

Health &  
LifeCare  
**Arthritis  
Aids**

Global Assistance

**Allianz** 

## We are Allianz Global Assistance—Health & LifeCare.

We help people, every day, all around the world – that’s what it means to be the world’s leading assistance company.

Previously we were known as Mondial Assistance Australia though we have been part of the Allianz Group for more than ten years. As an assistance company, we have a unique and valuable offering in connecting people in need with professionals who can help—whether that is roadside, travel, emergency medical, health or home assistance. We put the needs and wellbeing of the people we serve first. It is at the heart of everything we do. And it is this assistance philosophy, this desire to help others that sets us apart.

With close to 600 employees in Australia and more than 10,000 employees worldwide, we help someone, somewhere in the world every two seconds.

### *How can we help you?*

**Arthritis is a very common condition in Australia affecting people of all ages and from all walks of life. Its symptoms often have a big impact on the daily lives of people, and although arthritis can be difficult to live with, there are many simple measures that can help anyone manage their symptoms.**

There is no cure and living with arthritis can be different from person to person. For each individual, symptoms can vary from day to day.

One of the most important steps is to understand your arthritis and discover the best ways to improve your condition.

- ▲ We recommend you work with your healthcare professional to develop a management system and choose the equipment right for you.
- ▲ Arthritis is not a single disease. The word ‘arthritis’ is a name for a group of more than 100 conditions that affect the joints.
- ▲ The three most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and gout.



### 01. Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis can affect any joint in the body but it usually occurs in large joints that support the weight of your body such as the hips, knees and lower back. It can also occur in the hands, particularly at the base of the thumb and the end joints of the fingers and in the big toe.

Osteoarthritis symptoms may include:

- ▲ inflammation around a joint.
- ▲ damage to joint cartilage.
- ▲ bony spurs growing around the edge of a joint.
- ▲ deterioration of ligaments.

One of the most important things you can do is exercise the joints.

### 02. Gout

Gout is a common and painful condition.

- ▲ It tends to mostly affect men between the ages of 40 and 50 years.
- ▲ It often affects the joint of the big toe first, then it can go on to affect the knees, ankles and hands.

Gout attacks can be prevented by:

- ▲ Cutting down the amount of alcohol you drink and avoid binge drinking.
- ▲ Avoiding rapid fluctuations in weight, ‘crash’ diets or fasting.
- ▲ Ensure you have a healthy diet.
- ▲ Limiting foods that contain high levels of purines, a substance that can be made into uric acid in the body.
- ▲ Medication to lower uric acid levels in your blood.

Here are some common-sense tips for living with or caring for loved-ones with arthritic challenges.



### 03. Rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a disease that causes inflammation of the joints, often in the smaller joints, such as the joints in the hands and feet. However larger joints such as the hips and knees are also often affected.

Women are three times as likely as men to develop RA.

RA symptoms vary from person to person but often include:

- ▲ Joint pain and tenderness.
- ▲ Early morning stiffness in the joints.
- ▲ Swelling in the joints.
- ▲ The same joints on both sides of the body are affected.

Prevention and treatment techniques include:

- ▲ Learn pain management techniques.
- ▲ Use of hot and cold packs.
- ▲ Be physically active, especially warm water exercise, strength training and tai chi - these will strengthen supporting muscles and keep your joints flexible.
- ▲ Learn how to protect your joints and pace yourself – use equipment such as specially designed cooking utensils and get plenty of rest.
- ▲ Stop smoking - smokers are twice as likely to get RA as non-smokers.
- ▲ Medication, as recommended by your doctor.

### Pain management

Arthritis-related problems include pain, stiffness, inflammation and damage to joint cartilage and surrounding structures.

This can result in joint weakness, instability and deformities that can interfere with the most basic daily tasks such as walking, driving a car and preparing food.

Treatment and management options vary with the type of arthritis, its severity and the parts of the body affected. Management options can include medical treatment and medication, physiotherapy, exercise and self-management techniques.

