

## Issue Brief: Make Arthritis a National Priority!

**One in Five Americans Have Arthritis!**  
*(that's 50 million adult Americans, including 300,000 children)*

President Barack Obama, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin have made prevention and wellness a major policy focus for the nation. We applaud these efforts to invest in public health programs that manage and prevent chronic disease. However, often, only diseases such as heart disease, diabetes or cancer are included and arthritis fails to be mentioned. This is unacceptable. **One cannot address other chronic diseases without first addressing arthritis—a disease that affects an estimated 50 million (one in five) American adults and 300,000 children and is the nation's most common cause of disability. Without appropriate interventions, the number of Americans with arthritis is expected to increase to 67 million Americans within the next 20 years.**

### Help people with arthritis:

- Urge the President, the Secretary and the Surgeon General to include arthritis in any public policy initiatives and national conversations addressing chronic disease.
- Ensure the nation invests in evidenced-based arthritis programs proven to help Americans manage arthritis and also help prevent further disability.
- Learn about the impact of arthritis on your state by visiting:  
[www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data\\_statistics.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data_statistics.htm)
- Understand that the nation cannot address obesity without understanding that those who suffer from arthritis face additional challenges and pain when trying to stay active and lose excess pounds.
- Commit to including arthritis in your national and local discussions on chronic disease.

Please learn more about the Arthritis Foundation's evidenced-based programs at <http://www.arthritis.org/programs-events.php>



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