

Walk With Ease (WWE)

What is it?

- The Arthritis Foundation developed WWE as a group walking program to encourage people with arthritis to start walking and stay motivated to keep active. A self-directed version of the program is also available, using the workbook and materials from the group classes.
- During the 6-week program, participants meet three times a week in groups of up to 15. They begin each class with a health education session on an arthritis- or exercise-related topic, followed by stretching activities and a 10–35 minute walk. Participants receive WWE educational materials and tools to supplement the group classes.
- Online support is also available and includes video instruction, a message board, and an automated e-mail service alerting participants when milestones are reached.
- Class discussion and supplemental materials cover topics such as:
 - Managing arthritis pain and stiffness
 - Stretching and strengthening activities to support the walking program
 - Self-monitoring for physical problems while walking
 - Anticipating and overcoming barriers to being physically active
 - Getting and staying motivated to exercise
- WWE leaders supervise each discussion and walking session. Leaders must complete a 3–4 hour training workshop.

Who is it for?

- WWE is for people with arthritis who want to increase their physical activity levels and are able to be on their feet for at least 10 minutes without increased pain.
- The program may also be appropriate for people with other chronic health conditions—such as diabetes and heart disease—who want to be more active.

What are the benefits?

- A CDC-funded randomized clinical trial found that both the group and self-directed versions of WWE can:
 - Reduce arthritis symptoms such as pain, stiffness, and fatigue
 - Improve strength, balance, and walking pace
 - Reduce disability
 - Increase confidence in the ability to manage arthritis

For More Information

- Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org/walk-with-ease.php
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/program_lists.htm

Contact

Reference

Callahan LF, Shreffler J, Altpeter M, et al. Evaluation of group and self-directed formats of the Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease Program. *Arthritis Care & Research*. 2011;63(8):1098–1107. PMID: 21560255.

Summary of the Evidence

Author, Year	Design	Participants	Outcomes
Callahan LF, Shreffler J, Altpeter M, et al. (2011)	Quasi-experimental pretest-posttest evaluation of group and self-directed formats Performance and self-reported outcomes at baseline and 6 weeks Self-reported outcomes at 1 year	468 participants from urban and rural communities	No difference in group vs. self-directed formats at 6 weeks: ↓ pain, stiffness, fatigue ↓ disability ↑ strength, balance, walking pace ↑ confidence in ability to manage arthritis More benefits sustained at 1 year with self-directed format