- ▲ Visit your doctor regularly to make sure you are making the most of your medicines and physical therapies.
- ▲ Take care of your body – exercise, eat a healthy diet, and get a good night’s sleep.
- ▲ Use heat and cold treatments for extra pain relief.
  - ▲ a warm bath or shower
  - ▲ a heat pack placed over a painful joint for 15 minutes
  - ▲ an ice pack may reduce swelling and relieve pain in the same way
- ▲ Distraction techniques, including exercising, reading, listening to music, or seeing a movie.
- ▲ Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
- ▲ Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- ▲ Relaxation techniques – when you are stressed, your muscles become tense, making pain feel more severe:
  - ▲ Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS). A TENS machine applies very mild electric pulses via small electrodes (pads) to block pain messages going from the painful area to your brain
  - ▲ you should see a physiotherapist to trial a TENS machine, and to learn how to use it correctly
- ▲ Massage and acupuncture can be useful to help control pain and improve relaxation but this has not yet been proven by research.



### Mental conditioning

**Stress** is the mind/body’s response to perceived fear or pressure. People with arthritis need to learn how to manage stress, otherwise it can lead to muscle tension, pain and depression.

**Depression** is not just a low mood or feeling sad, but a serious condition that needs treatment. People with depression find it hard to be interested in normal day-to-day activities. Depression has serious effects on physical as well as mental health.



## Physical therapies

- ▲ Physiotherapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists and other therapists offer a range of treatments that will help your joints function better.
- ▲ Being overweight is a risk factor for some forms of arthritis, especially OA. Weight loss has been shown to significantly lessen pain in some joints and to help mobility and joint function:
  - a dietitian and exercise physiologist can help devise a weight loss plan and assist you with this
- ▲ If medicines have not worked for you, you may require joint replacement surgery. Most people find that joint replacement surgery improves their quality of life.
  - your doctor will refer you to an orthopaedic surgeon who can advise you on whether surgery is required.
- ▲ Regular exercise is one of the most effective treatments for arthritis:
  - decreasing the pain in your joints and muscles
  - maintaining and increasing the flexibility of your joints and muscles
  - strengthening muscles will help take the load off your joints, and make the joints more stable
  - decreasing or relieving muscle tension
  - improving your posture and balance to reduce your risk of falling
  - reduce body fat which will reduce the load on weight-bearing joints

- ▲ Arthritis friendly physical activities include:
  - walking
  - exercising in water, such as hydrotherapy (with a physiotherapist), swimming or water exercise classes
  - strength training - using weights, resistance bands, gym machines or even just your own body weight
  - tai chi, yoga and pilates
  - cycling
  - dancing
  - chair-based exercises
- ▲ Keep the affected joints warm whenever possible (eg. wearing gloves outside in winter).
- ▲ Arthritis creams, gels and balms can temporarily relieve minor pain associated with arthritis, simple backache, muscle strains and sprains.



## Food and arthritis

No diet has been proven by research to cure arthritis and there is very little scientific evidence that specific foods have an effect on arthritis.

Except for gout, most foods will not have a direct effect on your arthritis, or on the pain and stiffness you experience.

- ▲ A healthy diet which leads to weight loss will lessen the pressure on weight-bearing joints such as knees, ankles, hips and spine which will reduce the amount of pain you experience.
- ▲ Omega-3 fats can help reduce inflammation in some forms of arthritis:
  - oily fish like sardines and salmon have greater amounts of omega-3 fats.
  - fish oil supplements
  - ground linseeds, linseed oil and flaxseed
  - walnuts
  - canola oil (also called rapeseed oil)
- ▲ Some foods that appear to trigger attacks of gout include:
  - meat – particularly red meat and offal, such as liver, kidneys and heart
  - seafood – particularly shellfish, scallops, mussels, herring, mackerel, sardines and anchovies
  - foods containing yeast – such as vegemite and beer.
  - fructose, as found in soft drinks sweetened with corn syrup and fruit juices.

## More support

Arthritis Australia offers a wealth of support and information to arthritis sufferers – visit their website [www.arthritisaustralia.com.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.com.au) or call their information line on **1800 011 041**



## Daily Aids

### Pick-Up Reacher

This lightweight Reacher features a unique trigger design that allows for two alternative methods of operation (whole hand squeeze or second palm).

