



Keeping Your Joints Healthy



Overview

Your joints are the places where two bones meet. Some support your skeleton. Others allow different parts of your body to bend, twist and rotate. We want to keep all of your joints healthy and strong. Let's look at some simple ways to do that.

Well-balanced diet

First, it's important to eat a well-balanced diet. Reach for fresh foods instead of processed foods, and prepare meals at home when possible. Eat things like whole grains, lean proteins, fruits and vegetables. Limit sugar, salt and unhealthy fats. And try to steer clear of fast food.

Exercise

Next, it's important to stay active. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. Children and teens should get even more if they can. You can do things like walking, jogging, swimming or cycling. You can dance. You can also play sports. To help protect your joints, make sure you stretch and warm up before athletic activity. Always wear the proper safety gear. And listen to your body. If you're in pain, stop the activity. Never try to "push through the pain."

Manage your weight

And finally, focus on managing your weight. When you gain too much weight, you put a lot of stress on your joints. This greatly raises your risk of joint injury. So monitor your weight, and if you have excess pounds, try to shed them. If you're having trouble controlling your weight, talk to your doctor. They can help you make a plan for weight control.

