

# Physical activity and older people with chronic health conditions

Carolyn Page

Physiotherapy Department, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne

# Chronic Health Conditions

- Cardiovascular disease (Heart Disease, stroke)
- Type 2 diabetes
- Cancer
- Arthritis



# Impact of Chronic Disease

- Increased mortality and morbidity
- Increased healthcare cost
- Evidence linking chronic diseases to physical inactivity and diet



# Physical Exercise & Chronic Disease



- Chronic diseases :most common cause of preventable death
- Physical activity and diet can reduce the risk of developing chronic disease

**Solution: Implementation of long-term behaviours that encourage healthy lifestyles in the primary care setting**

# Clinical care Standard 2017

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION  
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE



## Osteoarthritis of the Knee

Osteoarthritis is one of the most common chronic joint conditions in Australia. It can cause pain, loss of mobility and reduced quality of life.

Knee osteoarthritis is a major form of the condition and the main reason for knee replacement surgery, with excess weight being a key risk factor.

About 2.1 million  
Australians are  
estimated to have  
osteoarthritis



30% of people  
aged 65 or older  
report some  
joint symptoms

It is the fourth most  
common reason  
people visit GPs

\$1.6 billion spent on  
treating osteoarthritis  
per year

Effective management in primary care can reduce the burden of knee osteoarthritis on patients and the healthcare system



Provide a comprehensive  
clinical assessment



Educate the patient and develop  
a self-management plan



Include non-surgical treatments:  
weight loss, exercise,  
pain management



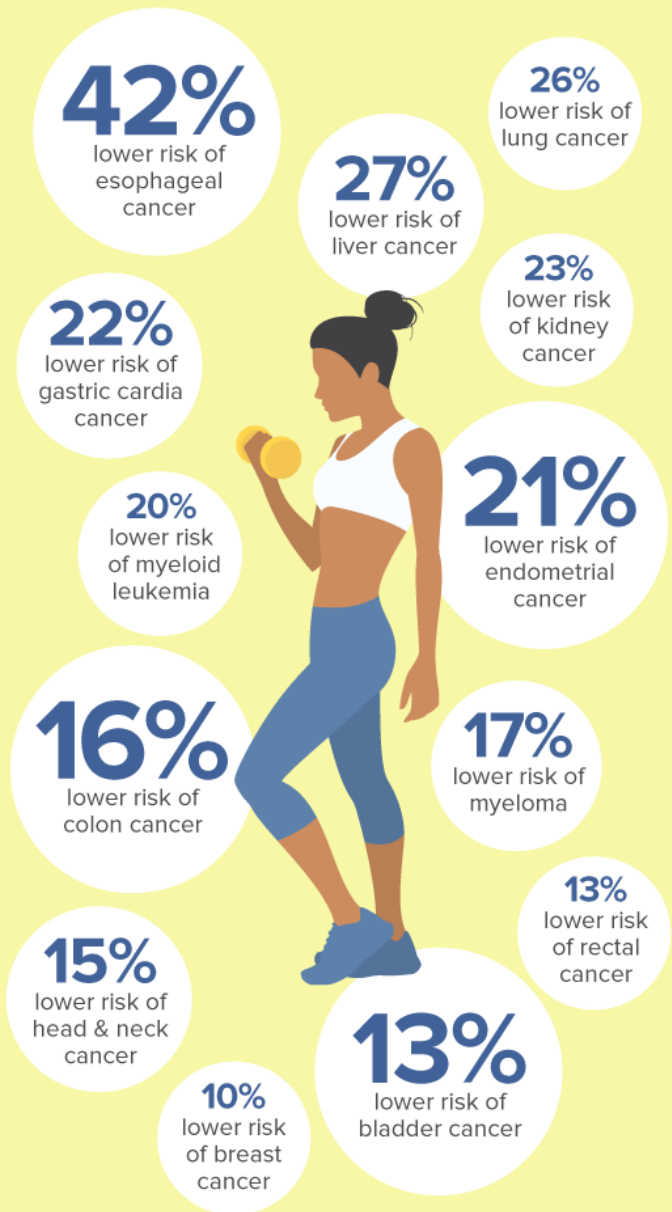
Monitor the patient through  
planned clinical reviews



