



[About the Alliance](#)

[Alliance Members](#)

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[Resource Library](#)

[News & Events](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Newsletter

New Osteoarthritis Action Alliance Is Formed to Elevate OA As a Health Priority



Inaugural Meeting Kicks Off OA Action

This April more than 50 public health leaders met in Washington, D.C. to discuss [the burden of osteoarthritis \(OA\)](#) in the United States and to launch the OA Action Alliance, a coalition of stakeholders committed to putting OA on the national policy agenda.

Spearheaded by the Arthritis Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Alliance has for the first time united all constituencies affected by the epidemic of OA. Working collectively through the OA Action Alliance, members are striving to advance the recommendations outlined in [A National Public Health Agenda for Osteoarthritis \(OA Agenda\)](#). On behalf of the OA Action Alliance Steering Committee, we thank everyone who took part in this important meeting or joined us in spirit for their commitment to promoting action to prevent and control OA and its progression.

OA Action Alliance members and other participants of the inaugural meeting included leaders in aging, public health, women's and minority health, chronic disease prevention, physical activity, injury prevention, weight management and consumer affairs. While we all understand that OA has already reached epidemic levels, we also know that prevention and control efforts have not nearly matched the seriousness and scope of this painful and debilitating joint disease. This is unacceptable. Accordingly, OA Action Alliance members mapped out initial priorities for advancing the recommendations detailed in the OA agenda. Those priorities include:

- **Implement key components** of the physical activity guidelines to improve the physical activity behaviors of people with or at risk of developing knee and hip OA
- **Make the connection** between obesity and increased OA risk among state and federal policymakers and integrate OA into the national policy discussion about obesity prevention and management
- **Expand self management** education as a community-based intervention for people with symptomatic OA
- **Advance the widespread adoption** of rules and policies for organized sports, recreation and school athletics to prevent joint injuries that can lead to OA

Now operational, the OA Action Alliance is driving action through four working groups based on the categories of interventions outlined in the OA Agenda:

- **Weight Management**
- **Physical Activity**
- **Self Management Education**
- **Injury Prevention**

While a major success in jump starting the Alliance, the work of the OA Action Alliance has only just begun. Together, we are driving real action. For those who have already committed, the Steering Committee thanks you. **For those who have not yet joined the Alliance, we need your voice and the participation of your organization to advance OA awareness, education and those policies where change will have the most immediate impact. Please [join us](#).**

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Member Spotlight

Alliance Members Speak Out About OA

OA in the News

Arthritis May Keep Obese Adults from Physical Activity

Arthritis Today

Arthritis appears to be a major barrier to obese people getting physical activity, according to a new study...[Read More](#)

Extra weight piles on knee arthritis risk: study

Reuters

Being overweight doubles a person's risk for OA of the knees and being obese quadruples it, according to a new review of past studies...[Read More](#)

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Member Spotlight

Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC

President, National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA)
Co-Chair, OA Action Alliance Injury Prevention Working Group

Marjorie has a true passion for action—especially when it comes to the preventative kind. NATA, a member organization of the OA Action Alliance, has designated OA action as a priority because “if we can prevent injuries, we make an impact on preventing osteoarthritis.” Learn more about what Marjorie and NATA have to say about OA and the OA Action Alliance by [clicking here](#).



Penney Cowan

Founder and Executive Director, American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA)
Co-Chair, OA Action Alliance Self Management Education Working Group

As the founder of ACPA, Penney has been advocate and consumer representative for pain issues for over 30 years. Penney sees the OA Action Alliance as an excellent platform for positive change in the lives of people with OA and OA-related pain, a primary reason why ACPA became a founding member of the Alliance. Learn more about what Penney and ACPA have to say about OA and the OA Action Alliance by [clicking here](#).

Standing up against OA

OA Action Alliance members understand that OA is a significant concern for their constituencies and are passionate about affecting change for the millions of Americans suffering from this debilitating disease.



“Greater OA awareness is going to bring better health outcomes for all.”

– Edgar Gil, M.B.A, senior health program manager, National Alliance for Hispanic Health

“We can work together to make OA livable for individuals who have difficulty with activities of daily living... We can only do this if we work as a team.”

– Anita Bemis-Dougherty, PT, DPT, MAS, associate director of practice, American Physical Therapy Association

[Click here](#) to hear more from members of the public health community working to address the individual and national toll of OA.

