



# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

An informational quarterly newsletter.

## ARTHRITIS ON THE JOB

Arthritis can affect a worker's ability to perform their normal job functions. Preventing arthritis and managing arthritis symptoms can help employees stay at work or return to work faster.

### Arthritis Prevalence Among Workers in Montana, 2013-2017

- Among those employed, **17.7%** reported being diagnosed with some form of arthritis.
- **Overweight or obese** workers reported arthritis more often than workers in the healthy BMI range. Extra weight increases the stress on joints.
- Of those affected by arthritis:
  - **43.9%** reported their arthritis **affected their daily life activities** and
  - **29.1%** said their arthritis **affected their ability to do their job**.

### Top 5 Affected Industries and Occupations, Montana 2013-2017

Industries and occupations that require more physical work and repetitive movement can lead to an increased risk of arthritis.

Industry	Arthritis Prevalence	Occupation	Arthritis Prevalence
Accommodation & Food Services	23.1%	Production Occupations	25.1%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	22.5%	Sales & Related Occupations	23.4%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	21.9%	Office & Admin Support	21.1%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	21.6%	Service Occupations	21.0%
Utilities, Transportation, & Warehousing	21.1%	Transportation Occupations	20.9%

### Prevention and Management Tips

Melissa Dale, program manager for the [Montana Arthritis Program](#), recommends regular, low-impact **physical activity**, and **maintaining a healthy weight** as the best ways to manage arthritis and joint stiffness. Staying active reduces arthritis pain, increases joint range of motion, and reduces everyday activity limitations. In addition, maintaining a healthy weight is crucial to keeping joints healthy.

The Montana Arthritis Program offers Montanans arthritis-approved exercise and self-management programs. Employers who are interested in implementing worksite wellness programs to help their employees manage their arthritis and other chronic conditions can contact Melissa for more information.

## NOTEWORTHY NEWS

Find all of our newsletters and more reports on other occupational health and safety topics at our website, [www.mtworkerhealth.com](http://www.mtworkerhealth.com).

Data are from the Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a health-related survey of non-institutionalized adults ages 18 and older. All data are age-adjusted.

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