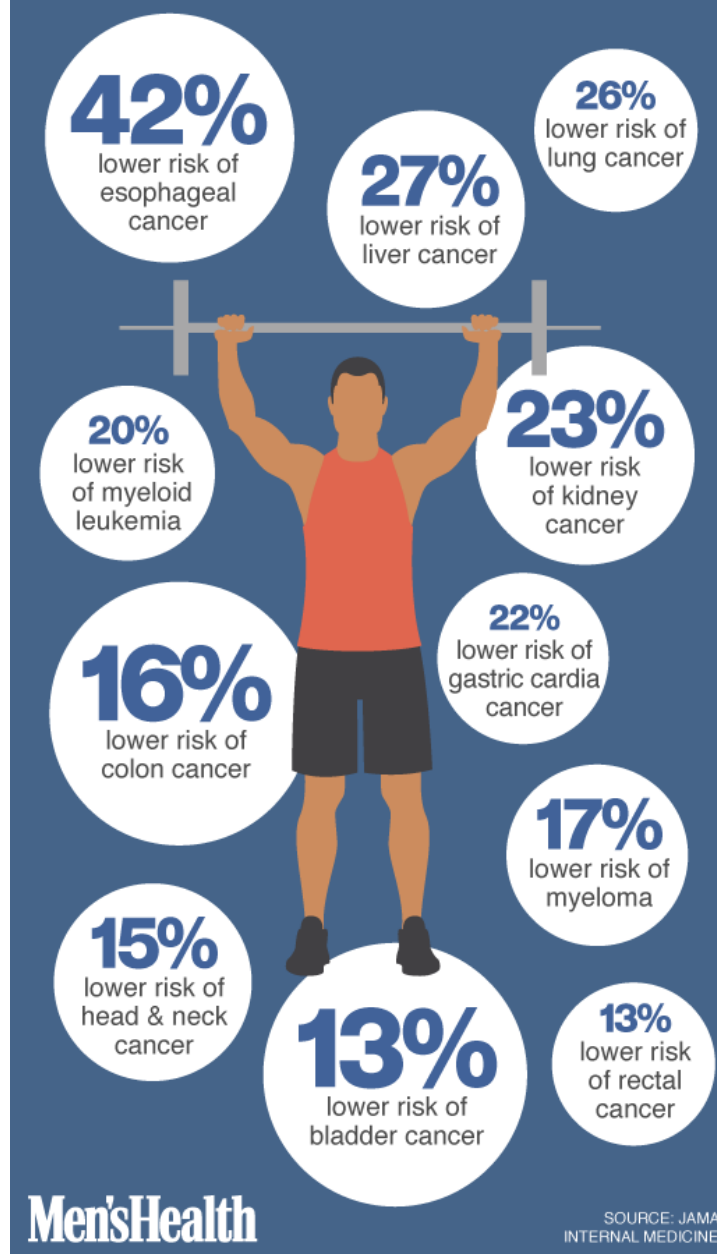
Refer the patient to a surgeon or rheumatologist if  
conservative management no longer works

For more information on the *Osteoarthritis of the Knee*  
Clinical Care Standard go to [www.safetyandquality.gov.au/ccs](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/ccs)

# Why You Should Exercise



# Why You Should Exercise





“What fits your busy schedule better, exercising one hour a day or being dead 24 hours?”

# Australian Physical Activity Guidelines

## National Physical Activity Guidelines



- The Australian Department of Health and Ageing has produced a set of guidelines on the minimum levels of physical activity required for optimum health and body weight.
- They are not designed for high-level fitness or sports training, but are intended to provide realistic strategies for incorporating physical activity into our daily lives.



- Doing any physical activity is better than doing none.
- Be active on most, preferably all, days every week.
- Accumulate 2 ½ to 5 hours of moderate intensity or 1 ¼ to 2 ½ hours of vigorous intensity
- Do muscle strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.



# Therapeutic Exercise vs physical exercise

- Strengthening
- Neuromuscular training
- Range of movement/Stretching
- Aerobic/cardiovascular



# Considerations when exercising

- What comorbidities ?
- Prior exercise experience
- Prior exercise tolerance
- To consider management strategies for persistent pain.



