

ARTHRITIS *Action*



A PUBLICATION OF THE ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION

UTAH/IDAHO CHAPTER

Fall 2005

NAVIGATING THE DISABILITY MAZE

Arthritis is second only to heart disease as a cause of workplace disability. Arthritis is responsible for 70 million lost workdays and about 500 million days of restricted activity each year.

If you are a person who cannot work because of your arthritis, you may qualify for help from the Social Security Administration (SSA). Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) provide monthly payments to people who are disabled and cannot work.

How does SSA define a disability?

For both SSDI and SSI, a disability is defined as the inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity because of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment:

- That can be expected to result in death, or
- That has lasted or that can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

How does SSA decide if you have a disability?

SSA asks these five questions to decide if you qualify as disabled:

1. Are you working? You must earn an average of \$830 or less per month or not work at all to be eligible.

2. Is your medical condition severe? Your impairment must significantly limit your ability to do basic work activities, for example walking, sitting, seeing, and remembering.

3. Is your medical condition found on the list of disabling impairments? SSA maintains a list of impairments that are so severe that you are automatically considered disabled. Many types of arthritis may fall under the musculoskeletal or immune system categories. If your medical condition is not on the list, SSA decides if it is of equal severity to an impairment on the list.

4. Can you do the work you did previously?

5. Can you do any other kind of work? SSA may refer you to the state Vocational Rehabilitation Division to help you maintain your current job or find a more appropriate job.

When a decision on your claim is reached, you will receive a written notice from SSA. The notice will show your benefit amount or will explain why your claim was denied. If SSA does not approve your claim, you have the right to appeal.

A list of disability resources is found on page 3.

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

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UTAH/IDAHO CHAPTER
Take Control. We Can Help.
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION®

Kids Get Arthritis Too

Back to School



Adapted from a presentation by Susan Hurwitch and Nancy Parsons at the AJAO Regional Conference in Pennsylvania. The full article can be found at <http://www.arthritis.org/resources/classroom.asp>.

School is a major portion of any child's developmental experience. During the school years, each individual discovers the strengths, skills and talents he or she will continue developing as an adult. These involve more than academic capabilities. The skills of social interaction, which include the ability to communicate effectively with others, the growth of leadership qualities, and the acquisition of character attributes such as a sense of fairness and a capacity for compassion, are at levels of importance at least equal to those of the basic learning skills.

A study done by the National Center for Health Statistics shows that one child in

eight in the age group of six to 11 years old will have a physical disability or chronic disease. It is two in five for the age group of 12 to 17 year olds. There is a high probability that a classroom teacher in any school in the United States will have several children with chronic illness or some other physical impairment. Most teachers have had no first-hand experience contending with the medical problems of the children they have in their classrooms. Parents must take the responsibility to see that teachers are well informed about their child's condition.

When the child with juvenile arthritis is first enrolled in school and each year after, the parent and physician should plan what information and what specific recommendations are to be transmitted to the school. A conference between the parent, the classroom teacher, the principal, and the school nurse should be arranged. A phone call from the physician to the school nurse is always

helpful. The parent should be prepared to describe the program of home care and to discuss the child's personal needs, fears, and strengths. The parent should offer specific ideas to solve the challenges the child will face in school. Adaptations for writing, sitting, etc., should be discussed at length. The school needs to know what medication the child will be required to take during the day. The school will need a recommendation from the doctor regarding participation in free play during recesses and to what extent the child can participate in the physical education program.

Remember, most people are not even aware that children can have arthritis. You must make them aware; you are your child's best advocate. Your child's teacher wants to join your team. Good communication is the key. The teacher, the nurse, and the administrator can then appreciate a need for rest or other special considerations.

Six Tips For School Success

- 1 Meet with your child's teacher at least two times a year above and beyond traditional "open house" conferences.
- 2 Find out how you will be informed about your child's progress.
- 3 Find out specific ways you can help your child perform better in school and discuss these strategies with your child.
- 4 Ask your children what they would like you to talk about with their teachers.
- 5 If there is a problem or you suspect a problem, immediately call for an appointment.
- 6 Children who have parents who volunteer or find other ways to get involved in school life do significantly better in school.

Juvenile Arthritis Family Day

Saturday, October 1, 2005

9 am – 1 pm

West Valley City Family Fitness Center

5415 West 3100 South

West Valley City, Utah

Register by September 23

Enrollment Limited

Saturday, October 22, 2005

1 pm - 4 pm

West Family YMCA & Aquatic Center

5959 North Discovery Way

Boise, Idaho

Register by October 14

Enrollment Limited

"DISCOVER YOUR POWER"

Are you a young adult living with arthritis? Join us at our first official gathering.

"Arthritis, Artists and Ambition"

Arthritis in the Younger Generation

Thursday, November 3, 7-8 PM

Salt Lake City Public Library - Conference Room B

210 East 400 South, Salt Lake City, Utah

Disability Resource List

Social Security Administration

Utah: 801-524-4115 800-772-1213
Idaho: 208-321-2900 800-772-1213
www.ssa.gov

Vocational Rehabilitation Division

Utah: 800-473-7530 www.usor.utah.gov/vocrehab.htm
Idaho: 208-334-3390 www.vr.idaho.gov

U.S. Department of Labor -

Office of Disability Employment Policy

This agency can help with training and work programs, information on new laws and policies, and on the job accommodations.
www.dol.gov/odep

National Organization of Social Security Claimants Representatives

The organization can help you find qualified attorneys in your area.
800-431-2804

RESEARCH UPDATE: Understanding Heart Disease In Rheumatoid Arthritis



What problem was studied?

