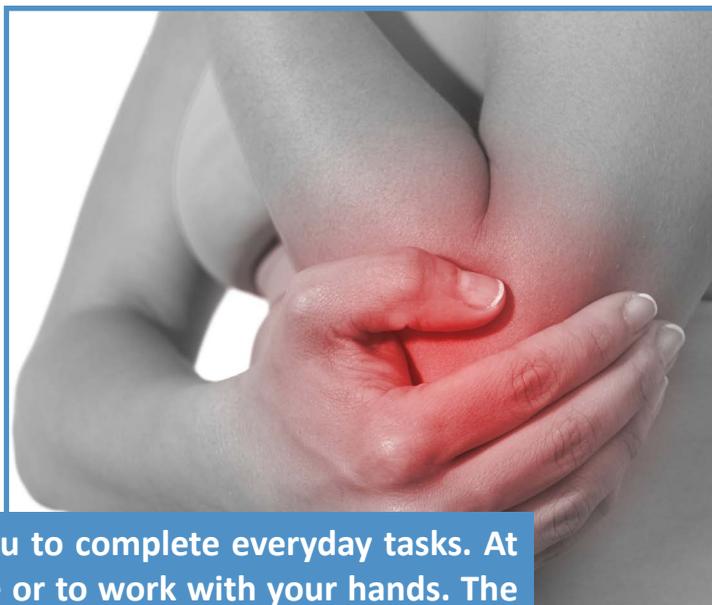


Prevent joint pain at work



Joint pain can make it difficult for you to complete everyday tasks. At work, you may find it difficult to type or to work with your hands. The good news is that you can control joint pain with regular exercise.

Joint pain can be linked to musculoskeletal disorders that include several conditions affecting muscles, tendons, nerves, ligaments, and joints. Examples of musculoskeletal conditions include carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, and tension neck syndrome, and they all result in chronic or temporary joint pain.

Another common cause of joint pain is arthritis. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, arthritis is the leading cause of work disability.

Arthritis and musculoskeletal disorders can affect joint mobility and can make it hard for you to tolerate repeated motions like typing.

Joint pain is more prevalent in adults older than 45 and one of the main reasons for this is because we lose muscle as we age. Muscle is necessary to support your joints and, without a strong support structure, they may suffer.

Office programmes in ergonomics and disability management can help keep your joints healthy. You can also reduce joint pain with lifestyle interventions.

According to research, resistance training has been shown to slow down and reverse joint ageing and also helps build and maintain muscle mass. Joints are designed for movement and they require motion to stay healthy.

Loss of range of motion results in a tightening of surrounding tendons, muscles, and other tissues, and this may lead to pain. Therefore, it's important to exercise for at least 30 minutes, five times

a week.

Muscle strengthening

Both isometric (muscle contraction without movement) and isotonic (muscle contraction with joint movement) strengthening exercises are recommended.

Isometric exercises can build muscle strength without adverse effects on an acutely inflamed joint. Examples include planking, squatting, wall sits, and neck stretches.

Isotonic exercises, such as weight lifting, calisthenics, and leg movement during cycling, allows the joint to move through a limited or full range of motion while the muscle is contracting.

This type of exercise is recommended when pain and joint inflammation have been controlled and sufficient strength has been built up through isometric exercises.

Aerobic exercise

Low-impact activities such as swimming, water aerobics, walking, cycling, and rowing can improve aerobic fitness without negatively affecting aching joints.

Start with 10-15 minutes of aerobic activity every other day, gradually progressing toward activity of 30-45 minutes at a moderate to fairly hard intensity five times a week.

For further advice, please contact your Employee Wellness Programme or your healthcare provider.