



The Arthritis Foundation Welcomes Elected Officials

arthritis.org/advocate



On behalf of the nearly 60 million Americans battling arthritis, the Arthritis Foundation invites you to become a Champion of Yes for people living with this disease. Did you know, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 20 percent of the population of every state has arthritis?

As the number one disability in the United States, arthritis includes more than 100 different diseases and conditions that attack the body's joints and connective tissues. It is a pervasive and costly chronic illness, totaling over \$300 billion each year in direct and indirect expenses.

Unfortunately, there is no cure, and for forms of disease like osteoarthritis, there is no disease-modifying treatment. For forms that do have treatments, medications are often expensive, and millions of patients have difficulty affording or accessing them.

People with arthritis depend on nearly every aspect of the health care system — from access to specialists and prescription drugs to medical research — and all too often they cannot adequately access the providers, services and treatments they need. And we frequently find that the patient is not at the center of their health care decisions. This must end.

- It is important to reform step therapy, prior authorization and other utilization management practices that can be overly burdensome and prevent patients from receiving the treatment they need when they need it.
- Health coverage for biomarker testing is failing to keep pace with innovations and advancements in treatment for arthritis. Symptoms for arthritis can vary and even be mistaken for other illnesses and considering there are multiple classes of drugs to treat different forms of the disease, using biomarker testing, as it is available, can aid in developing more precise care, improved survivorship, and better mobility and quality of life for patients.
- For those that need to access copayment assistance to fill their medications, we need to ensure all copays count and any third-party payments are credited towards the patient's deductible and out-of-pocket costs.

In 2025, the Arthritis Foundation will continue to focus on an "Ideal Model of Care," a multi-year initiative to help patients achieve the best health care possible which incorporates these priorities. State legislation will be vital in this effort, and we look forward to working with you to pass laws streamlining health care and improving patients' lives.

This packet covers ways you can support your constituents who battle arthritis, as well as ways the Arthritis Foundation can support your service to them. Please visit [arthritis.org/advocate](https://www.arthritis.org/advocate) to learn more about our policy priorities and advocacy initiatives.

Melissa Horn

Director of State Legislative Affairs

Arthritis Foundation

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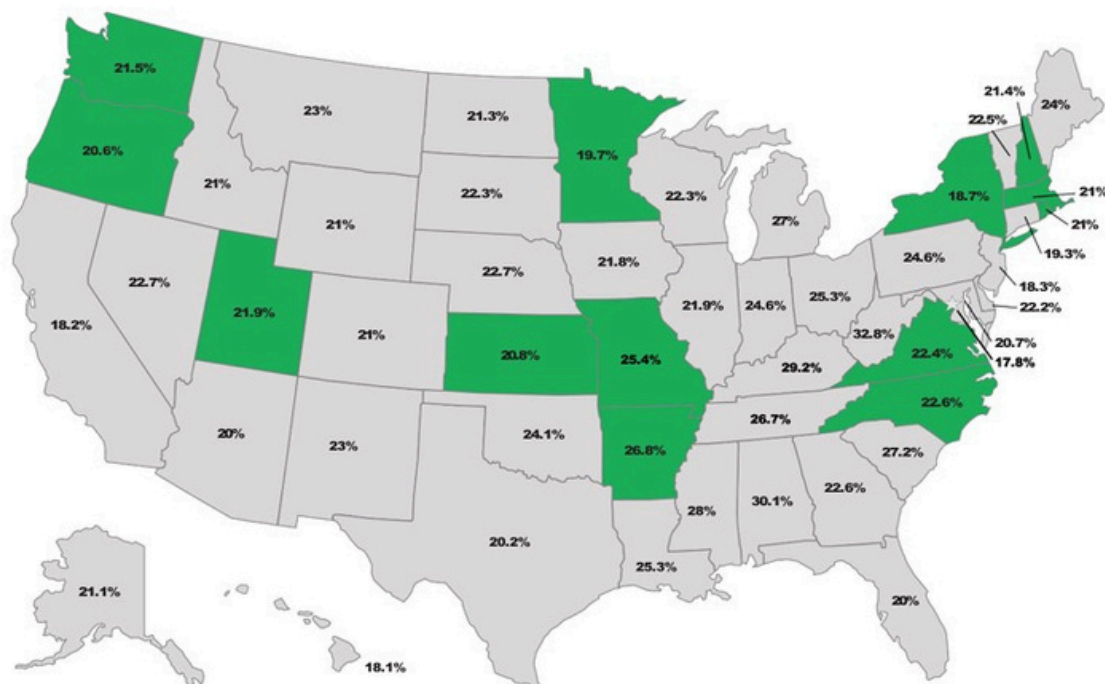
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Arthritis is a serious disease that affects millions of people of all ages, races and ethnic groups — and it's growing.

