



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022

WHAT'S INSIDE

NO MORE PAIN!

Find Lasting Relief
For Your Arthritis!

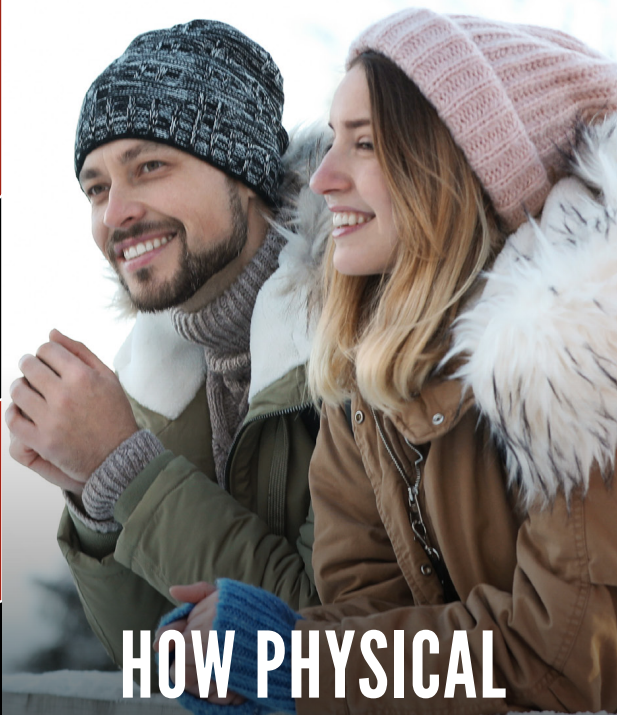
HEALTHY RECIPE

Try this delicious grab-
and-go snack!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Meet Sarah Runyon,
PTA, CCCE

**5 SIMPLE TIPS FOR
SHOVELING SNOW**



HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP YOUR ARTHRITIS

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► Are you experiencing pain in your groin or stiffness in your back? Do you find it painful to go up and down stairs? Are these symptoms making it difficult for you to go about your daily routine?

You could be suffering from osteoarthritis.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis, affecting nearly 30 million nationwide. OA is a degenerative joint disease often described as “wear and tear” arthritis. Repetitive movement and prior injuries also contribute to the condition.

Early on, the condition most commonly is associated with stiffness and ache after prolonged rest and inactivity. As the condition advances, inflammation leads to pain and loss of motion in the joints.

While arthritis can be debilitating, there's a lot that you can do to alleviate the pain and improve your function, joint movement, muscle strength, balance, and coordination. It's even possible to eliminate symptoms, depending on the amount of arthritis you have.



WHAT IS ARTHRITIS, EXACTLY?

Osteoarthritis is also known as degenerative joint disease. The main characteristic is the loss of articular cartilage and joint disability. It is known as the “wear and tear” form of arthritis. The breakdown of the cartilage affects the whole joint, causing inflammation, bone/joint structural changes, and bone spur formation.

Primary osteoarthritis has no known cause, but almost 30–65% is thought to be genetically determined. Secondary osteoarthritis mainly comes from traumatic events. Despite the differences in the causes, the two types of osteoarthritis progress in similar directions, ultimately resulting in the loss and destruction of articular cartilage.

Typical symptoms include pain, muscle weakness, joint instability, brief morning stiffness, crepitus (i.e., noises like snaps and pops), and physical inactivity.

WHAT CAUSES OSTEOARTHRITIS?

There is increasing evidence that different risk factors are associated with osteoarthritis, including:

- Obesity
- Genetic predispositions



FIND LASTING RELIEF FOR YOUR ARTHRITIS!

- Sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., female gender, African-American race),
- Specific bone/joint shapes
- There are also physical risk factors associated with increased osteoarthritis including:
 - Joint injury
 - Participation in certain occupational activities (i.e., repetitive movements like bending or prolonged positions like sitting/driving)
 - Participation in sports (i.e. contact sports)
 - Thigh flexor muscle weakness and knee osteoarthritis
 - Joint malalignment

Although aging is one of the most significant risk factors for osteoarthritis, obesity is also a major contributor to developing osteoarthritis. Obese patients have extra weight on their bodies that add to cartilage breakdown.

