

# Health Bulletin



## Arthritis On The Rise—Take Action If You're At Risk

(NAPSA)—Alarming new numbers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveal as many as 70 million—or one in three—adults suffer from arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation urges Americans to take action to prevent and manage this disease.

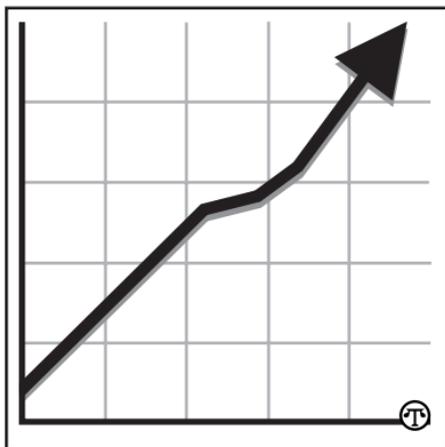
“We are a nation in pain. Arthritis is the number one cause of disability and affects more people than ever imagined. It's time we individually and as a society fully realize the seriousness of arthritis and take action to limit its impact,” said Tino J. Mantella, president and CEO of the Arthritis Foundation. “What may start as minor aches and pains today could end up affecting your future ability to enjoy the everyday activities you love.”

Arthritis already was recognized as the nation's leading cause of disability with a nationwide economic impact of more than \$82 billion annually.

The condition strikes teens, baby boomers and seniors alike and nearly 300,000 children are affected. As the U.S. population ages, it's likely that the prevalence of arthritis will continue to climb.

“Americans must take their joint health seriously and see a health care provider at the earliest warning signs of arthritis so that they can continue to enjoy active lives and avoid future limitations,” said John H. Klippel, M.D., medical director of the Arthritis Foundation.

There are a number of proac-



**The nation needs to focus on arthritis as a public health problem, say the experts.**

tive healthy lifestyle measures that Americans can take to prevent or manage arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation recommends that people:

- Maintain an appropriate weight and lose weight as needed
- Exercise to maintain fitness and flexibility
- Seek early diagnosis and treatment to prevent joint damage, disability and ensure an active life.

There are more than 100 forms of arthritis and related conditions. The initial signs include pain, swelling and limited movement that lasts for more than two weeks.

To assess your joint health and learn more about arthritis, call the Arthritis Foundation at 1-800-283-7800 or visit [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org) for the free booklet, *51 Ways to Be Good to Your Joints*.