

Better Choices, Better Health™ (BCBH) for Arthritis

What is it?

- BCBH for Arthritis is the Internet-based version of the Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP), an in-person group education program for adults with arthritis developed by researchers at Stanford University. The National Council on Aging and the Arthritis Foundation are partnering to make BCBH for Arthritis available online, with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- BCBH for Arthritis is based on the content of the ASMP workshops. Like ASMP, it aims to help people with arthritis adapt to their condition and gain confidence and control over their lives. It teaches the same skills as ASMP, including:
 - Effective problem-solving
 - Symptom management
 - Goal-setting
 - Communication techniques
- Each online workshop has 20–25 participants. They can log on to the secure Web site at their convenience. Each workshop lasts for 6 weeks, with new information posted each week.
- It takes most people 2 hours per week to complete the activities, such as action plans and sharing experiences through secure online message boards. Web-based tools, such as exercise logs and medication diaries, are also available.
- Peer facilitators are trained to moderate BCBH for Arthritis groups. They assist participants with the course material, offer encouragement, and monitor and post to the message board. There are two facilitators per group, at least one of whom has a chronic condition.

Who is it for?

- BCBH for Arthritis is designed for adults with arthritis who have access to a personal computer and reliable Internet service.
- It may be a convenient alternative for people with arthritis who are unwilling or unable to attend in-person ASMP workshops.

What are the benefits?

- BCBH for Arthritis is an effective alternative to the in-person ASMP.
- A randomized controlled trial found that participants in BCBH for Arthritis had less pain, disability, and health distress; better self-reported health; and more confidence in managing their arthritis. These benefits have been shown to last for up to 1 year.

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For More Information

- Better Choices, Better Health™ for Arthritis Web Site
www.arthritis.org/betterhealth
- Stanford University Patient Education Research Center
patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/self_manage.htm

Contact

Selected Reference

Lorig KR, Ritter PL, Laurent DD, et al. The internet-based arthritis self-management program: a one-year randomized trial for patients with arthritis or fibromyalgia. *Arthritis and Rheumatism*. 2008;59(7):1009–1017. PMID: 18576310.

Summary of the Evidence

Author, Year	Design	Participants	Outcomes
Lorig KR, Ritter PL, Laurent DD, et al. (2008)	RCT with usual care control group Data collected through online questionnaires at 6 and 12 months	855 participants	Outcomes sustained at 12 months: ↓ pain, disability, health distress ↑ self-reported health ↑ self-efficacy