

Fact Sheet



What Is the *Arthritis Yes I Can?*

We call the mail delivered arthritis self management program *Arthritis Yes I Can!* It is based on the small group Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP) developed at Stanford University in 1985 and later adopted by the Arthritis Foundation. ASMP, also known as the Arthritis Self-Help Course and the Expert Patient, is now offered all over the world.

Arthritis Yes I Can! is for people with arthritis, fibromyalgia, or pain in their joints. Topics include:

- Techniques to deal with problems such as pain, fatigue, frustration, and isolation
- Appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance
- Appropriate use of medications
- Effective communication with family, friends, and health professionals
- Healthy eating
- Planning to take action

Arthritis Yes I Can participants can study the materials in their own homes at their own pace. Print materials and CDs are available in English and Spanish. Participants will receive a Tool Kit containing written Information Sheets, CDs containing the same information as the Information Sheets plus guides to relaxation and exercise, and the latest edition of *The Arthritis Helpbook* or *Como Convivir con su Artritis*. All *Arthritis Yes I Can!* materials and questionnaires will be mailed directly to participants at no cost to them.

Does the Program Replace Existing Programs and Treatments?

Arthritis Yes I Can! is designed to enhance regular medical treatment by giving participants the additional knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy lives. It will not conflict with participants' existing treatments or programs.

Anyone Can Participate if They Are:

- 18 years of age or older and has arthritis, fibromyalgia, or pain in their joints
- Have **not** participated in any other arthritis self-management program except PACE
- Are willing to spend 8-12 hours in self-study over 4-6 weeks
- Agree to participate in research about the program's usefulness

How Was *Arthritis Yes I Can!* Developed?

Dr. Kate Lorig at Stanford University and Dr. Jean Goepfingher at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). They work with Dr. Teresa J. Brady and Dr. Joe Sniezik at the CDC.

The purpose of the grant is to develop and evaluate, through a nation-wide randomized clinical trial, a version of the Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP) that is effective and easy for people to use in their homes. ASMP was difficult for some people to access, especially those who were homebound or otherwise unable to get to small group meetings. Arthritis Foundation chapters and state health departments found that traditionally underserved populations, including rural African Americans and Spanish-speaking people, faced access barriers. The CDC funded this study to learn if the small group ASMP can be adapted and delivered by mail, in order to make it more accessible to greater numbers of people.

Dr. Lorig and Dr. Goepfingher built *Arthritis Yes I Can!* on the small group Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP). ASMP has been found effective, in many national and international studies, in improving participants' exercise behaviors, increasing self-efficacy and confidence, reducing pain, and lowering health care costs. The curriculum was developed with input from persons with arthritis and from experts in medicine, exercise, and nutrition. Ms. Virginia Gonzalez, who is bilingual and bicultural and has worked with Dr. Lorig for more than 20 years, led development of the Spanish language materials.

Researchers will use a randomized study to evaluate the effectiveness of *Arthritis Yes I Can!* Some participants will receive *Arthritis Yes I Can!* shortly after they enroll. Others will receive it four months later. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of the two study groups using a process like flipping a coin.

When Will *Arthritis Yes I Can!* Begin?

The study begins soon. We will begin mailing *Arthritis Yes I Can!* packets in Fall 2005.

How Can You Help?

Give potential participants the Spanish toll free number at Stanford or the English toll free number at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

When they call we will enroll them in the study. (Potential participants must call these numbers themselves. You can't call for them.)

To Enroll Call Toll Free

1-877-668-0682 (English speakers)

1-800-725-9424 (Spanish speakers)

African Americans and Spanish Speakers strongly encouraged to participate!