- Systolic BP  $>180$  or  $<100$
- HR: should be regular and resting (60-100)
- Call health professional if worried about a patient

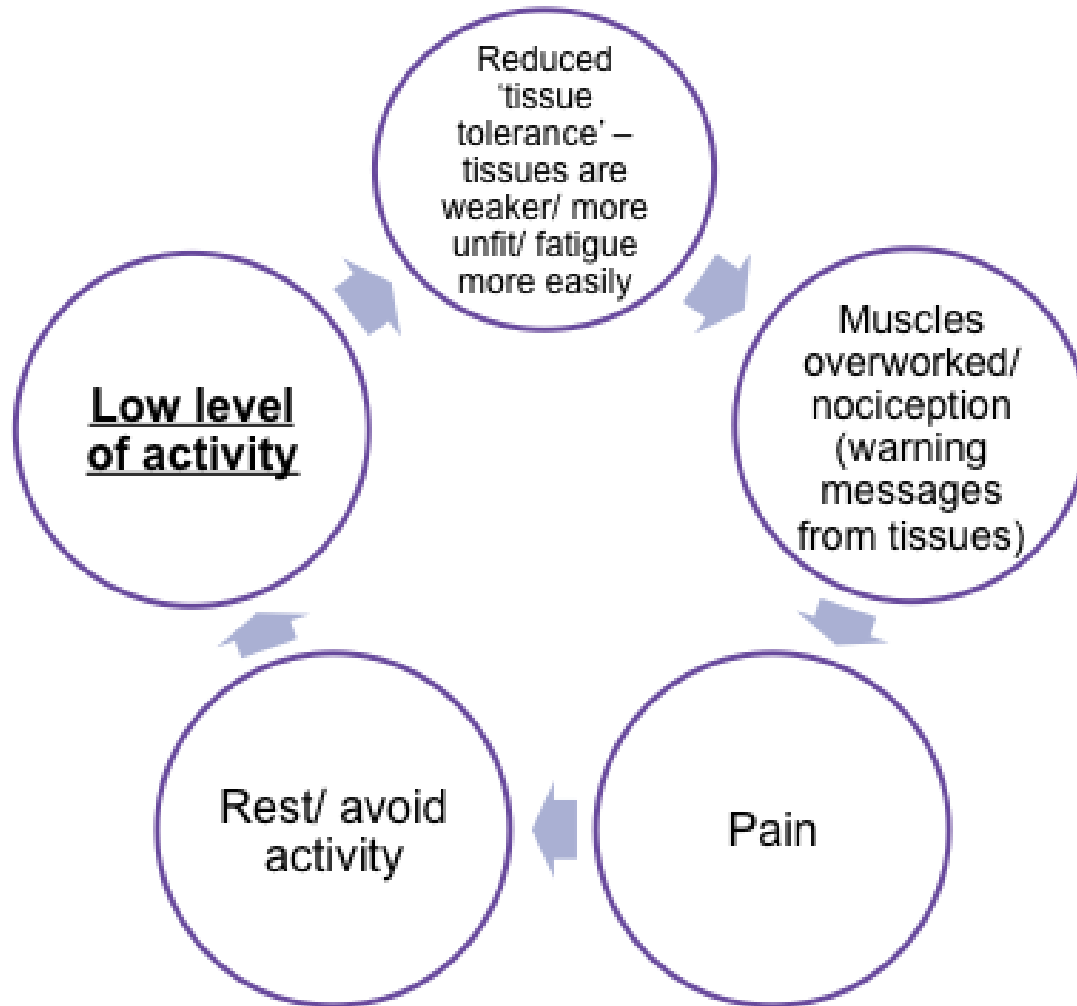
# Persistent pain (Chronic Pain)

- Pain >3 months.
- Often no diagnosis.
- Can involve changes within the nerves and nervous systems

