

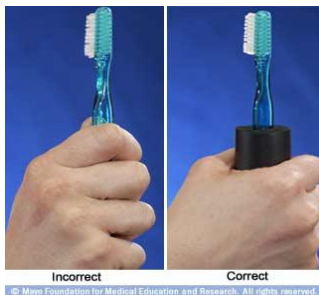
PATIENT INFORMATION - JOINT PROTECTION TECHNIQUES

Your joints — the structures where two or more bones come together — undergo a certain amount of wear and tear as you age, but treating them with care can help keep them pain-free. Although practicing good joint protection is important for everyone, it's especially important if you have **arthritis**.

Arthritis causes joints to become stiff and sometimes inflamed. Arthritic joints can't tolerate as much stress, so pushing; pulling or twisting motions can be painful. Though you may want to work through the pain, doing so can aggravate the situation.

Protecting your joints is one of the most effective ways to avoid or relieve pain and prevent further joint damage. Try the following strategies:

1. Respecting your pain
2. Being careful of how you use your hands.
 - Avoiding positions that push your other fingers toward your little finger.
 - Avoid making a tight fist and putting unnecessary pressure through your hands.
 - Avoid holding items with a tabletop grip. Avoid pinching items between your thumb and your fingers.



3. Avoid Holding One Position For A Long Time
4. Use Your Strongest Muscles and Joints
5. Distribute Pressure
6. Simplify Your Task
7. Balance Rest And Activity
8. Move each joint through its full pain-free range of motion at least once a day.

How can Hand Therapy help? Hand Therapists are skilled at helping you in the management of your arthritis. They can provide and fabricate splints, advise on appropriate exercise, and suggest aids and equipment that may make tasks easier. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us directly.