



Arthritis Foundation
Walk With Ease ProgramSM



What is the Walk with Ease Program?

The Arthritis Foundation *Walk with Ease* Program is a community-based physical activity and self-management education program. It is conducted in groups led by trained leaders in a structured **six-week** program. Sessions are held three times a week over the six-week period for a total of 18 sessions. The average group size is 12-15 people per leader. While walking is the central activity, *Walk with Ease* also includes health education, stretching and strengthening exercises, and motivational strategies. Group sessions include socialization time, a brief scripted pre-walk informational lecture, warm up and cool down, and a 10-35 minute walking period.

What are the program goals and objectives?

The overall goals of the *Walk With Ease* Program are threefold:

- to promote successful physical activity for people with arthritis
- to promote safe and comfortable walking
- to encourage participants to continue their walking program

By the end of the six-week program period, participants will:

- Understand the relationship between arthritis, exercise, and pain
- Learn how to exercise safely and comfortably
- Use methods to make walking fun
- Make a personal walking plan that is achievable
- Gather tips, strategies and resources to help overcome barriers and continue to be physically active
- Maintain walking and other physical activity.

What is the target population?

Walk with Ease was specifically developed for adults with arthritis who want to be more physically active. The program is also appropriate for people without arthritis, particularly those with diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions, who want to become more active. The only pre-requisite is the ability to be on your feet for at least 10 minutes without increased pain. Groups begin walking about 10 minutes and increase time incrementally each week. Larger groups may split into sub-groups or pairs of similar ability to walk varying distances.

What are the essential program components and activities?

The essential program components are:

- Walking (10-35 minutes walking duration)
- Health education information
 - All participants receive the *Walk With Ease* workbook
- Stretching and Strengthening Exercises
- Motivational Tips and Tools

What are the leader requirements?

- Current CPR certification
- Affiliation with a facility or organization that can provide space for the classes and insurance coverage for the program
- Complete an online training module (about 2-3 hours) and post test

What are the program costs?

- On-line training workshop—registration fee is \$50, including materials (\$25 scholarships are currently available)
- Participant/class costs—Walk with Ease participant workbooks: \$12 each plus shipping and handling (many organizations have participants borrow and return the book at the end of the session, or purchase the books themselves)

What are the facility requirements?

Any host agencies offering the group classes should provide:

- An ADA accessible site
- A safe and accessible place to walk either inside (indoor track, gymnasium, mall, etc.) or outside (neighborhood, walking trail, etc.)
- Adequate general liability insurance (industry standard is \$1 million)
- A signed program co-sponsorship form

How will the program be monitored?

- All agencies offering the group classes will be expected to send participant release forms and a program information form or equivalent data on the number of classes and participants to the Arthritis Foundation. Some classes may continue to meet after the initial six-week session. However, only new enrollee participants should be counted and reported.

For more information on Walk With Ease, contact April Rautio at the Oregon Arthritis Program at april.l.rautio@state.or.us or 971-673-0984, or Cindy Bishop, Programs and Services Coordinator, Arthritis Foundation – Great West Region at 503-245-5695 or cbishop@arthritis.org.