

Successful Living with Arthritis

Exercise Helps Every Time!

Meet Dodi Lance

Dodi Lance from Alpena, Michigan is an 83-year-old mother of five and loves life! She was formally **diagnosed with osteoarthritis** in her ankles and her hands around 2003, though she'd had severe discomfort in her joints for nearly 10 years before that. Her osteoarthritis severely affects her hobbies of dancing and painting, but her fundamental desire to **keep her body in motion** helps keep Dodi healthy and happy.



Whenever Dodi feels her joints stiffening or her body aching, she always turns to exercise to feel better. Dodi insists on **keeping her body active**, and when she simply moves around or stretches, she instantly feels better. Dodi can't walk very far and can really only walk on soft surfaces now. Even with her upbeat view on life, Dodi does get sad that she cannot go for walks with her friends. But she has many friends she does exercise with, and she knows just how important it is to have friends and **stay active**.

Dodi was visiting a friend at a senior center and saw a brochure about exercise classes being held at the center. The classes for seniors were sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation, and Dodi started going to the 45-minute sessions three times a week. Dodi loved the classes and how they made her feel so much that she trained in 2011 **to become an instructor**. When she started going to the classes herself, there were about 10 participants. Now each class can have as many as 40 regular participants.

Exercise Classes Are More than Just a Workout

Exercise classes are not only a physical workout for Dodi, but a mental and social activity too. Dodi will gladly talk about how wonderful she feels because she keeps physically fit. **Her arthritis flare-ups happen less often, her flexibility has improved, her energy levels are up, and she enjoys a better quality of life.** However, attending or leading a class is so much more for Dodi. The classes take her mind off everything else going on in her life during those 45 minutes and are a great way to beat stress. Dodi knows that having so many friends in the class also makes her accountable—to herself and to her friends. Her friends are a great source of motivation for her.

Exercise works every time for Dodi. Staying active is important to her emotional and physical well-being. Dodi offers simple and sound advice to anyone who has arthritis: "Please keep moving gently. Once you stop you will be in even more pain. But don't overdo it—just do what you can. **Don't forget, we are made to move—so go on, keep moving!**"

Exercise class is more than just a physical work out. It is a mental and social activity too. My friends are a great source of motivation!