Test Your Knowledge

1. How many Americans suffer from osteoarthritis?
   a. 2 million  b. 27 million  c. 1 billion  d. 5

2. Which joint disease is characterized by morning stiffness and heated, swollen joints?
   a. Osteoarthritis  b. Rheumatoid arthritis  c. Lupus  d. Chronic hypertaeboi
tis

3. What is generally known as the “wear-and-tear” joint disease?

4. True or false: Vitamin D deficiency may increase pain and make walking more difficult for osteoarthritis patients.

   Answers on back

For more information about nutrition and fitness, visit these websites:

NDSU Extension Service: www.ag.ndsu.edu

Office of Dietary Supplements – National Institutes of Health
http://ods.od.nih.gov/

MyPyramid: U.S. Department of Agriculture information about food and physical activity recommendations
www.mypyramid.gov

Arthritis Foundation:
Locations for aquatic and exercise programs for arthritis patients
www.arthritis.org/chapters/north-central/programs.php

Videos demonstrating helpful exercises and stretches for the joints

Answers: 1. B; 2. B; 3. A; 4. True: Recent studies show a connection between vitamin D and joint health. Maintaining adequate levels of vitamin D is important for many parts of the body, including the joints.

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu

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County commissioners, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

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Most of us experience some joint stiffness during seasonal changes. However, degenerative diseases such as arthritis can inhibit daily activities. Help keep your joints mobile with these tips:

Stay Fit
Be good to your joints by staying faithful to a physical activity routine. Benefits of fitness routines include:

- Weight loss
  - Less weight = less strain on your joints
- Reduced risk of osteoarthritis
- Improved flexibility
  - More flexibility = possible improvement in pain and performance and reduced disability

Try these joint-friendly fitness ideas:
- Water aerobics
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Cross-country skiing
- Biking
- Elliptical machines

Stay Hydrated
Drinking plenty of water is important to prevent dehydration and for keeping joints lubricated. Often as we age, our thirst mechanism stops working as well, so drink water even when you might not feel very thirsty.

Eat Smart
Eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables and omega-3 fatty acids also is important for joint health. Get 2 to 3 cups of fruits and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables each day to maintain adequate nutrition and provide your body with vital antioxidants.

Consider Some Extras
If your doctor has recommended adding a supplement, be careful to follow the instructions on the label. Common supplements taken to relieve joint pain include:
- Glucosamine/Chondroitin
- Omega-3/fish oil
- Tart cherry
- Turmeric

Did You Know?
Those who lose weight cut their risk of osteoarthritis in half.

Exercise Tips
- Begin new exercises slowly.
- Keep joints warm.
- Stretch and warm up.
- Keep to low-impact exercises, not bouncing movements that stress joints.
- Don’t do anything that causes more pain.

Other alternative treatments that may help the joints include:
- Water therapy
- Acupuncture