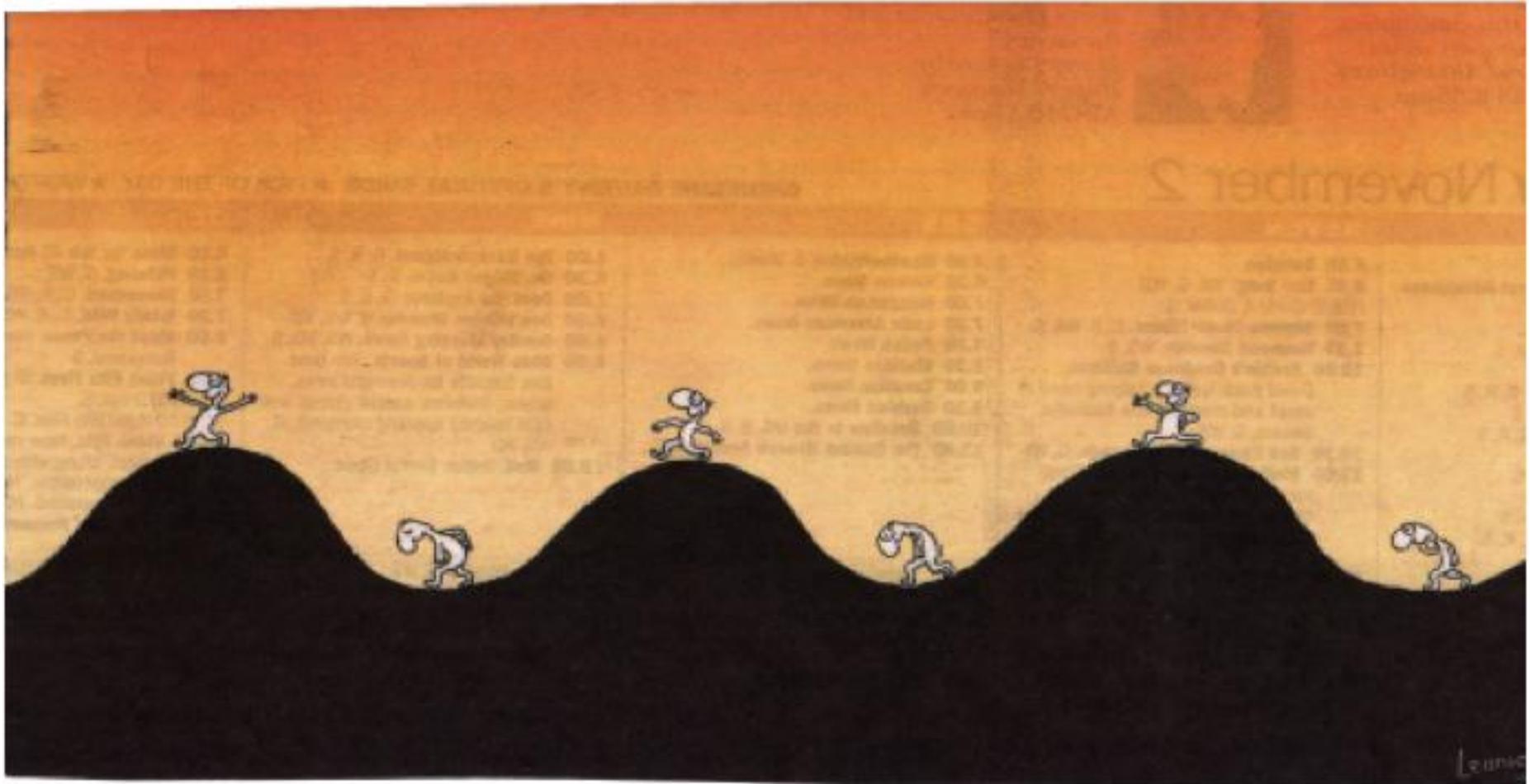
***1 in 5 Australians live with persistent pain***



