

# How do I manage a flare of my arthritis?

## What is a flare?

- A sudden, temporary worsening of symptoms such as pain, stiffness and swelling.

It is  
**NORMAL** to  
experience  
a flare

## What causes a flare?

- Overexertion
- Weather
- Emotional stress
- Infection or illness
- Changing medicines
- Poor sleep
- Unknown cause

Flares are  
**COMMON** and will  
eventually pass

They can happen at  
any time and with  
little warning

## What should I do when I have a flare?

- Reduce the overall amount that you are doing and take more rest breaks
- Add in some heat or cold therapy
- Try some relaxed breathing or meditation exercises, over the counter anti-inflammatory topical gels / creams or tablets
- Consider a walking aid to keep you moving during the flare
- Keep up with gentle movements, stretches and exercise to keep the joint mobile, and return to your exercises as able
- Take note of which exercises / activities cause a flare so they can be modified or adapted, not stopped

**Regular exercise can prevent flare ups!**  
Gradually increase your physical activity as the flare subsides and keep it up as a habit!