Enjoying Thanksgiving With Osteoarthritis

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Top Tips for Thanksgiving With Osteoarthritis

The holidays can be very trying if you have osteoarthritis. You want to do what everyone else does for Thanksgiving, like going shopping for groceries and preparing a big meal, but the pain your OA causes makes it too difficult.

Fortunately, there are some steps you can take to make your Thanksgiving holiday easier and more enjoyable.

If You're Hosting

Reduce your stress and pain levels by:

- Have your groceries delivered – Grocery shopping is a chore and carrying bags out to your car and into your house can be a painful ordeal for someone with OA. Check out grocery delivery services like FreshDirect, which allow you to order anything that your grocery stores offers. The groceries then come right to your door. Can't beat that!
- Check out where your stores are first – If you're set on going out to shop, look at a map of the mall online first. You can shop efficiently by working out the shortest route, so you can avoid backtracking and wandering around.
- Select dishes that can be prepared in advance – This can be like making the macaroni salad a couple days beforehand and fixing the side dishes a few days in advance so you can just pop them in the oven on Thanksgiving Day. That way, you are spreading the tasks over a few days, not trying to get everything done in one day.

If You're a Guest

You should tell your host if you need certain accommodations before you arrive. For example, if you're staying the night, having your sleeping accommodations on the first floor so you do not have to climb stairs.

You may also want to request a chair that is easy to get out of, and anything else that will help your stay be more comfortable and make your visit more enjoyable and pain-free.

If You're Traveling By Air

- **Book your flight smarter –** If you can, choose a flight mid-week. It is less likely to be fully-booked and you are more likely to be able to travel non-stop, so you won't need to change planes. If you are able to, get a seat with extra leg room.
- **Move around a bit –** Don't sit too long in one spot. Get up and walk around if you can. Move your joints, so they stay flexible, preventing any pain from setting in.
- **Request assistance if you need it –** There are wheelchairs available at the airport as well as motorized

escorts to help get you through the airport. You can save much of your energy if you use the assistance available.

- **Drink your water –** Drinking plenty of fluids, especially water, will help keep inflammation at bay.
- **Avoid alcohol –** You may be tempted to get your fluids by drinking a glass of wine on your flight. Alcohol affects osteoarthritis and can aggravate the inflammation in your body, so abstain from it. If cranberry juice is available, opt for that. It can help reduce inflammation and it is a better alternative than pop if you don't like drinking water.

Above all, remember to relax and enjoy your time spent with friends and family. Happy Thanksgiving!