exercise for joint health

While there is no cure for arthritis, exercise is an integral component of a treatment plan for arthritis sufferers. Exercise helps to increase synovial fluid in the joints and keep them well lubricated, increase the strength of the muscles supporting the joints and reduce the load, manage body weight and improve flexibility which may be affected by arthritis symptoms.

A variety of exercises can be beneficial for managing arthritis including aerobic training, resistance training and water based exercise.



If you suffer from osteoporosis or arthritis and would like to engage in an appropriate exercise program, then contact an Accredited Exercise Physiologist service, who is able to complete an assessment and work with you to develop a tailored plan to help you reach your goals and improve your health and wellbeing.

Rebates through Medicare or your Private Health Insurance may be available.

This article was provided by Raintree Allied Health, 0475 164 900, based in Yarrawonga at 34 / 5 McCourt Road.

How to find an accredited exercise physiologist

Contact Exercise and Sports Science Australia on (07) 3171 3335 or use the “Find an exercise physiologist” feature on their website www.essa.org.au.

Apple and Blueberry Crumble

Desserts can be heart healthy too! Try this recipe from <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/>
Serves 6



Ingredients:

- 1 kg (5-6) Granny Smith apples, peeled and cut into 2cm pieces
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tbs raw sugar
- 125g punnet blueberries

Topping:

- 1/3 cup (55g) wholemeal plain flour
- 1 cup (95g) no-added sugar natural muesli
- ¼ cup raw sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup (60g) reduced-fat margarine
- ½ cup reduced-fat Greek yoghurt, to serve

Method:

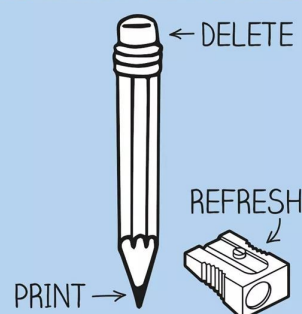
1. Place apples, water and sugar in a large saucepan. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat. Cover and cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until apples are just tender. Remove. Stir in blueberries.
2. Transfer apple and blueberry mixture to a shallow ovenproof dish (6-cup capacity).
3. To make topping, mix flour, muesli, sugar, cinnamon and margarine until well combined. Sprinkle over apple and blueberries.
4. Bake in 180C oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until topping is crisp and browned. Serve warm with yoghurt.

Palmerston support group

Now meets on the fourth Monday of each month at the same venue, the Brennan Electorate office opposite Target. Their next meeting will be on 24th April.

Perhaps this new arrangement will suit more Palmerston and rural members - all AONT members are welcome to attend! Most meetings include a guest speakers and/or an activity.

WHEN I WAS A KID, THIS WAS MY COMPUTER:



DAN BACKLAND FOR GRUMPY OLD GITS @ LITTLE CHURCH MOUSE LTD MMXX

**The Arthritis
Foundation of the
Northern Territory Inc.**
Trading as
**Arthritis &
Osteoporosis NT**
ABN 67 099 326 608

Patrons:

His Honour
Professor the Honourable
Hugh Heggie PSM
Administrator of the NT
and Ms Ruth Jones

Vice Patron:

The Honourable
Vicki O'Halloran AM CVO

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Business Village,
48 Trower Rd Millner

www.aont.org.au

[facebook.com/
arthritis.osteoporosis.nt](https://facebook.com/arthritis.osteoporosis.nt)

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We are open:

9:30am – 2pm
Monday to Thursday
(excluding Public Holidays)

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Ruth Quinn

Vice President
Amin Islam

Secretary
Hilary Fowler

*Treasurer and Public
Officer*
Ruth Garden

Ordinary Board Members

Margaret Murray
Lyn Skipper

What We Do

Our work includes:

- Responding to walk in and telephone enquiries
- Providing personalised information packs in response to enquiries
- Producing this newsletter six times a year
- Hosting “Taking the First Step” and pain self-management courses. Call the office on 8948 5232 for more details.
- Providing information stands at a range of forums throughout the year
- Keeping in touch with other community health organisations and the services they provide
- Delivering bulk materials on request to a range of health services
- Presentations to community groups
- Making applications for various small grants to assist with special projects
- Liaising with Arthritis Australia and Healthy Bones Australia



Helping You

Support groups are opportunities for members with common interests and experiences to meet informally to chat, share news and ideas etc. Good company in a relaxed setting means feeling better when you leave than when you arrived!

Palmerston Support Group meets monthly:

- at the Brennan Electorate Office, Palmerston Shopping Centre (opposite Target)
- on the *fourth* Monday of each month at 10:00 am

Arthritis Australia

Our national body funds research, and advocates to improve care, management, support and quality-of-life for people with arthritis. AONT relies on Arthritis Australia for up to date and accurate information on musculoskeletal health.



Proudly sponsored by



**Northern Territory
Government**



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