AREP Patient Journey

Arthritis Society Canada

ARTHRITIS REHABILITATION & EDUCATION PROGRAM

What is the Arthritis Rehabilitation and Education Program (AREP)?

AREP helps you live better with arthritis. A team of health care providers run the program. This team includes occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and social workers. The team works with you to make a plan. They help you learn ways to manage arthritis, protect your joints, and gain skills to more easily complete daily tasks.

Who can use AREP?

AREP provides support to children and adults living with arthritis. You can use this program if you have a valid Ontario health card and need help with arthritis related concerns. This includes people who have arthritis or think they may have arthritis. AREP services are covered by OHIP, so there is no cost to you.

Contact AREP

Phone: 1.800.321.1433 ext. 3307

Email: AREP@arthritis.ca

Step 1: How to Access AREP

There are two ways to get started:

1. You can **call AREP and speak with a Client Service Coordinator** yourself.

OR

2. A health care provider can **send a referral to AREP for you**. A Client Service Coordinator will call you after a referral is received.

When you talk with a Client Service Coordinator, they will explain how the program works, ask you questions to understand your needs, and register you. They will schedule your first appointment, which is usually a call with an AREP therapist.

Step 2: Attend Your First Appointment

Within **2 to 3 weeks**, you will have your **first phone call** with an AREP therapist. They will ask about your arthritis. They may ask what joints hurt, how arthritis affects your day, and your health history. This will help you and your therapist choose the right supports for you. Supports may include attending an online workshop or support from a social worker, in addition to follow up appointments with your therapist. Together you will build your personal care plan.

Step 3: Receive Your Personal Care Plan

You and your therapist will **create a care plan together**. It may include exercise and activity guidance, ways to manage pain, arthritis education, tips for daily activities, or support from a social worker. You may also attend online workshops that match your needs.

You and your therapist may decide that a splint, brace, or other support tool could help. Some AREP clinics have a small supply of these items available to buy at cost. This means you pay only what the clinic paid for the item, with no added fee. Custom splints may also be available to purchase.

Continued on next page...

Step 4: Attend Ongoing Appointments

Where?
Based on your needs and choices, sessions can be in person, by phone, or online. In person sessions may take place at an Arthritis Society Canada office, or in a shared space in a hospital or medical clinic.

When?
You and your therapist will decide how often to meet. You may meet 6 to 8 weeks apart. This gives you time to try out new strategies before your next appointment. Sessions are on weekdays, usually between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

How long?
Each session is about 45 to 60 minutes.

How many?
On average, people have 1 to 4 sessions with AREP therapists. After your sessions end, you are always welcome to return for any new or changing arthritis concerns.

Cancellation policy?
If you need to cancel, please give at least 48 hours (2 days) notice. A late cancellation fee may apply if this is not followed. Exceptions are made for emergencies or illness.

Optional: Online Group Workshops

In addition to support from your therapist, you can also attend online group workshops on Zoom. These workshops cover many topics, such as different types of arthritis, pain, sleep, meditation, and coping skills. Workshops are offered during the morning, afternoon, and early evening on weekdays throughout the year.

People You May Meet

Client Service Coordinator

This person is your first contact with AREP. They help you register, ask what support you need, and help with scheduling while you are in the program.

AREP Therapist

This person may be a physiotherapist or an occupational therapist. They meet with you, help assess your needs, and build a care plan with you.

Social Worker

This person can help with the emotional and social parts of living with arthritis. They may help you adjust to life changes, find support, use health services, or learn about other programs that may help with costs.

Wait Times

How long you wait depends on where you live and the type of appointment you need. In person appointments may take 4 to 6 weeks, or longer in busy areas. Online appointments may take 2 to 4 weeks.

Arthritis Society Canada

ARTHRITIS REHABILITATION & EDUCATION PROGRAM

Learn More

Online: arthritis.ca/arep
Phone: 1.800.321.1433 ext. 3307
Email: AREP@arthritis.ca