

ARTHRITIS SELF-HELP COURSE INFORMATION

When Are Classes Held?

Check with your local Arthritis Foundation Branch for the time, dates and location of your Arthritis Self-Help Course.

What Are the Next Steps?

If you are interested in getting involved with the Arthritis Self-Help Course as a:

- Class participant;
- Class instructor; or
- Co-sponsor (assisting with publicity, recruiting participants and /or leaders, providing equipment funding, etc.) please contact the Arthritis Foundation Branch listed on the back panel.

Our Mission

The mission of the Arthritis Foundation is to improve lives through leadership in the prevention, control and cure of arthritis and related diseases.



Your Local Branch:
Kankakee Arthritis Foundation

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ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION SELF-HELP COURSE

Designed to help people with arthritis (and their families and friends) manage their disease.



Take Control. We Can Help.
www.arthritis.org

Kankakee Arthritis
Foundation

Tel: 815-937-2461

ARTHRITIS SELF-HELP COURSE

Self-help involves the willingness to learn about and to assume responsibility for the daily care of your arthritis. It includes all the decisions you must make and action you take to keep arthritis under control and to stay as independent as possible. Consistent with this self-help philosophy, the Arthritis Self-Help Course is designed to give you the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to take a more active part in your arthritis care.

What is the Arthritis Self-Help Course (ASHC)?

The ASHC is a group education program, designed to supplement the professional services provided by the health-care system and provide an opportunity for mutual peer support. Trained lay volunteers lead the ASHC.

Who Can Participate?

Any person having one of the more than 100 types of arthritis may attend the ASHC. A spouse, other family member or friend may accompany you as a registered member of the class. In fact, participation by significant others is encouraged, as these people not only play an important role in the support and care of the person with arthritis, but also feel a personal impact from being so closely associated with the disease. Participants receive a copy of the *Arthritis Helpbook* and a set of handouts and pamphlets distributed by the Arthritis Foundation. Course participants are usually charged a fee to cover program expenses.

Course Content and Process

The ASHC is taught over six consecutive weeks in sessions lasting two hours per week. Active participation by the course members and experiential learning are emphasized. The class size is usually limited to about 12 people to encourage group discussions.

Topics of discussion include:

- Arthritis;
- Self-Help principles;
- Pain and fatigue management;
- Exercise;
- Relaxation and stress management;
- Medications;
- Dealing with depression and other problems;
- Doctor-patient relationship;
- Nutrition; and
- Unproven remedies

Who Conducts the Program?

The ASHC classes are usually conducted by two leaders. Only persons who have successfully completed an ASHC Leader Training Workshop led by an approved trainer are eligible to conduct this program.

Professional or lay persons who have a genuine interest in working with groups of people with arthritis and who are willing to lead a six-week course are eligible to attend the 16 hour training workshop.

All leaders agree to follow the standardized course outline to ensure the continued quality of the program.

Program Goal

The Arthritis Self-Help Course program is designed to:

- Inform participants about basic aspects of arthritis;
- Teach participants the appropriate use of arthritis medications;
- Encourage informed decisions about the use of special diets or unproven forms of treatments
- Encourage participants to take an active role in arthritis management and make appropriate use of arthritis care providers;
- Encourage sharing of experiences and group problem-solving; and
- Provide an opportunity for learning and practicing stress management and other self-help behaviors designed to decrease stress, pain, fatigue and depression.