

# Arthritis

Arthritis, a chronic disease that is characterized by more than 100 conditions which primarily affect a body's joints, can be disruptive to the lives of seniors. Some of the most familiar forms or related conditions include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia and gout.

According to the Arthritis Society, osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common type of arthritis, affecting more than three million Canadians. People living with OA experience erosion of the cartilage, and this can lead to pain, stiffness, swelling and bone-on-bone movement in the affected joint. Osteoarthritis affects joints of the body that receive the most stress, namely the knees, hips and hands. And, sadly, the prevalence increases with age.\*

Medication can help treat the symptoms, but adopting certain lifestyle changes including moderate exercise, could provide additional benefits. Sometimes, though, seniors with arthritis who are living alone or who lack support face challenges in caring for themselves. They forget to take their medications or aren't motivated to exercise. Perhaps they have difficulty eating a nutritious diet that will help them maintain a healthy weight.

What's more, osteoarthritis sometimes leads to the need for knee and hip replacements – and a stint in the hospital or a facility. If your loved one with arthritis has recently been hospitalized or spent time in a facility, a local Home Instead Senior Care® office can help your senior transition safely home through the Returning Home<sup>SM</sup> Program.

\*<http://www.arthritis.ca/types%20of%20arthritis/osteoarthritis/default.asp?s=1>



## How a Home Instead CAREGiver can help:

**Medication Reminders:** Joint replacements often require the need for several different prescriptions. A Home Instead CAREGiver can pick up new prescriptions and refills, and oversee medication reminders to help reduce the risk of a medication mishap. A CAREGiver can also make a note of any reactions or side effects so that they can be addressed during a doctor's appointment or, if needed, alert the doctor immediately.

**Nutrition Management:** Since mobility is a major issue while dealing with recovery from arthritis-related medical procedures, a Home Instead CAREGiver can help with grocery shopping and meal preparation. Preparing meals offers opportunities to interact with the client as well as a chance to observe and record the client's food intake.

**Assistance with Daily Routine:** A joint replacement or other surgery for an arthritis-related problem will often require a daily regime of simple at-home exercises to speed up the pace of recovery. A Home Instead CAREGiver can remind and encourage a client to stay on schedule with exercises. Light housekeeping and assistance with bathing, dressing and toileting are other services that may be available.

**Doctor Appointments:** Follow-up appointments are often required to ensure that an older adult recovers or manages pain effectively. A Home Instead CAREGiver can track scheduled appointments, prepare a client for the trip and provide transportation to the doctor's office.



For more information contact your local  
Home Instead Senior Care® office at  
**888.484.5759**  
or visit [ReturningHome.com](http://ReturningHome.com)

## Returning Home<sup>SM</sup>

Each Home Instead Senior Care franchise office is independently owned and operated. © Home Instead, Inc. 2012