The kit includes forearm support and lock. Available in a range of lengths.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Easy Grip Bottle Opener

Helps to provide a solid grip on items such as bottle tops, medicine bottles or even small doorknobs.

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### Non-Slip Jar Opener

This dome shaped Jar Opener is designed to fit comfortably in the palm of the hand and is effective for opening screw-top jars including tamper-proof lids.

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### Etac Contour Pen

The Etac Contour Pen is a lightweight pen, specially designed to enable handwriting with poor gripping ability. Ideal for people suffering from rheumatism and arthritis.

The pen rests comfortably in the hollow of thumb and index finger, preventing point pressure and strain on the fingers. Light fluid ink further reduces required strength.

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### Active Hands Gripping Aid

Helps overcome the limitations caused by weak grip or poor hand function. Glove slides onto the hand for grip assistance.

Built from tough webbing and comfortable neoprene (wet suit material), they are designed to withstand regular use, even for

strenuous activities. Machine washable.

Available in three sizes (small, standard and extra large), for both right and left hand. Refer to the size guide on specification sheet for best fit.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Fixed Line Phone with additional Cordless Handset

The big button phone designed to assist the visual and hearing impaired.

- ▲ fixed line unit operates during power failure
- ▲ hearing aid compatible
- ▲ integrated answering machine with slow playback and remote access

- ▲ visual ringer with 'audible ringer off' option.

- ▲ audio boost and volume control
- ▲ add additional handsets for intercom and up-to 3 way conferencing

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## Pain Management

### Physio Duo TENS+ Digital

Natural, non-invasive pain relief without the use of chemicals or drugs. A large liquid crystal display and easy operation press buttons, ideal for people who have difficulty reading or turning smaller dials. There are 5 adjustable TENS modes, 3 adjustable

EMS modes and 24 professional presets of TENS and EMS available.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Physio Duo TENS+ Analogue

Natural, non-invasive pain relief without the use of chemicals or drugs.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Hollywog WiTouch™ Pro

The first wireless remote controlled pain relief device incorporating TENS technology to specifically target back pain. The thin and flexible design perfectly contours the back for maximum surface contact. Maximises energy use providing over 150, 30-minute treatment sessions per battery life.

Portable and convenient for travel, the WiTouch Pro offers a treatment area twice the size of most TENS devices for more effective back pain relief. Operates with or without remote control.

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## Cooking and Preparation

### Etac Cut Cutting Aid

A lightweight cutting aid designed to simplify kitchen work by holding items firmly in place while the board remains secure on work surface.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Etac Fix Preparation Board

Keep items in place while the board remains secure and stable on work surface. Board stands on either four friction feet or suction feet. Jaws can hold a bowl, grater or piece of food.

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### Etac Relieve Angled Carving Knives

This Kitchen Knife with serrated blade from Etac is engineered to help people with limited hand strength, relieving strain on the fingers, hands and wrists.

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The angle of the handle is designed to keep the wrist straight, making efficient use of all strength in the hand and arm.



## Personal Care

### Sock Aid

This notch style Sock Aid is designed to help people who have difficulty reaching their feet; who have the use of only one hand; or with decreased strength or coordination.

The notch at the upper end of the flexible plastic gutter hooks the sock

or stocking, the attached cord is then used to pull the sock over the foot and around the heel.

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### Long Handled Toe Washer

This long handled toe washer with soft towelling wash pads is designed to help wash the feet and toes without the need to bend in the shower.

Includes two replaceable white towelling wash pads that slide over one end of the frame, with a solid PVC grip the other.

[Click for details & to order](#)

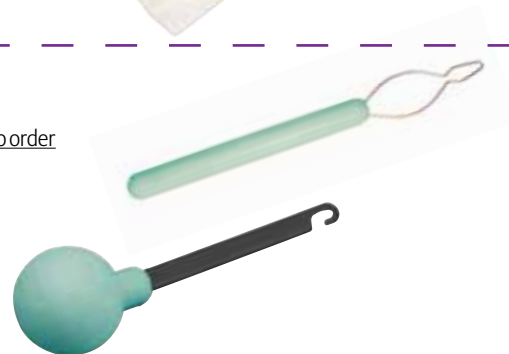


### Etac Butler

A simple device designed to make it easier for people with reduced grip or hand mobility to manage buttons and zippers.

