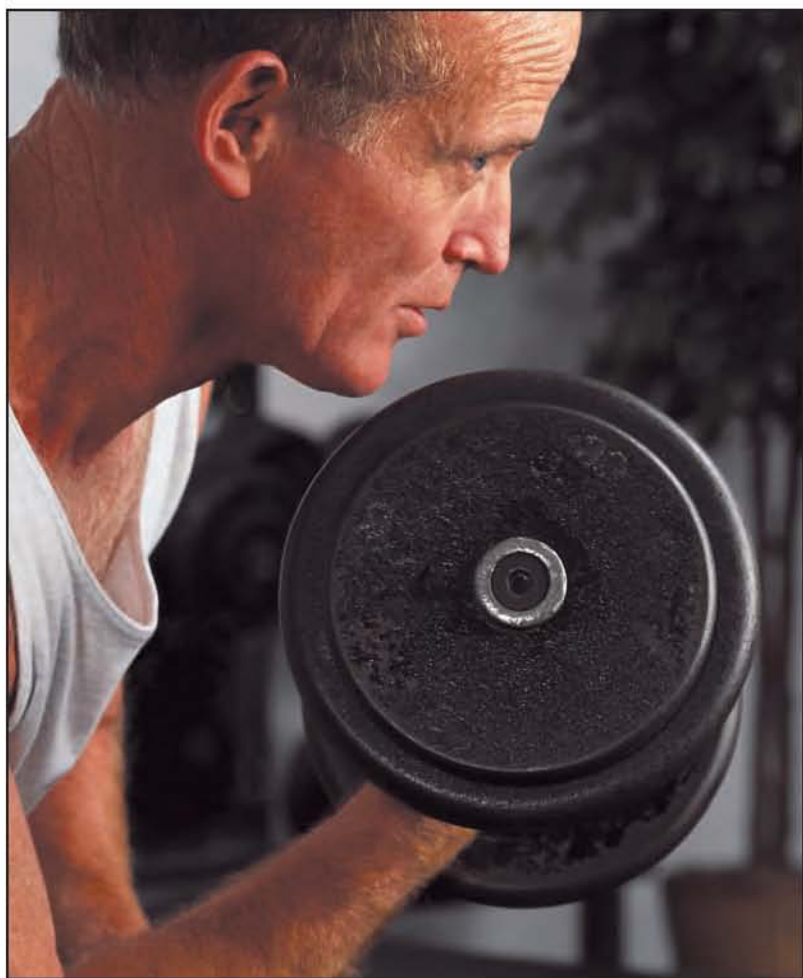


# **EXERCISE** for **ARTHRITIS** and **JOINT PAIN**



**WEIGHTLIFTING, SWIMMING, AND OTHER SPORTS ACTIVITIES CAN ALL HELP MAINTAIN JOINT HEALTH AND EASE JOINT PAIN.**

By Marc Lebert, Certified Personal Trainer

While it may seem counter intuitive to move an already sore joint, research shows that even those suffering from arthritis and joint pain would be better off to start an exercise program.

Why? Because exercise 'feeds' your joints. Cartilage and other connective tissue depend on joint movement to increase blood flow so that nutrients are absorbed and waste is removed. Moving actually helps keep your joints healthy!

So, let's get started. First things first. Discuss your exercise plans with your doctor and receive supervision from a physical therapist or qualified athletic trainer (at least until you have an exercise routine laid out for you and you are comfortable following it on your own). Start with range-of-motion exercises.

## **RANGE-OF-MOTION EXERCISES**

Range-of-motion exercises (eg: arm circles) help maintain normal joint movement and relieve stiffness. Perform these movements slowly and through as big a range of motion as your joints will allow. These movements will maintain your flexibility and over time may even improve it!

## **STRENGTHENING EXERCISE**

Strengthening exercises (e.g., weight training) help keep or increase muscle strength which is vital to help support and protect your joints. Strength training also improves your metabolism.

## **AEROBIC EXERCISE**

Aerobic exercises (e.g., bicycle riding, swimming) improve cardiovascular fitness, help control weight, and improve overall function. Maintaining a healthy weight is important because extra weight applies pressure on your joints. Aerobic exercise has also been shown to reduce inflammation in some joints. When exercising ease off if your joints become painful, inflamed or red. After exercise you may want to use cold packs to help reduce inflammation.

We don't need studies though to tell us how good it feels to enjoy exercise like a stroll on the boardwalk, a yoga class and getting back some control over your arthritis. For more information go to [www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca).

*Marc Lebert is a Certified Personal Trainer training clients in their homes, corporations (including 10 years at GlaxoSmithKline) and at his fitness club, Fuel Fitness in Mississauga. For more information visit [www.lebertequalizer.com](http://www.lebertequalizer.com).*

