

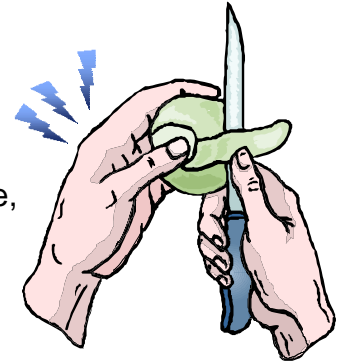


# Disability Services

## Information Sheet

### Arthritis Management

Arthritis is a very common condition in Australia affecting people of all ages and from all walks of life. The word 'arthritis' literally means 'inflammation of the joint'. People can be affected in all sorts of different ways but the most common symptoms of arthritis are fatigue, pain, swelling and stiffness in one or more joints.



#### Protecting your Joints

Pain can be the body's warning sign of excess stress on joints.

To avoid over stressing your arthritis-affected joints you may need to stop the activity you are doing and rest more often, limit the amount of work or modify the activity (for example allow dishes to air dry rather than wiping them). Also, it is advisable to use larger, stronger body joints and muscles whenever possible (you might carry shopping bags on your forearm or use both hands, rather than carrying them in one hand).

A free information sheet is available from the Independent Living Centre on *Energy Conservation*. The information may be helpful in assisting you to manage your arthritis.

#### How can the Independent Living Centre Help?

Staff at the Independent Living Centre can discuss with you the activities that you find difficult and offer information on alternative ways of achieving tasks.

We can make an appointment for you to visit the equipment display, to view and trial a large range of items that may be of use. There is no pressure to buy as the Independent Living Centre is not a sales outlet. If you decide that an item would be of benefit, you will receive printed information giving you a description of the item, the place of purchase and a price guide. The information is also available from the equipment catalogue on our website.

Listed below are some items that may help you to manage a variety of everyday tasks. Many of these items are on display at the Independent Living Centre.

#### Household Tasks

- ▶ Utensils with a built-up handle may be easier to grasp (for example specifically designed vegetable peelers, cutlery, cooking spatula). Tubular foam or lightweight slip on handles can be added to a range of items to build up the handle (such as eating utensils, hairbrush, toothbrush).
- ▶ A 'kettle tipper' allows you to pour from a standard kettle without having to lift it.

- ▶ Jar openers and can openers, including ring-pull can openers are designed to use larger muscles and put less stress on smaller joints.
- ▶ An ergonomic knife with an angled handle is useful when cutting and slicing.
- ▶ Tap turners and lever style taps can provide better grip and leverage.
- ▶ Doorknob grippers or non-slip matting may make it easier to grasp and turn round doorknobs.
- ▶ A 'pick-up reacher' is a long-handled stick with a claw at the end that enables you to pick up lightweight objects from the floor or unreachable heights.
- ▶ Plastic plug pullers are used to pull electric plugs out of their close-fitting sockets.
- ▶ Trolleys such as tray mobiles can make moving heavy objects easier.
- ▶ Key turners give better grip and leverage on keys.
- ▶ Lightweight plastic, rubber and foam grips for pens and pencils aid grasp.
- ▶ Spring-action scissors require less pressure and less involvement of the thumb to operate.



## Dressing

- ▶ Clothing that pulls on without fastenings, or at least has the fastenings at the front, is generally easier to manage. Suggestions can be made on replacing some buttons, press-studs or hook and eye fastenings with velcro fastenings.
- ▶ Other handy gadgets include button hooks, zip pullers and dressing sticks.
- ▶ Bras with no fastenings that pull over the head are available.
- ▶ Sock and stocking aids assist with reaching the sock or stocking to the foot and pulling it up.
- ▶ Slippers that open up flat make it easier to place your foot in and do up with velcro fastenings. They are available with non-slip rubber soles for grip.
- ▶ A long-handled shoehorn may assist with getting shoes on.

## Personal Care

- ▶ Pill splitters, pill crushers and medicine organisers help you to get the right dose
- ▶ Angled, long-handled brush, comb or washing sponge can help people with restricted range of movement of their neck or shoulder to wash.

