

Arthritis Foundation® Leader Links

Get the Most Out of A Doctor Visit

Participants in your classes are already well on their way to improving their quality of life, and experiencing the health benefits of regular exercise. Diet, weight management and regular doctor visits are all additional ways for your participants to live a healthier life.

To help take the mystery out of doctor appointments, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has put together a list of 10 questions to ask your provider at each visit. Remember: Better communication leads to better care.

1. *What is the test for?*
2. *How many times have you done this procedure?*
3. *When will I get the results?*
4. *Why do I need this treatment?*
5. *Are there any alternatives?*
6. *What are the possible complications?*
7. *Which hospital is best for my needs?*
8. *How do you spell the name of that drug?*
9. *Are there any side effects?*
10. *Will this medicine interact with medicines that I'm already taking?*

Help your participants collect the tools they need to live a healthier life. As always, the Arthritis Foundation is here to help you – don't forget to visit the AF website for educational resources to share!



Why Not Cross Train?

Spring is the perfect time for new beginnings. As exercise instructors, we often encourage participants to cross-train in order to reach fitness goals. So why not take your own advice this spring and engage in a little cross-training with some other Arthritis Foundation programs?

If you've always been a "water baby," maybe now is the time to step on dry land and become certified in the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program. If terra firma has been your venue of choice, tak-

ing the plunge in a warm water pool and attaining certification in the Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program may be just the change you need. Or, you might consider expanding your horizons by investigating the mind/body arena and becoming an Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi Program leader.

Prevent Falls with Balance Management

Falls are the leading cause of injury for people over 65. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), one out of every four people over 65 will fall. Of those, 20 to 30 percent will suffer moderate to severe injuries, but only half will talk to their health care provider about the fall.

The good news is that we can help prevent falls. Strengthening and balancing exercises, such as those included in our exercise program, can help even chair-bound individuals improve their balance and significantly reduce the risk of falls.

Use the balance exercises starting on page 109 of the instructor manual in your classes. Start off with ankle rotations and heel raises to strengthen ankles and calves. Next, have participants stand behind the chair while holding onto the chair, then touch the chair back with fingertips only, then let go of the chair entirely. Practice hamstring curls, back leg slides and side leg lifts: first holding onto the chair, then turning the head while moving the leg and finally, letting go of the chair entirely. For an extra challenge, participants can hold onto the chair and perform the same moves with their eyes closed. Tandem walking and sideways walking, which require more balance than walking a straight line, should also be included in your program.

Opportunities for Arthritis Foundation instructors to cross-train aren't just limited to Programs for Better Living. Consider forming an Arthritis Walk or Jingle Bell Run team. Maybe your love of children would make you a natural volunteer for a JA event in your region? Think outside the box and branch out – the rewards are waiting for you!

ANSWERLinks

Why is data collection so important?

Collecting data is one of the greatest challenges we face as Arthritis Foundation instructors. Our ability to offer effective exercise programs is often based on grant funding the Arthritis Foundation receives from external organizations.

Years ago, it was enough to just supply the numbers of people with arthritis we were serving. Today, our funders require more specific data. In order to continue receiving these valuable grants, which enable us to run leader training workshops and conduct our Programs for Better Living, we are charged with providing the required data.

Liability is another issue in which data collection plays a role. Unless we have a completed Participant Release Form, we have no record of class participants and their signed, informed consent. If an unfortunate situation/injury occurs, we would need to produce this paperwork.

Understanding these requirements will help us explain the importance of cooperation and the need to gather this information to our participants and partners.

National Office News



Arthritis Walk®

Are you looking for a fun way to engage your program participants in supporting the Arthritis Foundation's mission? Then don't miss this great opportunity: Arthritis Walk season is here and your local event is recruiting teams!

Encourage your class to sign up together, fundraise and then take part in their local Arthritis Walk to let their community know that arthritis is unacceptable. Forming a team is easy! Visit www.arthritiswalk.org, choose your state from the drop-down menu and then select the Arthritis Walk closest to you. For additional questions, contact your local office.

Online ASMP Program

Thanks to grant funding from the CDC and in partnership with the National Council on Aging, the Arthritis Foundation is excited to offer the Online Arthritis Self-Management Program later this year. The online program, like its community counterpart, has been shown to relieve pain and reduce activity limitation. The marketing campaign, which includes a program microsite, will launch in late spring.

Take Action with the Let's Move Together Podcasts

Did you know there are a number of pre-recorded audio files available to assist people with arthritis? The Let's Move Together program has created a variety of podcasts that can be listened to or downloaded to your computer free of charge.

Currently, podcasts on some 35 arthritis related topics are available to help people overcome the obstacles that accompany arthritis and take steps toward a lifetime of physical activity.

A few of the most popular podcasts include:

Intro to Tai Chi – Physical activity is one of the most useful remedies for managing arthritis pain. The ancient Chinese exercise, Tai Chi, offers movements that are easy enough for almost anyone to perform.

Movement and Your Health – Everyone knows exercise is good for us, but the benefits extend much further than most people realize.

The Benefits of Massage – Massage therapy may help ease arthritis symptoms such as pain and stiffness.

Interview With Dr. Patience White – More than 50 million people are affected by arthritis. What do people need to know about this disease?

To hear the latest Let's Move Together podcast, visit: <http://lmt.arthritis.org/our-community/podcasts/index.php>

You Are More Than an Instructor



You are on the front lines of the battle against arthritis, helping the 50 million Americans living with this disease. But should you care about what's going on in Washington, D.C.? Absolutely. Why? It affects your participants – and it might even affect you one day!

Arthritis E-Advocates and Ambassadors receive valuable information about the latest legislative developments concerning arthritis. Sign up to become an E-Advocate and have

the latest news about what's happening on Capitol Hill delivered to your inbox. You can then share it with your participants and encourage them to become E-Advocates as well.

If you're already an E-Advocate, consider becoming an Arthritis Ambassador. An Ambassador is a "super advocate" – someone who will commit to at least one year of building a strong relationship with his or her members of Congress on behalf of people with arthritis.

Where do you sign up? Visit www.arthritis.org/advocacy to register today!

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