

Arthritis and You

Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) wants to find ways to serve you better with future JointHealth[™] materials. In this December issue of JointHealth[™] monthly, ACE is asking you to participate in various activities that will help us reach our goals. In return, we are offering various gift cards as a reward for getting involved in some of the activities. In some cases, we may publish your written submissions*

Most people take for granted all the things they do every day, like getting dressed, preparing meals, caring for children, driving, typing at a computer, exercising, shopping, and entertaining. People who live with arthritis, however, have to think about whether any of those activities will be too tiring, too difficult, or even impossible to do.

You may have looked for advice in books and online, but ended up feeling like all the things you have to buy to accommodate your arthritis either take up a lot of room, mean you are packing all sorts of stuff with you, or spending a ton of money. Some of the advice you are finding, such as “avoid carrying heavy bags”, may seem obvious. Or you may sometimes feel like your options are limited when you read, “don’t buy clothes with buttons.”

Over time you may have come up with your own ways to get around some of your challenges.

In honour of all those who are frustrated by uninspiring advice, ACE would like to dedicate a future JointHealth[™] monthly to useful and even fun tips and tricks for going about your daily life. If you have ideas that are cheap, easy, less cumbersome, and add flare to daily life, tell us what they are. If you have found strategies to help you pace yourself, share them with us. Since you are the true experts of living with arthritis, we want to hear your ideas so that we can share them.



To qualify for a gift card your submission must be one of the first three received in a particular category, and it must include your full name and address so that we can mail your card.

Send us your living with arthritis tips

Do you have simple and inexpensive tricks for doing things around the house? Have you found beautiful ways to accessorize your outfits that don't involve buttons? What do you do everyday to make your life a little easier? Please contact ACE at feedback@jointhealth.org to provide your best tips. We will share them in a future issue of JointHealth[™] monthly.

The first three people we receive tips from, along with a photo that demonstrates the tips, will receive a Shoppers Drug Mart gift card worth \$10. *

Tell us what you think

Arthritis Consumer Experts wants to do more to better help you: people living with arthritis and JointHealth[™] subscribers. To achieve this, we regularly conduct JointHealth[™] Program Satisfaction and Interest surveys.

From your valuable input we aim to improve our programs, activities and communications tools. The information we gather measures our relationships with people who live with arthritis (consumers) and spotlights areas of information we need to focus more attention to. The survey also gives you the opportunity to make suggestions for what you would like to see in future JointHealth[™] programming.

The survey includes 15 questions and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

We sincerely thank you for taking the time to help us work toward improving ACE's JointHealth[™] programs and related projects for the 4.6 million Canadians living with arthritis. At times, the survey leads to the development of focus groups and follow-up surveys, which help dig more deeply into consumer issues.

[Click here to take the survey.](#)

Tip for the holidays: Prepare some food days or even weeks ahead of a party you are hosting. Vegetables could be chopped a day or two before and stored in the refrigerator. Side dishes could be cooked a few days ahead and frozen until the big day. Avoid freezing cream-based or cheesy dishes. Remember to take your casseroles out of the freezer the day before the party to allow them enough time to thaw so they cook evenly. Desserts, like cookies and bars, can be baked a month or so before.

Tip for the kitchen: An easy to find item for opening jars is broccoli elastics. Any time you buy broccoli, it comes with a wide elastic band. Just wrap the band around the lid of the jar and now you have a lid that is much easier to grip and unscrew.



Tip for the house: Lever door handles are recommended for those who have difficulty opening the standard, round door knob. If you want to avoid the cost and hassle of installing levers, you could put the broccoli elastic to another good use: place one around the door knob.

Tip for the day-to-day: For the hand, simple things like having implements with wide, thick handles make gripping easier and put less pressure across the joints.

Tip for traveling: Boat cruises can be a good option for people with mobility challenges. You can decide how many cities to stop off at, just about everything you need is on board, and you can stay active by swimming in the pool, walking around the jogging track or promenade deck, or exercising at the gym without even leaving the boat.

