

# 24 TOP TIPS to make every day **EASIER**

FROM THE EXPERTS AT THE ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION





# Make every day **EASIER**

**THESE SIMPLE TIPS FROM EXPERTS AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH ARTHRITIS WILL HELP YOU TACKLE DAILY TASKS WITH LESS PAIN AND FRUSTRATION.**

Often it's the most mundane daily tasks that create the greatest frustrations of living with arthritis – buttoning a shirt, washing dishes, driving, climbing stairs, even just having to stop and rest in the middle of doing something. The good news is that with some forethought and ingenuity, there are less painful ways to do just about anything.

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# STARTING YOUR DAY

**1** Set your electric blanket or heating pad to come on shortly before you wake to help loosen stiff joints.

**2** Do some stretches before you get out of bed. A stretching strap, like those used in physical therapy, can help stretch your legs, but be careful not to overdo it.

**3** Sit while you dress. If one arm or leg is more stiff or painful, slip it into the clothing first. When undressing, remove the stronger arm or leg first.

**4** Make brushing easier with a spray-on detangler. Use long-handled brushes or combs, and slide foam sleeves over handles to make them thicker and easier to grasp.



**42%**  
report difficulty  
getting dressed

FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS



**54%**  
report difficulty  
picking clothing up  
off the floor

FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS

# LAUNDRY

**5** Use a wheeled hamper with multiple sections to sort clothes as they are put in.

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**6** A grabber helps reach items in top-loading washers and pick clothes up off the floor.

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**7** Have each family member use a mesh lingerie bag for dirty socks to cut sock-matching time and effort.

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**8** Skip ironing. Instead, use a garment steamer or toss a handful of ice cubes into the dryer with the clothes; the cubes will melt and steam away the wrinkles.



# COOKING

71%  
started eating  
more healthfully

FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS

**9** Buy pre-cut ingredients or use a food processor, mandoline or kitchen shears instead of a knife when possible. Try an ergonomic knife (like a rocker knife), and keep it sharp.

**10** Use a stand mixer or food processor to blend ingredients. If mixing by hand, use a device to hold the bowl in place, like the Staybowlizer (\$20; amazon.com).

**11** Reduce cleanup with microwaveable steamer bags for vegetables or buy pre-packaged microwave-ready veggies.

**12** Use lightweight, non-stick cookware, like silicone bakeware. Line baking sheets and roasting pans with foil, or use disposable pans for easy cleanup.



**68%**  
often have to take  
a break during  
an activity

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FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS



# CLEANING

**13** Dishwashing gloves not only protect hands but provide better grip for many tasks. Remove them more easily by running your gloved hands under cold water.

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**14** Mount a brush with suction cups in the sink so you can hold dishes with both hands while you scrub.

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**15** Try a wheeled cart for taking out trash bags. Ask your waste management company if it provides special services like moving cans to the curb and back.

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**16** Tackle tubs and showers with long-handled brushes and battery-powered scrubbers. Wear a microfiber hand mitt instead of gripping a cloth.



# DRIVING

**17** Get in and out of your car more easily with a swivel maneuver: With your back to the car, sit, then swing legs forward. Do the reverse to get out.

**18** A rubber handle that attaches to the seatbelt (\$13; [seatbelttextenderpros.com](http://seatbelttextenderpros.com)) or an extender for the buckle (\$16; [mybucklemate.com](http://mybucklemate.com)) make buckling easier.

**19** Install additional or larger mirrors ([all-viewmirror.com](http://all-viewmirror.com)) to help with backing up, parking and blind spots.

**20** Hold the wheel at 5 and 7 o'clock instead of 10 and 2 to reduce arm and shoulder strain. Add a steering wheel cover for a more comfortable grip.



**68%**

report difficulty  
getting in and out  
of a vehicle

FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS



**77%**  
have trouble getting  
a good night's sleep

FROM A SURVEY OF  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS

# BEDTIME

**21** Rushing and stress can put joints at risk, so reduce morning pressures by preparing at night: Have breakfast foods, outfits and school and office gear ready to go.

**22** Take a warm shower or bath; the drop in body temperature helps relax and ready your body for sleep. Turn off electronic screens; they emit sleep-disrupting blue light.

**23** To sleep more soundly, turn down the thermostat; also, write down thoughts that are troubling or preoccupying you.

**24** Put your morning anti-inflammatory pills by your bed with crackers and water. Take them when the alarm goes off, then hit snooze so they start working before you get up.





# *It's* **GREAT** *To Meet You*

We're so excited to have you in our community and can't wait to help you **Live Your Yes!**

## **Helpful Resources**

To get started on your personal journey, we hope you'll take advantage of some of the many tools and resources designed for you. Here are a few to get you started.

- ▶ Join a **Live Yes! Connect Group or the Online Community** today to make connections and get information and resources to help you manage your pain.
- ▶ Have questions? Our licensed clinical staff is available to you to provide **one-on-one personal support**.
- ▶ **A variety of tools** are accessible online to help you reduce pain, promote your independence and live your best life — including our new **Vim mobile app**.
- ▶ Ready to connect locally? Check out programs and **events in your area**.

## **Support**

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