## Recreation

- ▶ Lightweight, long-handled and adapted garden tools are available.
- ▶ A card holder will allow you to look at your playing cards and select one without having to hold them in your hand.
- ▶ Book holders support a book, whilst you are in a chair or bed.

## The Arthritis Foundation of South Australia (incorporating Osteoporosis SA)

The Arthritis Foundation of South Australia's vision is a leading organisation for the improvement and dissemination of information on arthritis, and the support and advocacy of people with arthritis and other musculo-skeletal conditions.

They aim to:

- ▶ Provide funds for research programs towards a cure and better treatments
- ▶ Give practical advice and support to people with arthritis and other musculo skeletal conditions and their carers
- ▶ Organise education programs for people affected by arthritis and other musculo skeletal conditions, their families and carers, health professionals and awareness in the wider community
- ▶ Provide information on many different types of arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions.

You can contact the Arthritis Foundation of South Australia at:

118 Richmond Road, Marleston SA 5033

Telephone: 8379 5711 or Helpline: 1800 011 041

Email: [info@arthritissa.org.au](mailto:info@arthritissa.org.au)

Website: [www.arthritissa.org.au](http://www.arthritissa.org.au)

## Contacting the Independent Living Centre

For further information or to make an appointment to visit the display please contact the Independent Living Centre. The Independent Living Centre offers free advice on equipment and techniques to help you with everyday tasks.

Independent Living Centre

11 Blacks Road

Gilles Plains SA 5086

Phone: 1300 885 886 (SA & NT callers only) or 8266 5260

Fax: 8266 5263

Email: [ilcsa@dfc.sa.gov.au](mailto:ilcsa@dfc.sa.gov.au)

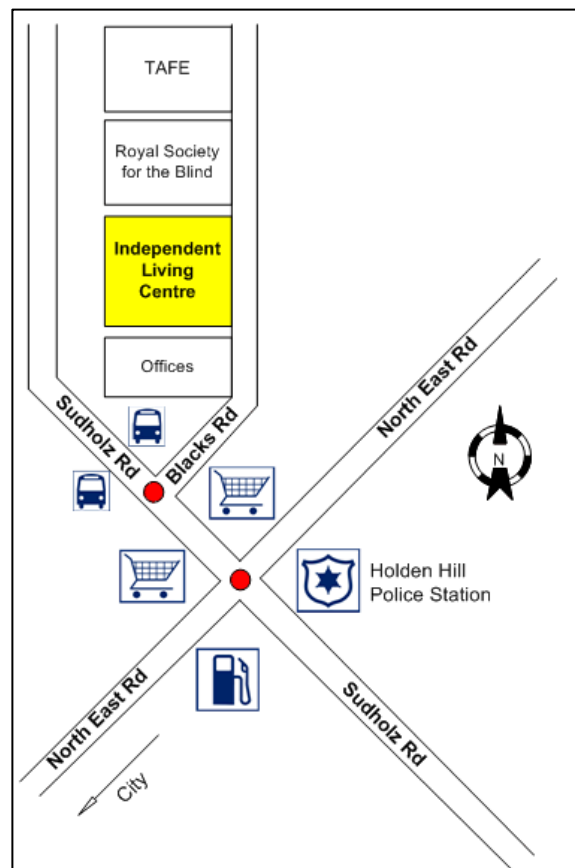
Website: [www.sa.gov.au/disability/ilc](http://www.sa.gov.au/disability/ilc)

Accessible off street parking is available.

Bus routes:

From the city T500/T501 or 207/208 to Stop 28 Sudholz Road

Timetable information: 8210 1000



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Copies of this publication are available from the Disability Information Service  
Tel: 1300 786 117 Email: [disabilityinfo@dfc.sa.gov.au](mailto:disabilityinfo@dfc.sa.gov.au) Website: [www.sa.gov.au/disability](http://www.sa.gov.au/disability) Version: July 2011



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