

## Your *FIRST* Choice in Physical Therapy

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### Monthly Calendar

**November 11:**  
HYHY with Dr. Dugas  
Cartilage Injuries of the Knee  
7:00 at Bankers Ave Office

**November 14:**  
LSU vs La Tech

**November 26:**  
Thanksgiving

**November 28:**  
LSU vs Arkansas

**Join Us...**  
for the 18th HYHY  
Seminar on  
Nov. 11th at our  
Bankers Ave Office.

**Dr. Robert Dugas will be discussing cartilage injuries of the knee and explain ways to prevent and treat knee injuries.**



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### Arthritis: How do I protect my joints?

**A**rthritis affects more than 20 million Americans each year. The most common form of arthritis is osteoarthritis, followed second by rheumatoid arthritis. Arthritis can affect people not only physically but also financially and emotionally. You can decrease your pain, decrease destructive forces on the joint, and maintain range of motion by adhering to just a few joint protection rules.

**L**isten to what your body is telling you. If you have pain in your joints while doing an activity, this activity may not be good for you to be doing. The same thing is true if you have pain right after doing an activity. You may find this happens when you are doing repetitive activities such as knitting or gardening. Knitting, for example, may cause your fingers to stiffen up. You may notice pain or stiffness while knitting or after you stop knitting. In either case this pain or stiffness is your body telling you that knitting is hurting your joints.

**J**oint protection can help you prevent tissue damage. There are several rules of joint protection. If each rule is followed, you can help minimize the effects of arthritis on your joints.

1. The first rule involves maintaining fitness, strengthening muscles and increasing range of motion. If you are in good physical shape, the muscles will be better able to support the joints. The better shape you are in, the better you are able to maintain the full range of motion needed for all types of activities. Cardiovascular activities help you stay in good shape.

2. The next rule of joint protection deals with minimizing destructive forces on your joints. You should avoid heavy lifting, gripping against resistance, and activities that cause pain. In other words, you should try not to lift heavy groceries or move heavy furniture. Also avoid activities that require a tight pinch or grip that you need to maintain, such as furniture refinishing. If you cannot avoid these types of activities, be sure to take frequent breaks.

3. The last rule is to avoid static positions, in other words, staying in one position for a long time. All types of arthritis can cause stiffness when joints are not in use. You should rotate between resting and activity. Try to change your position every half hour. Create a balance between rest to allow healing and exercise to maintain strength and range of motion. Motion is lotion to the joints.

Your Physical or Occupational Therapist will help you analyze the activities that you regularly do. They will help you learn how to modify these activities using the joint protection rules and adaptive equipment. Remember, pain-reduced or pain-free participation in activities is the key to helping you maintain strength, range of motion and well-being. It's not always what you do but how you do it that is the key to staying active.

