

## Media release

For immediate release  
Monday 15 March 2010



## Move it or lose it...

That's the message from Arthritis Victoria for this year's Arthritis Awareness Week, which runs from Sunday 21 March to Saturday 27 March.

Research has shown that regular physical activity is one of the best treatments for arthritis – a name for over 100 conditions that affect the joints. No matter how old, unfit or frail you are, you can find a suitable kind of exercise or activity that you can enjoy.

“Low impact exercises that place less stress on your joints can be very effective if you have arthritis,” says Dr Jane Glatz, who manages Arthritis Victoria’s training programs. “Appropriate activities include walking, swimming, or a warm water exercise class. Tai chi, pilates and yoga are also popular with people who live with the chronic pain and fatigue associated with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions.”

“Whether you have arthritis or not, your aim should be to maintain or improve flexibility in your joints and to strengthen the muscles that support them. It’s also important to find something that gets your heart and lungs working,” Dr Glatz explains.

Arthritis Victoria is currently offering a choice of suitable physical activities, health management courses, and information seminars. While these programs have been designed specifically for people with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions, they are also suitable for people who want to keep active or learn more about musculoskeletal health.

<b>Better Health Self Management course</b>	25 March-29 April, 1.00pm-3.30pm, Elsternwick 26 May-30 June, 1.00pm-3.30pm, Footscray
<b>My Tai Chi - Beginners</b>	6 April - 11 May, 10.00am-11.00am, Elsternwick
<b>Osteoarthritis of the Knee Education &amp; Self Management program</b>	14 April - 19 May, 1.00pm-3.30pm, Cranbourne
<b>Early Arthritis Seminar</b> For people diagnosed with arthritis in past 2 years	15 April, 6.00pm-8.30pm, Austin Hospital, Heidelberg
<b>WAVES Warm Water Wellness program</b>	NEW location: first class starts 15 April, Hampton East WAVES classes also available in locations across metropolitan Melbourne
<b>Nordic Walking</b> (with Nordic Academy)	16 April - 21 May, 10.00am-11.00am, Elsternwick
<b>Inflammatory/Rheumatoid Arthritis Education &amp; Self Management program</b>	29 April – 3 June, 6.00pm-8.30pm, Heidelberg
<b>Early Lupus Seminar</b> For people diagnosed with lupus in past 2 years	8 June, 6.00pm-8.30pm, Monash Medical Centre, Clayton
<b>Dealing with change: Managing your relationships with a chronic condition</b>	24 June - 6.00pm-8.30pm, Elsternwick

## Information and bookings

For information about any of the activities on offer from Arthritis Victoria, contact **03 8531 8000** or **1800 011 041** (toll free for country callers), or email [afv@arthritisvic.org.au](mailto:afv@arthritisvic.org.au).

For more information about arthritis, contact Arthritis Victoria for a free arthritis information pack.

Ends/...

## Media contact

Sue Montague, Communications Manager, Arthritis Victoria, phone 03 8531 8024, mobile 0422 794 885, email [sue.montague@arthritisvic.org.au](mailto:sue.montague@arthritisvic.org.au)

## Notes to editor

- Arthritis Victoria, [www.arthritisvic.org.au](http://www.arthritisvic.org.au), is the leading Victorian organisation for people with arthritis, osteoporosis and other musculoskeletal conditions.
- Arthritis is the name for a group of conditions affecting the joints. These conditions cause damage to the joints, usually resulting in pain and stiffness. Arthritis can affect many different parts of the joint, and nearly every joint in the body. There are over 100 different forms of arthritis. Osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout and ankylosing spondylitis are the most common.
- Arthritis is Australia's major cause of disability and chronic pain.
- 1 in 5 Australians, or 3.85 million people, lives with some form of arthritis.
- 18.6% of the Victorian population (20.1% of women and 17.1% of men) has arthritis. That's over 820,000 people in Victoria who live with chronic pain and discomfort.
- Arthritis affects people of all ages, backgrounds and lifestyles. Most people with arthritis (62%) are of working age, between 15 and 64 years.
- Children get arthritis too, and there are 1,000 children in Victoria with juvenile arthritis.
- By 2050 it is projected that there will be 7 million Australians with arthritis, or almost 1 in 4 people.
- Arthritis costs Australia more than \$23 billion each year in costs to the health system, to people with arthritis, and in lost productivity.
- For information on arthritis, osteoporosis and other musculoskeletal conditions, call the Arthritis Victoria **Telephone Information Service**, 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Phone **03 8531 8000** or **1800 011 041** (toll free for country callers).