

Muscle and Joint Pain in Sjögren's

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Joint and muscle pain in Sjogren's may result from a variety of causes including inflammation, fibromyalgia, age-related osteoarthritis, vitamin D deficiency, hypothyroidism etc. Work with your rheumatologist to identify the specific cause(s) of your pain and find the best treatment regimen for you. Maintain a positive attitude and be an active partner in the management of your pain. The tips below will also help.

- ▶ **Become knowledgeable about your medications.**
- ▶ **Get a good night's sleep**
 - Maintain a regular sleep schedule.
 - Set aside an hour before bedtime for relaxation. Listen to soothing music. Consider taking a warm bath before going to bed.
 - Make your bedroom as quiet and comfortable as possible.
 - Avoid caffeine and alcohol late in the day.
 - Avoid long naps during the day.
- ▶ **Exercise regularly with the goals of improving your overall fitness and keeping your joints moving, the muscles around your joints strong, and your bones strong and healthy.**
 - A physical therapist, occupational therapist, or your health-care provider can prescribe an exercise regimen appropriate for your joint or muscle problem.
 - Start with a few exercises and slowly add more.
 - Make your exercise program enjoyable. Do it with your spouse or a friend. Include recreational activities, such as dancing, walking, and miniature golf.
 - Try different forms of exercise, such as Tai chi, yoga, and water aerobics.
- ▶ **Balance rest and activity.**
 - Pace yourself during the day, alternating heavy and light activities and taking short breaks to rest.
- ▶ **Control your weight.**
- ▶ **Protect your joints and muscles.**
 - Use proper methods for bending, lifting, and reaching.
 - Use assistive devices, such as jar openers, reach extenders, and kitchen and garden tools with large rubber grips that put less stress on affected joints.
- ▶ **Use various therapeutic modalities that can relieve joint and muscle pain.**
 - Use heat (heating pads, warm shower or bath, paraffin wax) to relax your muscles and relieve joint stiffness.
 - Use cold packs to numb sore joints and muscles and reduce inflammation and swelling of a joint.
 - Consider massage therapy.
 - Practice relaxation techniques, such as guided imagery, prayer, and self-hypnosis.

For more information on Sjögren's, visit the Foundation website at www.sjogrens.org, call 301-530-4420, email info@sjogrens.org, or write to the Sjögren's Foundation, 10701 Parkridge Blvd, Ste 170, Reston, VA 20191