

Table. Arthritis Stages, General Signs and Symptoms, and Exercise Prescription Considerations.

Stage	Signs and Symptoms	Exercise Considerations
Acute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Joint pain • Reduced joint tissue tensile strength attributable to inflammation • Reduced joint nutrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid activities that exacerbate joint pain.
Chronic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent joint damage • Pain at end of normal ROM • Stiffness after rest • Poor posture and ROM • Joint deformities • Pain with weight bearing • Abnormal gait • Weakness • Contractures or adhesions • Reduced aerobic endurance and muscle strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform aerobic, strengthening, and ROM exercises. • Perform exercises and intensities during resistance training that do not cause joint pain but are still sufficient to ensure gains in strength and muscle mass. • Initiate walking and perform in water if necessary to reduce pain. • Perform lower back flexion and abdominal strengthening exercise. • Avoid trunk extension (especially with spinal stenosis). • Maintain a neutral spine position. • To reduce the risk of osteoporosis and ligament laxity, avoid long-term oral corticosteroids.
Chronic with acute exacerbation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammation and joint size greater than normal • Joint tenderness, warmth, swelling • Joint pain at rest and with motion • Stiffness • Functional limitations • Hips and spine affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalise gait. • Same recommendations as for the acute phase.

Abbreviations: ROM = range of motion.