Easy to hold, the wire loop or hook gently pulls buttons through button holes without snagging.

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### Etac Beauty Kit

A light weight range of ergonomically designed body care products, which are carefully balanced to provide maximum power with minimal effort and strain on hands, arms and shoulders. The Kit comprises one Body

Washer, one Long Comb and one Multipurpose Grip with three nail files.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Compression Stocking Donner

A lightweight frame designed to minimise bending and assist in the easy application of compression or surgical stockings. The frame is designed to hold the stocking sufficiently open to allow easy insertion of the foot.

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## Mobility

### Walking Sticks

Range of lightweight, aluminium walking sticks for added support when walking.

Models include

- ▲ Devon
- ▲ SoftGrip
- ▲ Crook
- ▲ QuadBase

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Push Down Wheeled Walker

Ideal for physically or cognitively impaired users. Incorporates a unique push down brake activation system for people with limited grip strength.

Adjustable handle height and fully moulded PU seat. Includes basket, bag and hidden PVC pouch.

[Click for details & to order](#)



## Bathroom

### Aqualoy Bath Lift

The Aqualoy is a lightweight, two-piece, battery operated bath lift with reclining backrest – to lift or lower users into a bath at the touch of a button

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Bath Transfer Bench

Sturdy one-piece bath bench for secure transfer in and out of bath. Broad wide seat area, plus backrest and arm rail for added safety. Height adjustable legs with rubber suction cups for added security; each leg adjusts independently to match uneven

surface requirements for safety in wet environments.

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### Adjustable Toilet Seat Raiser

Designed to assist with transfers on and off the toilet, this adjustable toilet seat raiser is easy to install on most toilets. The seat can be adjusted to increase the height of the toilet seat by 80 mm, 120 mm or 160 mm, and includes flip

up lid and lift up armrests to facilitate lateral transfers from a wheelchair or commode.

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## Bedroom

### Elephant Feet Bed Raisers

Increase the height of furniture to better match ideal user requirements for easy use and comfort. Designed to accommodate square and round furniture legs up to 65 mm in width.

Allows bed height to be raised for ease of getting in and out without raising knee height above hip height or placing undue pressure on joints.

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### Touch Lamp

Touch Lamp designed for easy operation, even in the dark. Simply touch the base to turn the light on and off without the need to locate the switch.

Ideal for entrance ways and hallways, the lamp includes an 11 watt energy saver bulb for great lifespan and energy saving.

240x100x100 mm

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### Remote Control Power Sockets

This set of four Remote Control Power Sockets makes it easy to switch on and off hard to reach appliances, without the need to bend and avoiding fiddly switches.

Helps to prevent the risk of falls around the home and reduces electricity consumption for reduced power bills.

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## Eating and Drinking

### Etac Light Cutlery with Thick Handles

The handles are oval to sit securely in the hand and allows various grips. The spoon has a slightly longer and thinner handle to make a grip in the hollow between the thumb and index finger comfortable. To make cutting easier the knife handle has a slope for the thumb to rest and a sharp blade.

[Click for details & to order](#)



### Etac Relieve Angled Knives

Ergonomically design Carving Knives are great for helping people with limited hand strength to cut meat, bread or other food items.

straight, making efficient use of all strength in the hand and arm.

The angled handle and sharp edge to make cutting easier. The angle of the handle is designed to keep the wrist

The lightweight knife is dishwasher safe for easy cleaning.

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### Etac Tasty Glass

A thick neck and a stable foot to aid drinking. The lightness of this glass, plus the ability of the bowl to rest against the top of the hand when lifting makes it easy to use.

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Allianz Global Assistance

# Health & LifeCare

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[www.allianzassistancehealthcare.com.au](http://www.allianzassistancehealthcare.com.au)

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