



## Arthritis of the Knee and Exercise

Very often I am asked the question by patients who have osteoarthritis of the knee or perhaps severe chondromalacia of the knee (which is really a pre arthritis condition), what is the best form of exercise for them to do. They often want to know whether it is better to walk or to ride a bike. Obviously we need to walk to get around for our daily activities. When it comes to exercise however, when one has a choice either to walk or to use an exercise bike or a regular bicycle, the bicycle is the better choice. Walking causes an impact on the joint that a bicycle does not. Jogging produces even more impact on joints and would be even more objectionable than exercise walking and or that reason. Perhaps the best type of exercise of all would be a Nordic Track type of cross-country ski machine.

A bike has less impact on the joints and strengthens the muscles in the front of the thigh much more effectively than walking alone. A cross-country ski machine of the Nordic Track type strengthens the muscles even more effectively, and not only in the front of the thigh, but also in the back of the thigh (hamstrings) as well. In addition, of course the upper extremities are exercised and it is a better type of aerobic activity. The drawback is that it takes somewhat more coordination to operate a Nordic Track cross-country ski machine. Some patients have tried to use the Nordic Track, but found it not to their liking for this reason. In that case then, they would be better off using an exercise bike.



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**Please consult Dr. Haverbush or a physician for specific treatment recommendations.**

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