Nearly 60 million adults and hundreds of thousands of children in the U.S. are living with arthritis. By 2040, the number of adults in the U.S. with doctor-diagnosed arthritis is projected to increase by 49% to more than 78 million (25.9% of all adults). In 48 of 50 states, at least 20% of the population has arthritis, yet only 13 states receive funding for arthritis research and programs from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Look at your own state's prevalence [here](#). Additionally, you can pass an [Arthritis Awareness Resolution](#) in your state! Check out our priority issues to learn more.

- [Step Therapy](#)
- [Accumulator Adjustment Programs](#)
- [Biomarkers](#)

Arthritis Prevalence in the United States



KEY

 CDC-Funded State

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health. Chronic Disease Indicators (CDI) Data [online]. [accessed Jan. 31, 2023] URL: <https://nccd.cdc.gov/cdi>.

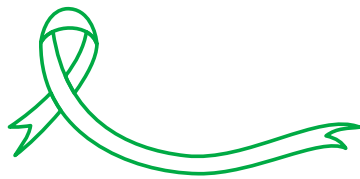
How the Arthritis Foundation Can Help YOU

Whether it's in the thousands or millions, many of your constituents have arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation wants to help you connect with them.

Our goal is to support people with arthritis so they can live life to its fullest — easing their pain and offering a path toward wellness. That's why we offer the following tools and resources:

Webinars, Expert Advice, Tools, and Resources

Visit [arthritis.org](https://www.arthritis.org) by saying YES to more!



Your Coverage, Your Care

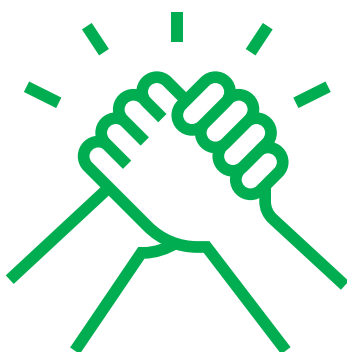
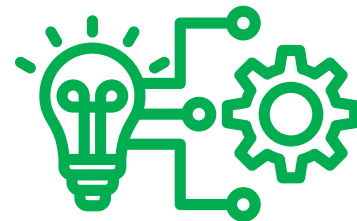
This powerful resource will help you better understand health coverage options and prepare for open enrollment, choose the right coverage for arthritis care needs, minimize claim denials, manage the denial process with step-by-step instructions, reduce costs and find financial assistance programs.

[arthritis.org/rxforaccess](https://www.arthritis.org/rxforaccess)

Take Control of Pain

Get expert tips, strategies and support to help you manage arthritis pain from the experts at the Arthritis Foundation.

[arthritis.org/pain](https://www.arthritis.org/pain)



Helpline

The Arthritis Foundation Helpline has a licensed, clinical social worker and trained staff who offer support on a variety of topics, such as access to care and financial assistance — in English, Spanish and other languages.

Email helpline@arthritis.org or call toll-free at

[1.800.283.7800](tel:18002837800)

For more information email advocacy@arthritis.org and follow us on X at [@AFAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/AFAdvocacy)