Fun Hobbies for Rheumatoid Arthritis

by BRENDA VANTA

Pain-Free Pastimes

You wake up in the morning and your joints are stiff, painful and swollen. The muscles are painful, too. You feel tired throughout the day, and your appetite is low. You try to get as much done as you can from your “to-do list” and the last thing that’s in your mind is to pursue your hobbies. Rheumatoid arthritis does impact your quality of life, including your desire to follow your favorite activities. How can you reverse this? Let's take a look at some fun hobbies for RA.

No Hobbies, More Boredom

As Dr. John Eastwood, Ph.D., suggests, people who lose touch with their emotions will be more likely to experience boredom because they won't feel satisfied. If you can't pursue old hobbies such as running or dancing because of your painful joints, explore the reasons why you like those activities and pursue alternative options. New hobbies will help you enjoy life again.

Alternative Options to Your Old Hobbies

Let’s say you love to cook gourmet dinners, but your pain and fatigue don’t allow you anymore to stand and prepare the food for long hours. Why not organize a dinner party with your friends? Either ask them to do all the cooking, or order the dinner from a fine restaurant.

Do you like running or practicing competitive sports such as tennis or bowling? You can still socialize with your friends and express your competitive side by organizing a home party and playing Nintendo Wii or cards. You may also try a swimming contest since exercising in the water puts less pressure on your joints.

Did you like drawing or pottery before developing rheumatoid arthritis? These activities may be hard to perform now since the small joints are the most affected by this form of arthritis. But you can always express your artistic side by visiting art galleries and museums.

Do you like to travel and explore new places and cultures? Think the other way around – if you can’t spend long hours on a plane, invite people over from other countries. You can host visitors through www.couchsurfing.org and learn from them about other places or cultures. Or you can learn a new language. Just sign up and attend classes that interest you.

How to Choose New, Alternative Hobbies

Make a list of your old hobbies and write down — or type it out if you have difficulty writing — why you enjoy them. For example, if you bowled, you probably liked it because you socialized and connected with others. Or perhaps you enjoyed the competitive aspect of it? All you have to do is find another activity that will allow you to socialize or involve some sort of competition.

Rheumatoid Arthritis and Recreation

Take control of your life, and don’t let arthritis limit your ability to enjoy life. Why do we all emphasize the “must-do” activities? Our leisure time and hobbies are equally important. Replace the old hobbies with new ones to add some spice to your life and socialize more.