Recent research suggests that unhealthy diets are associated with systemic inflammation. This inflammation is responsible for a 2.5-times higher likelihood of experiencing knee pain than patients with healthy weight and diets and similar cartilage damage.

However, this cycle can be broken by improving joint movement, muscle strength, balance, and coordination, reducing pain and inflammation.

HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP ARTHRITIS

Your physical therapist will assess your particular condition to identify the contributing factors and address all of them. Regardless of the cause of arthritis, physical therapy plays a significant role in treating arthritis symptoms and should be the first step.

Your therapist can educate you on how regular physical activity and individualized exercise programs can reduce your pain, prevent the condition from worsening, and improve daily function.

Physical therapists can also help you choose healthier

lifestyles for losing weight if you are overweight or obese. In addition, your PT can guide you on ways to maintain a healthy weight using diet changes and exercise.

In many cases, physical therapy can help patients by choosing specific exercises and designing appropriate strengthening exercises that improve your function without aggravating your pain. Your therapist can help you reclaim a healthy lifestyle. From start to finish, we're dedicated to your ongoing well-being. On every level, physical therapy serves to enhance the patient's quality of life.

Source

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32364594/>

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STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Sarah Runyon, PTA, CCCE

Sarah Runyon is a licensed Physical Therapist Assistant for Apex Physical Therapy LLC. She has been working with a wide variety of patients in an outpatient setting since 2015. Sarah utilizes her skills from extensive training in exercise therapy, manual techniques, vestibular and neurological rehab programs and prosthetic training. Sarah is MDT (Mechanical Diagnosis Therapy) trained, holding a certificate for the Lumbar region of the spine from the McKenzie Institute. Sarah strives to assure positive patient outcomes through the utilization of various physical therapy techniques. Her passion is to help patients succeed by delivering exceptional one-on-one

care.

Sarah is able to communicate with members of the deaf community through ASL. She is our Clinical Coordinator for Clinical Education, where she works with students as a Clinical Instructor in our Merrillville facility. In this role, she is able to influence students in the dynamic outpatient setting that Apex Physical Therapy provides.

Sarah is an active member in the community with passion for the field of physical therapy. She has been a member of the American Physical Therapy Association since 2014 and many volunteer programs in the community. Sarah also works as an Adjunct Faculty member for the PTA program at Ivy Tech Community College, and was awarded the Adjunct Faculty of the Year award for 2020. Sarah continues to seek opportunities on furthering her education in the field of Physical Therapy.

In her free time, Sarah enjoys all outdoor activities and spending quality time with her family and close friends.

5 SIMPLE TIPS FOR SHOVELING SNOW

Snow shoveling can lead to a number of health risks for many people, from back injuries to heart attacks. The following tips can help keep you safer when you set out to shovel:

- 1. Warm up.** Warm your muscles before heading out to shovel by doing some light movements, such as bending side to side or walking in place.
- 2. Push rather than lift.** Pushing the snow with the shovel instead of lifting can help reduce the strain on your body.
- 3. Lighten your load.** Consider using a lighter-weight plastic shovel instead of a metal one to help decrease the weight being lifted.
- 4. Consider multiple trips.** Consider shoveling periodically throughout the storm to avoid having to move large amounts of snow at once.
- 5. Keep up with snowfall.** Try to shovel snow shortly after it falls, when it is lighter and fluffier. The longer snow stays on the ground, the wetter it can become. Wet snow is heavier and harder to move.



HEALTHY RECIPE: TRAIL MIX



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup raw almonds
- 3/4 cup raw cashews
- 2/3 cup raw pumpkin seeds
- 1/3 cup raw sunflower seeds
- 2 tbsp unsweetened dried cranberries, chopped
- 2 tbsp vegan dark chocolate chips
- sea salt for taste

DIRECTIONS

Chop any large ingredients if necessary to make everything about the same size. Give the dried fruit a light sprinkle of sea salt before you mix it in (it sticks better), or sprinkle the whole mix with salt if you prefer. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and enjoy! Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.