

Arthritis Awareness Month — May 2019

Arthritis Awareness Month, led by the Arthritis Foundation (<https://www.arthritis.org>), is observed each May to bring attention to arthritis and its impact. Arthritis affects an estimated 54.4 million U.S. adults, or approximately one in four (1); and of these adults with arthritis, approximately 27% have severe joint pain (2). Arthritis also is linked to higher rates of physical inactivity (1).

A report in this issue of *MMWR* found that arthritis is more common among American Indian/Alaska Natives than among any other racial/ethnic group and is most prevalent in Appalachia and the Lower Mississippi Valley regions (3). Likewise, the report found that, in all states, severe joint pain and physical inactivity were common among adults with arthritis, but especially among those in southeastern states, and were most common among adults who were disabled or unable to work (3). Adults with arthritis and severe joint pain also were more likely to be physically inactive than those with no or mild to moderate joint pain (3) even though physical activity eases arthritis pain over time (1).^{*} CDC supports evidence-based lifestyle management programs proven to help adults with arthritis to be physically active and improve their quality of life.[†]

^{*} <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/physical-activity-overview.html>.

[†] <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/physical-activity.html>.

References

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2. Barbour KE, Boring M, Helmick CG, Murphy LB, Qin J. Prevalence of severe joint pain among adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis—United States, 2002–2014. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2016;65:1052–6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6539a2>
3. Guglielmo D, Murphy LB, Boring MA, et al. State-specific severe joint pain and physical inactivity among adults with arthritis—United States, 2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2019;68:381–7.

State-Specific Severe Joint Pain and Physical Inactivity Among Adults with Arthritis — United States, 2017

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An estimated 54.4 million (approximately one in four) U.S. adults have doctor-diagnosed arthritis (arthritis) (1). Severe joint pain and physical inactivity are common among adults with arthritis and are linked to adverse mental and physical health effects and limitations (2,3). CDC analyzed 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data to estimate current state-specific prevalence of arthritis and, among adults with arthritis, the prevalences of severe joint pain and physical inactivity. In 2017, the median age-standardized state prevalence of arthritis among adults aged ≥18 years was 22.8% (range = 15.7% [District of Columbia] to 34.6%

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