



# Alaska: Why Arthritis Matters

Arthritis affects **23.9%** of the population in Alaska. That's **117,000** adults living with doctor-diagnosed arthritis in the state.

- There are over **54 Million** American adults with doctor diagnosed arthritis in the U.S.
- 1 in 3** veterans has arthritis, which accounts for **22.2%** of the people in Alaska living with arthritis
- There are approximately **300,000 kids** with arthritis in the U.S. but only about **390 pediatric rheumatologists**. That's about 700 kids for each doctor.

## Over 24 million Americans experience activity limitations due to their arthritis.

- 60,000** adults in Alaska have activity limitations caused by arthritis
- Among all adults in Alaska with arthritis, **44.8%** have work limitations
- Arthritis in the U.S. has an economic burden of **\$304 billion** – made up of medical expenses and lost wages

## Adults with arthritis often have one or more chronic conditions.

- Mental Health:** Anxiety and depression affect **1/3** of U.S. adults with arthritis 45 years of age or older
- Diabetes:** **54.4%** of adults in AK with diabetes also have arthritis
- Heart Disease:** **51.7%** of adults in AK with heart disease also have arthritis
- Obesity:** **33.7%** of adults in AK who are obese also have arthritis

## You can make a difference by advocating for state and federal legislation that will help people with arthritis in Alaska. Legislative priorities for 2019 include:

- Workforce:** Legislation that addresses the pediatric rheumatology workforce shortage through federal loan repayment programs
- Congressional Arthritis Caucus:** Grows the bipartisan Congressional Arthritis Caucus, a forum to educate Members of Congress about the most pressing issues facing people with arthritis

Contact your local Arthritis Foundation [State Director of Advocacy & Access](#) to learn more.

Visit [arthritis.org/advocate/our-policy-priorities](http://arthritis.org/advocate/our-policy-priorities) to learn about our priorities.

Capital: Juneau  
Founded: 1959  
State Fish: The Giant  
King Salmon

