

Minorities hit hardest by arthritis

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The burden of arthritis is greater for African Americans and Hispanics, despite lower prevalence among these groups according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report published in the May issue of *Preventing Chronic Disease*. According to the Arthritis Foundation, these findings suggest a critical need to expand the reach of effective strategies aimed at arthritis prevention and management, particularly among groups bearing a disproportionate burden.

The report finds that the prevalence of activity limitation, work limitation and severe [joint pain](#) are significantly higher among African Americans and [Hispanics](#). These two groups are nearly twice as likely as whites to have severe joint pain and work limitations and 1.3 times as likely to have activity limitations.

"[Arthritis](#) is a debilitating disease that profoundly impacts the lives of millions of Americans on a daily basis," said Dr. Patience White, vice president of public health for the Arthritis Foundation. "The effects of the 46 million Americans with arthritis on the economy are enormous; the direct and indirect medical costs of this disease are estimated to be \$128 billion each year." With the aging of the baby boomer population, the prevalence of arthritis is expected to rise significantly from 46 million Americans to 67 million Americans by 2030, adds White.

Fortunately, there are simple steps everyone can take to prevent and decrease the pain and disability of arthritis. Small amounts of weight loss and physical activity can make a big difference. For example, for every one pound of weight loss, there is a four-pound reduction in the load

exerted on each knee. In addition, safe and effective self-management education programs are available. People living with arthritis can benefit from participating in one of the Arthritis Foundation's exercise or self-management programs, such as the Arthritis Foundation Walk With Ease Program, Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program, Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program, and Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Program.

Taking Action

Moving is the best medicine for arthritis and in recognition of Arthritis Awareness Month in May, the Arthritis Foundation is encouraging people with arthritis and the many more at risk to make physical activity part of their daily routine. To get started, go to www.fightarthritispain.org to find out your risk for osteoarthritis, the most common form of the disease, and learn how to manage your arthritis. Then, celebrate your commitment to move at an Arthritis Walk event. Visit www.letsmove.together.org for more information about Arthritis Walk events taking place in your community and for a movement tracker to set goals and stay on track.

Provided by Arthritis Foundation

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