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- ⊕ More Adults Are Suffering From Severe Joint Pain Than Ever
- ⊕ Competition is Shown to be an Effective Motivational Tool
- ⊕ Use of Professional Trainers Among 2016 Fitness Trends

More Adults Are Suffering From Severe Joint Pain Than Ever

A recent study showing more Americans than ever are suffering from severe joint pain comes as no surprise to the nearly 15 million people who deal with this challenge every day. Researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report the number of people with severe joint pain jumped almost 40 percent in the 12-year period ending 2014.

“Older adults, who comprise a growing percentage of the population as the baby-boomer generation ages, and people with arthritis make up the majority of that increase,” said Lana Lange, PT, senior physical therapist at Saint Francis Medical Center. “Our physical therapy team works with patients every day on ways to minimize joint pain and maintain quality of life.”



Lana Lange, PT,
Senior Physical
Therapist

The CDC research team used data from the U.S. National Health Interview Survey to develop its report. The study

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showed that more than 1 in 4 adults with arthritis reported severe joint pain, with rates highest among African-Americans and Hispanics. Severe joint pain was listed as the reason for disability or inability to work in about half the cases.

Joint replacement surgery, such as total knee replacement or total hip replacement, is the most effective option for eliminating severe joint pain for some patients. When surgery is not the recommended option, exercise therapy tops the list of nondrug treatments that have been shown to help relieve pain.

“Low-impact physical activity is not always the first option that comes to mind for people who struggle to move without pain, but it is one of the most effective,” Lange said. “The risks associated with extended use of opioid therapy to treat chronic pain make alternative treatment options the best bet for long-term health.”

For more information about minimizing severe joint pain, joint replacement surgery options and other questions pertaining to the management of joint pain, please call the Sports Medicine team at Saint Francis Medical Center at 573-331-5153.

Competition is Shown to be an Effective Exercise Motivational Tool

Outside of the self-motivation that must be at the center of any successful exercise program, competition may be the next best thing to

maintaining healthy lifestyle choices that decrease the risks of chronic illness.



**Cindy Henry, BS, MS,
Action, USAW,
Personal Trainer**

A recent study published in the journal *Preventive Medicine Reports* shows how much stronger the motivational push from competition can be than from a simple social media group support. This

is an important variable to understand in light of a National Center for Health Statistics report that shows more than two-thirds of Americans age 18-24 fail to meet the federal guidelines for physical activity.

“People like to feel as though they are winning or at least keeping pace when it comes to anything, and that includes their exercise program,” said Cindy Henry, BS, MS, Action, USAW, personal trainer at Saint Francis Medical Center. “We have seen where mixing a competition element into a workout plan is an effective motivational tool.”

Competition vs. Support

The study, conducted by the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, showed that participants in an exercise program were much more likely to attend classes and complete their workouts if they were involved in some type of online competition than those who simply had social media support. In fact, people in the competition group were almost twice as likely to exercise as people in the study groups who had no competition.

In the study, the competition group could see a leaderboard of how well other teams were doing and could earn prizes based on class attendance. Those in the support group could chat online and encourage teammates to exercise, but they did not know how well other teams were performing.

“Social support can tend to work negatively, as well as positively,” Henry said. “If people see that others in their group have stopped exercising regularly, it gives them permission to do the same and the effect can snowball throughout the group.”

Health Benefits of Exercise

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages a minimum of moderate exercise – as little as 15 minutes per day – to reduce the risk of all-cause mortality by 14 percent. Every additional 15 minutes of daily exercise further reduces all-

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cause mortality by four percent and all-cancer mortality by one percent.

Even these small amounts of exercise have been shown to help with:

- Reducing the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Reducing the risk of some cancers
- Weight control
- Reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease
- Strengthening bones and muscles
- Improving mental health and overall mood
- Balance and preventing falls

For more information about ways to use competition as a workout motivation, please call the Sports Medicine team at Saint Francis Medical Center at 573-331-5153.

Use of Professional Trainers Among 2016 Fitness Trends

A combination of new technology and human contact are among the hottest fitness trends of 2016 according to a worldwide survey published by the *American College of Sports Medicine's Health & Fitness Journal*[®].

Wearable technology such as smart watches, heart rate monitors, fitness trackers and other devices have become very popular in the few short years they have been available. Some business analysts predict the wearable technology market will approach \$6 billion this year as a growing number of people leverage the capabilities of these devices.

On the other end of the spectrum, a significant portion of the exercising population continues to

enjoy the expertise and accountability offered by experienced fitness professionals. More personal trainers are gaining additional education, and making access to quality fitness professionals easier for a larger number of people.

Body weight training is another relatively recent trend that continues to show staying power. This training uses a person's own body weight as a form of resistance training. The difference now is its growing popularity in commercial fitness clubs and gyms around the country.

A close cousin to body weight training is strength training. While it had been typical for younger clients of fitness clubs to train exclusively using weights, additional groups are using weight machines and free weights today. This includes men and women of all ages, patients with a chronic disease and older clients looking to maintain quality of life.

High-intensity interval training remains popular in gyms around the world despite the potential for increased injury rates from these short bursts of exercise. Interval training programs supervised by professional fitness trainers provide a desirable combination of guidance and high-level effort.

For more information about fitness programs offered through Fitness Plus, please call the Sports Medicine team at Saint Francis Medical Center at 573-331-5153.