



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Arthritis campaign asks people to 'get physical'

FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

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The Alabama Department of Public Health's Arthritis Control Program is targeting Montgomery, Selma and Tuscaloosa to implement an arthritis awareness campaign titled "Physical Activity. The Arthritis Pain Reliever" during the month of March. The campaign's goal is to reach Alabamians with arthritis who have tried various ways to relieve the pain associated with the condition and encourage them to "get physical" by engaging in moderate physical activity for 30 minutes a day, three or more times a week.

Data for Alabama show that 36 percent, or more than 1,150,000 adult Alabamians, have arthritis. Another 18 percent, approximately 578,000 adult Alabamians, have chronic joint symptoms or possible arthritis. They are among the 49 million American adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis and an additional 20.9 million with chronic joint symptoms.

"The Alabama Arthritis Control Program wants persons with arthritis to know that arthritis pain and disability can be improved by moderate physical activity. Not only can exercise lessen their pain, but it can also help them become more active and energetic," says Linda Austin, director of the Alabama Arthritis Control Program.

The Alabama Arthritis Control Program has also been working with local partners in Montgomery, Selma and Tuscaloosa to establish community-based arthritis exercise programs called PACE (People with Arthritis Can Exercise). These are valuable physical activity resources that exist in the local communities.

The campaign was designed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to encourage people who have arthritis pain and disability to become more active and participate in work and leisure activities, which are critical to quality of life.

"Being able to work for a living, play with children or grandchildren, do chores around the house, or just maintain independence, are among the concerns of people with arthritis. This campaign involves the placement of brochures, radio spots and newspaper advertisements that will help persons with arthritis to learn more about what they can do themselves to relieve pain, stiffness and disability associated with arthritis," said Austin.

Persons with arthritis can call the Alabama Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation at 1-800-879-7896 for more information and a listing of local resources and print resources.

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