Several previous studies have shown that there is a higher rate of cardiovascular (CV) disease and CV-related deaths among people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) compared to those without RA. A research team at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, set out to learn more about the reasons for this difference.

What was done in the study?

The Mayo Clinic team used a county-wide medical record system to identify all of the residents of Rochester, Minnesota who were diagnosed with RA over a 40-year period. From the same set of records, they selected another study group of people without RA who matched the age and sex of each of the RA patients. They examined the medical records of both groups to compare the incidence of heart disease and traditional risk factors. They also looked at indicators of systemic inflammation and RA disease severity.

What were the study results?

In a series of recent articles, the Mayo group reported that in comparison to the non-RA group, the 575 patients with RA had a significantly higher risk of heart disease, were less likely to report symptoms of angina and more likely to experience unrecognized symptoms of a heart attack and sudden cardiac death. The odds of developing congestive heart failure or a weakening of the heart's ability to pump blood was double in the RA patients. Traditional risk factors, such as smoking, alcohol intake, obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, and family history of heart attacks, did not explain the increased risk of heart disease, heart failure or death. In fact, a **high** body mass index (a measure of obesity) is a known risk factor in the general population. But RA patients with a **low** body mass index, (which can be a possible consequence of inflammation), had a significantly higher risk of death from heart disease. The Mayo team also found that markers of systemic inflammation were associated with a significantly increased risk for CV death.

**Take a giant step towards
the cure for arthritis.**

*Gather friends & family
and join the fun at the*

Arthritis Walk

September 10, 2005

9 AM

**Weber State University
Ogden, Utah**

October 8, 2005

9 AM

**College of Southern Idaho
Twin Falls, Idaho**

Register today at

www.arthritis.org

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR Bonnie Christophersen

Healthy Living Seminar Series

Physicians, physical therapists, and nutritionists will help you find a solid game plan for managing arthritis during these free, 1-hour seminars.

Tuesday, September 13 – Arthritis of the **Knee**
Wednesday, October 12 – Arthritis of the **Hip**
Tuesday, November 8 – Arthritis of the **Hand**

Seminars begin at 6:30 PM and are held at The Orthopedic Specialty Hospital (TOSH), 5848 South Fashion Boulevard in Murray, Utah.



This six-week program gives you the skills to take control of your arthritis. Classes cover ways to reduce pain, cope with fatigue, create better nutrition habits, use medications wisely, evaluate alternative treatments and more.

See program schedule and coupon to the right



The aquatic program combines the buoyancy of water and the soothing warmth of a heated pool to make an ideal environment for relieving arthritis pain and stiffness. You do not need to know how to swim to participate.

Facility locations are available online at www.arthritis.org



The exercises taught in this class were developed by physical therapists specifically for people with arthritis. The gentle, joint safe exercises can be performed either sitting or standing.

Facility locations are available online at www.arthritis.org

Respuestas Sobre La Artritis

Asista a este taller y aprenda como manejar major la artritis.

Martes, 20 de Septiembre, 2005 1:00 PM
Friendly Neighborhood Senior Center, 1992 S. 200 E., SLC, Utah

Para mas informacion, llame 801-536-0990

800-444-4993 or www.arthritis.org

Use the zip code locator to go directly to the Utah/Idaho Chapter site.

SELF-HELP PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Salt Lake City, UT @ Northwest Senior Center
 1300 West 300 North
 Wednesdays, Sept. 7 – Oct. 12, 12:30–2:30 PM

Twin Falls, ID @ South Central District Health
 1020 Washington Street North
 Thursdays, Sept. 8 – Oct. 13, 6 – 8 PM

Meridian, ID @ AARP
 3080 East Gentry Way
 Saturdays, Sept. 10 – Oct. 15, 10 AM - Noon

St. George, UT @
 Dixie Regional Medical Center
 1380 East Medical Center Drive
 Thursdays, Sept. 15 – Oct. 20, 6 - 8 PM

Boise, ID @ SLIERS
 600 North Robbins Road
 Wednesdays, Sept. 21 – Oct. 26, 6 - 8 PM

Salt Lake City, UT @
 Friendly Neighborhood Senior Center
 1992 South 200 East
 Tuesdays, Sept. 27 – Nov. 1, 10 AM - Noon

South Jordan, UT @
 South Jordan Community Center
 10778 South Redwood Road
 Mondays, Oct. 3 – Nov. 7, 1 - 3 PM

Murray, UT @ Hand & Orthopedic Rehabilitation
 5151 South 900 East
 Tuesdays, Oct. 4 - Nov. 8, 6 - 8 PM

Orem, UT @ Orem Community Hospital
 331 North 400 West
 Wednesdays, Oct. 5 – Nov. 9, 6 – 8 PM

Ketchum, ID @
 St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center
 100 Hospital Drive
 Tuesdays, Oct. 18 – Nov. 22, 6 – 8 PM

SIGN UP NOW and mention this ad for

\$15.00 off

the tuition fee for the
 Arthritis Foundation
 Self-Help Program.

Valid for 2005 classes.