



Stay active throughout the day.

If you feel up to it, try to stretch, exercise, or keep moving when you can. Being regularly active may help people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) experience less pain, more energy, better sleep, and better day-to-day function. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about exercise and what levels of activity may be right for you.

Here are some ideas to consider after you've checked with your doctor first.

STRETCHING

Adding some simple stretching into your daily routine may help to ease stiffness (especially in the morning) and increase flexibility. Stretching your body every day, including your legs, fingers and wrists, and arms and shoulders, may also help to improve mobility and range of motion.

WALKING

Walking may have physical benefits, like helping to increase mobility in muscles and joints without a great deal of impact. But walking can also help reduce stress, especially when combined with the added benefit of being outside. You can try starting off slowly on smooth, flat surfaces, and can ask family or friends to join you for some company.

YOGA

Different forms of yoga, ranging from gentle breathing exercises and relaxing stretches to more vigorous aerobic exercise, may help reduce the pain, stiffness, and fatigue associated with RA. Yoga may also help improve physical function, mobility, and grip strength. In addition to these physical benefits, some people with RA have experienced improvements in sleeping habits, energy, relaxation, and emotional well-being.

TAI CHI

The slow, graceful exercise of tai chi originated centuries ago. Tai chi may help improve balance, which can sometimes be problematic for people with RA. This low-impact activity may help reduce stress, pain, and stiffness, and may also help with flexibility and muscle strength.

SWIMMING

The buoyancy and temperature of water help make swimming a good way to reduce the feeling of stiffness and the load on joints. Water also provides natural resistance, so you can get both an aerobic and muscle-strengthening workout. Swimming regularly may also help with flexibility and overall muscle endurance.

STATIONARY CYCLING

Stationary cycling works all of the muscles in your body, even your feet. It's a way to get a cardiovascular workout without stressing your weight-bearing joints. And since there's no need to lean or turn the bike, it's safer for people with balance problems. Be sure to start with slow, short sessions.

This is not medical advice. We do not guarantee any individual results or beneficial outcomes. For more information, please visit arthritis.org.