

[IMAGE]

An Hour a Day Keeps OA Symptoms at Bay

By Editorial Staff

Osteoarthritis (OA), the most common type of arthritis, is caused by excessive joint use, often due to aging. Also known as degenerative joint disease or "wear and tear" arthritis, OA can cause pain, stiffness and weakness at joint sites such as the neck, back, hip, elbows, knees and fingers / toes. These symptoms can limit movement and activities of daily living, two aspects of life people of all ages can appreciate, but particularly the elderly.

Fortunately, movement – the same thing limited by OA – is actually one of the keys to reducing symptoms, according to research. Published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, the study evaluated patients ages 49-83 with lower-extremity joint problems due to OA. All patients were considered disability-free (no walking or activity limitations) at the start of the study. During the six-year study period, researchers measured patients' activity levels and interviewed them periodically to assess OA symptoms.

The results: OA patients who exercised moderately to vigorously at least one hour per week were significantly more likely to be disability-free after four years compared to patients who did not meet this exercise goal. In fact, patients who met or exceeded the goal were 86 percent less likely to have mobility limitations compared to other patients. Interestingly, *total time* spent participating in moderate-to-vigorous activity each week was more important than time spent in bouts of activity (e.g., 10 minutes vs. 15 minutes vs. 30 minutes at one time) when it came to reducing disability risk.

To learn more about arthritis in general and osteoarthritis in particular, [click here](#).

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