Tip for the kitchen: Reorganize your kitchen with a little creativity and organization, your kitchen can be arranged to help protect your joints and conserve energy. Store frequently used items in cupboards between knee and shoulder height to eliminate unnecessary bending and reaching.

Tip for inexpensive decorations: Dip pinecones in gold paint (either partially or all the way) or use a mixture of water, glue, and glitter for a sparkling effect. Place on side tables or use to fill baskets and bowls.

Tip for winter gardening: Place poinsettias, and other blooming holiday plants, in bright light, away from drafts. Keep the soil evenly moist.

Tip for falling asleep: Try to do the same things each night to tell your body it's time to wind down. This might include taking a warm bath or shower, reading a book, or listening to soothing music — preferably with the lights dimmed. Relaxing activities can promote better sleep by easing the transition between wakefulness and drowsiness.



JointHealth™ website and you

What features would you like to see added to the JointHealth™ website? For instance, the site already has a list of arthritis books, but would you be interested in having those kinds of books reviewed? Would you like to see other types of books, including fiction, reviewed as well? Can you think of other ways the site could be improved to be more meaningful and engaging? If you have other ideas for the website or for topics in future JointHealth™ monthlies or expresses, please let us know at feedback@jointhealth.org.

Book reviews and recommendations, please!

Is there a book you read that helped you to understand your arthritis, cope with pain, or inspired you? Was the book so good, you think others like you would benefit from it? If so, let us know about it. ACE will share your recommendations in the resources section of the JointHealth™ website. Write a full review, and we will publish it on www.jointhealth.org and the Arthritis Broadcast Network (ABN). Feel free to send in as many book recommendations and reviews as you please to feedback@jointhealth.org.

The first three people to send in their website suggestions or book reviews will receive a \$10 gift card from Indigo. ✨



ABN and you

We are always looking for more contributors to share their personal arthritis stories on the Arthritis Broadcast Network (ABN). Whether you are newly diagnosed or have been living with arthritis for a lifetime, we want to hear about your experience of living with one or more of the over hundred types of the disease, and so do those who are a part of the ABN community. Your story is important, so matter how often you would like to contribute – once only or every week – it will help someone else feel less alone in their experience.

There is more than one way to tell your arthritis story, so if you have other ways you express yourself, we would love to hear from you too. We will accept poetry and photos of your artwork or craft project.

The first three people to submit a personal arthritis story will receive a gift card from Amazon worth \$10. ✨

Please let us know if you would like to be an ongoing contributor.



To qualify for a gift card your submission must be one of the first three received in a particular category and it must include your full name and address so that we can mail your card.

About Arthritis Consumer Experts

Who we are

Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) provides research-based education, advocacy training, advocacy leadership and information to Canadians with arthritis. We help empower people living with all forms of arthritis to take control of their disease and to take action in healthcare and research decision making. ACE activities are guided by its members and led by people with arthritis, leading medical professionals and the ACE Advisory Board. To learn more about ACE, visit www.jointhehealth.org

Guiding Principles

Healthcare is a human right. Those in healthcare, especially those who stand to gain from the ill health of others, have a moral responsibility to examine what they do, its long-term consequences and to ensure that all may benefit. The support of this should be shared by government, citizens, and non-profit and for-profit organizations. This is not only equitable, but is the best means to balance the influence of any specific constituency and a practical necessity. Any profit from our activities is re-invested in our core programs for Canadians with arthritis.

To completely insulate the agenda, the activities, and the judgments of our organization from those of organizations supporting our work, we put forth our abiding principles:

- ACE only requests unrestricted grants from private and public organizations to support its core program.
- ACE employees do not receive equity interest or personal "in-kind" support of any kind from any health-related organization.

- ACE discloses all funding sources in all its activities.
- ACE identifies the source of all materials or documents used.
- ACE develops positions on health policy, products or services in collaboration with arthritis consumers, the academic community and healthcare providers and government free from concern or constraint of other organizations.
- ACE employees do not engage in any personal social activities with supporters.
- ACE does not promote any "brand", product or program on any of its materials or its website, or during any of its educational programs or activities.

Thanks

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Arthritis Research Centre of Canada
Arthrite-recherche Canada

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