Ask the Experts: Exercise and Lupus

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Introduction

- Providing the basics on exercise and lupus
- Exercise is an important part of taking care of yourself and your wellbeing:
  - for heart health
  - to prevent osteoporosis (thinning of bones)
  - for joint health
  - for prevention of depression, anxiety
- SELF CARE is as important as medical care
Tips to keep in mind

- **Guidelines**
  - Exercise should never be painful
  - You should aim for 30 minute sessions
  - Try to do some exercise every day
  - Listen to your body
  - Modify when needed
  - Find something you like!
Benefits of Exercise

- No studies demonstrate exercise can prevent a flare however there are benefits:
  - Improved mood
  - Weight loss
    - Medication side effects can increase weight gain, great solution to help combat this
  - Improved circulation
  - Improved self esteem
Exercises to try

- Start slow and work your way up to more intense physical activity
- Aerobic
  - Swim, take a walk, or go for a light jog
  - Beneficial to your heart and lungs AND mental health
- Non-weight bearing exercises
  - Essential when your joints have pain and stiffness
- Strength training
  - Use of weights when possible
  - Improves bone density and support for joints
  - Also consider: tai chi, yoga
Special considerations

- Flares--do not ignore
- Skin--take care with sun exposure and sweating
- Chronic pain—could improve
- Fatigue—may need to modify exercise, but could improve
- How to know your limits?
Conclusion

- Key takeaways:
  - Self care is as important as medical care
  - Exercise is a very important part of self care in lupus
  - Find exercise that you like and can handle
  - Make exercise a regular part of your routine
  - Listen to your body and modify as needed, but stick with it!
Ask a Question!

- Check back to www.lupus.org/ask in June for answers to 15 selected questions.
- If you are viewing this at a later date we encourage you to call our Health Educators at 1-800-558-0121 for any further questions.
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