

Three (3) Techniques to Avoid Back & Joint Pain in the Garden



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Since the weather is warming up, you might be planning to get outside and start [gardening](#). Yet digging, potting, weeding, mulching, and raking are all everyday gardening chores that may put stress and strain on your joints. According to the [report by the CDC](#), "In the United States, 24% of all adults, or 58.5 million people, have arthritis." (CDC.gov, 2021) It can impact someone's home life, job, hobbies, and especially gardening. However, with a bit of creativity and preparation, you can enjoy this activity pain-free.

Use the following tips to minimize aches and pains in the garden:

Stretch and Take Breaks

One of the easiest and most immediate ways to reduce arthritis pain — during any activity — is to warm up and take it slow.

- **Go for a walk.** Going for a short 10–15-minute walk is enough to get the blood moving in your body. Walking loosens up stiff muscles and encourages blood flow to your joints, reducing strain.
- **Change positions often.** Keep a close eye on how your body feels. If a section of your body hurts, take a break, and stretch slowly. By changing the position of your body during gardening, you can minimize pain and achiness.

Elevate Your Garden

Most gardeners spend most of their time crouching, kneeling, and bending over. Unfortunately, this is likely to cause pain in the back and knees. One way to fix this is by bringing the flowers closer to you.

- **Extra raised flower beds.** Easily avoid pain caused by bending over in your garden with raised flower beds. The extra elevation will take the strain off your knees and boost your mood. If you can't build

elevated flower beds, you may also consider counter-top gardening. This method requires setting up tables, so make sure to have someone nearby when assembling.

- **Pots.** Gardening in pots and containers can help give the gardener more control over plant irrigation, thereby reducing unnecessary muscle strain. Additionally, positioning plants in easy-to-reach spots reduces potential joint stress. For information on transporting potted plants, read our [guide](#).
- **Garden size and location.** Keep the number of plants in your garden to a bare minimum. Likewise, irrigating your garden may be challenging if the garden is far from the faucet. Keep your garden area close to your water supply.
- **Bring a Stool.** A small stool will let you sit while tending your garden. While sitting, you preserve energy and reduce stress on your joints. Keep in mind that sitting down shortens your reach, so make sure to plan the size of your garden accordingly.
- **Knee pads.** If kneeling causes pain in your knees or back, consider using knee pads or placing an old yoga mat on the ground. A soft cushion between your joints and the ground will help reduce pain.

Using the Right Tools

One of the quickest ways to cause an injury is using ineffective tools. Instead, you can alleviate strain on the hands and wrists by using the right tools. For example, light, long-handled tools that extend a gardener's reach can help ease your joint pain. In addition, gloves and other handheld cushioning methods prevent achiness in the hands by improving your grip. If you need more help finding the right tool, use our FREE [Tool Finder](#).

- **RelaxGrip handles.** In 2016, Melnor commissioned a joint study with the [Arthritis Foundation](#) to find out how we can better help those suffering from arthritis pain. From that study, we discovered four critical components that lead to a comfortable grip. Melnor incorporated these elements in our [RelaxGrip](#) nozzles and wands. For more information regarding RelaxGrip technology, visit <https://melnor.com/relaxgrip-e/>.
- **Lightweight hose.** A variety of hose options are available to reduce the stress on your back and joints.
- **Cover handles with sleeves.** Look for tools with padded handles to increase your grip. Consider slipping a rubber sleeve over the handle if your tool doesn't have this. Improving your grip decreases knuckle and joint pain.
- If you're unable to find rubber sleeves, gloves will do just fine. Gloves provide extra gripping ability while keeping your knuckles safe from everyday gardening bumps.

Incorporating these easy steps will not only help you manage your arthritis pain, but also help you enjoy your gardening/outdoor activities longer. For more information on managing arthritis pain, check out managing pain tips from the Arthritis Foundation <https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/managing-pain/pain-relief-solutions/tips-to-ease-joint-pain>