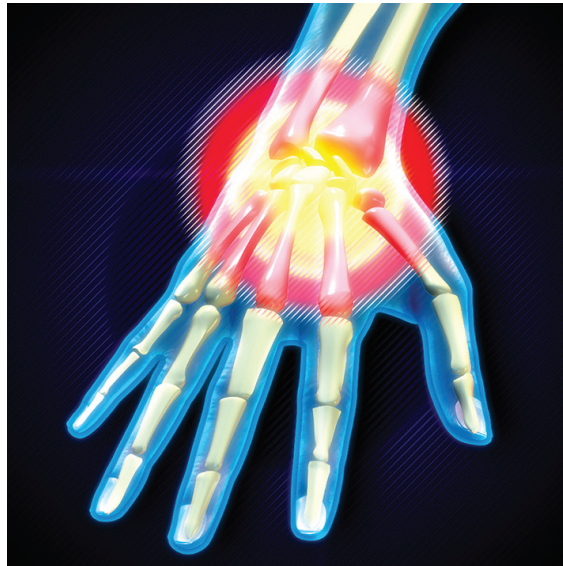


How Occupational Therapy Can Help People Live With Arthritis

Occupational therapy may sound like something exclusive to people who are injured on the job. Though occupational therapy helps people in the workplace every day, it also helps men and women, including those with arthritis, perform everyday activities that may or may not be work-related.

Arthritis can take both a physical and financial toll. The Arthritis Foundation notes that it's difficult to determine just how many people currently suffer from arthritis, as treatment often isn't sought until symptoms become severe. Conservative estimates from the AF suggest 54 million adults in the United States currently have arthritis, though the organization reports that a recent study suggested as many as 91 million might be dealing with this painful inflammation and stiffness of the joints. As if the pain from arthritis weren't enough, the condition also can cause financial problems for those who cannot work or only work part-time, with annual medical costs and earnings loss estimates in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

Occupation therapy can help people with arthritis overcome their conditions. The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc., notes that most joints have the potential to develop arthritis, which can affect mobility, cause pain and even lead to deformity. However, the AOTA® also states that OT practitioners aim to help people with arthritis maximize their ability to participate in activities like



Arthritis is a global concern that the Arthritis Foundation estimates will only become more prevalent in the decades to come. Occupational therapy can be just what arthritis sufferers need to overcome their conditions and improve their quality of life.

work or recreation while striving to help patients enhance their quality of life.

Because there are more than 100 different types of arthritis, men and women diagnosed with the condition can benefit greatly from individualized care. One-size-fits-all solutions may not work for arthritis sufferers, who can benefit from one-on-one interactions with OT practitioners. For example, the AOTA® notes that OT practitioners may recommend personalized adaptive equipment to patients with arthritis who are experiencing pressure and discomfort in their hands when holding or working with objects. Before making such recommendations, OT practitioners may analyze patients' daily activities to ensure they get equipment that will provide the support and relief their specific condition calls for.