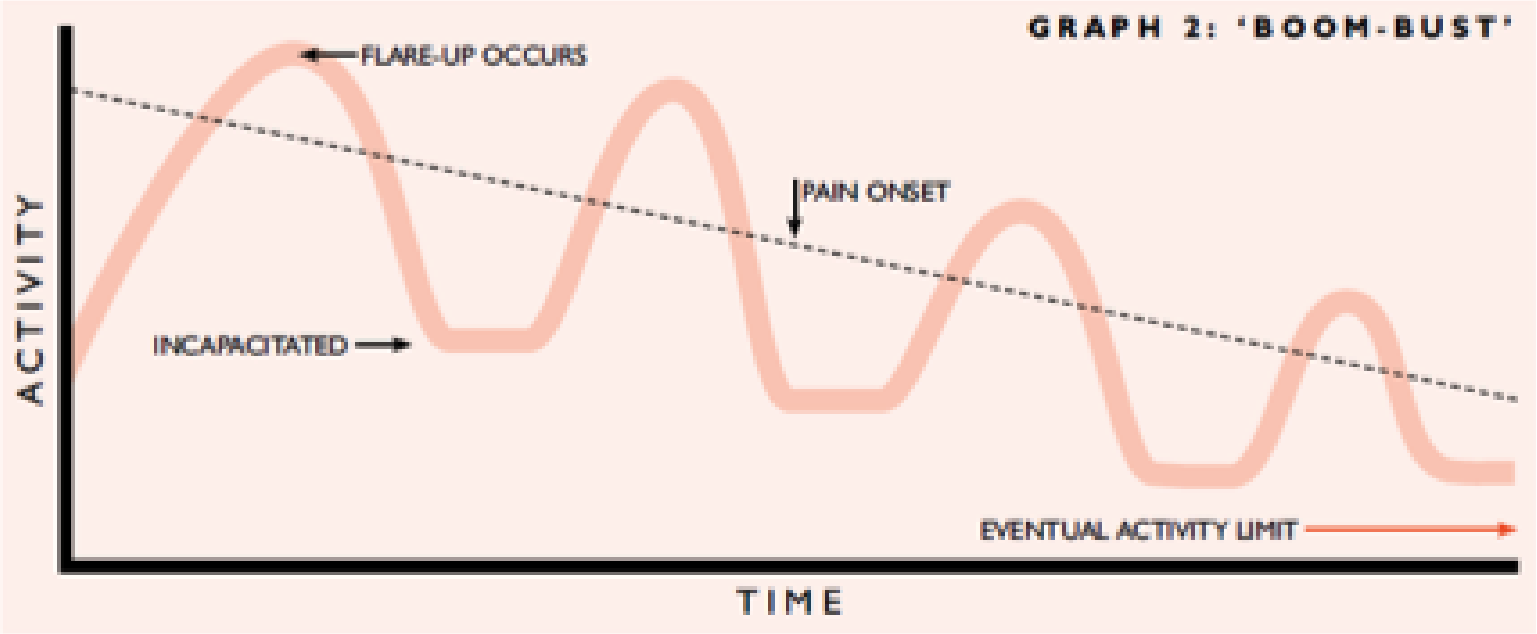
# FEAR AVOIDANCE CYCLE



# Over Activity/Boom-Bust etc.



# Over time activity levels.....



# Exercise and persistent pain

- Pain does not = harm
- Establish a baseline
- Goals: small, patient focused
- Regular contact
- PACING



On the first day only do the number of repetitions you can do before you feel a change

From the baseline you need to increase the time, reps or weight on a gradual basis

	Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise3	Exercise 4	Exercise 5
Diagram					
Baseline Sets/Reps					
Day	Target Increase	Target Increase	Target Increase	Target Increase	Target Increase

Before you do your exercises, have a target set out in how many you would like to complete  
Do not do more than this to avoid over-activity

# Pain Resources



- <http://painhealth.csse.uwa.edu.au/>
- <http://www.paintoolkit.org>
- <http://www.painaustralia.org.au>
- <http://knowpain.co.uk>

# Osteoarthritis (OA)

- OA is a painful condition that affects
  - synovial joints
  - subchondral bone
  - cartilage
  - ligaments
  - muscle
- Not a **wear and tear** disease
- Complex condition that is influenced by an interaction between **genetic, biomechanical, metabolic** and **biochemical**



# Clinical Guidelines

(Recommendations based on evidence)

	EULAR	NICE	ACR	AAOS	OARSI
Exercise	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘
Strength/ resistance	✘		✘	✘	✘
Aerobic	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘
Stretching /ROM	✘				✘
Neuromus cular	✘			✘	✘

Note: Overall recommendations of pacing, initial instruction with emphasis on independent programs. No clear evidence on delivery mode/structure

# Compliance

- Evidence in many areas of Chronic disease (diabetes, cardiopulmonary, osteoarthritis)
- Improvements in outcomes with exercise-short term
- Compliance after 12 months poor
- Strategies may include: education, home exercise programs, maintenance classes, health coaching

# Summary



ST VINCENT'S  
HOSPITAL  
MELBOURNE

A FACILITY OF ST VINCENT'S HEALTH AUSTRALIA

- Chronic disease is common
- Chronic disease can be improved with exercise
- Consider co-morbidities and persistent pain symptoms
- Use of Pacing strategies
- On going compliance with exercise