One in five adults of the United States has a form of arthritis, which is a term that includes over 100 conditions. Although medical treatment can be very helpful, many forms of arthritis cannot be cured and cause some pain and joint damage. This can make it hard to do activities such as walking, climbing stairs, and opening jars. Difficulty doing these activities can make it hard for people with arthritis to work in their job, take care of their home, and visit friends and family in the community. Because arthritis affects people many different ways, the various forms of arthritis are the leading cause of disability in the US.
**Occupational Therapist**

Occupational therapists (OTs) work with people to improve or change their ability to do daily living activities that people like to do at home, work and in the community. The OT assists people and their families to adapt to changes to their lifestyle.

**Medical Doctor**

Medical doctors include Rheumatologists (trained in the diagnosis and treatment of rheumatic diseases), Orthopedic Surgeons (trained in the surgical treatment of bone and joint problems that affect movement) and Physiatrists (trained in non-surgical treatment for muscles and joints).

**Rheumatology Nurse**

Nurses help give medications, teach people about medications and how to care for themselves, and help determine if additional medical or rehabilitation services are needed. Nurses may also coordinate care, which can be important for some people who are receiving care from different rehabilitation professionals.

**Orthotist**

Orthotists make orthopedic devices to help in correcting the shape and/or function of a body part to provide easier movement and reduce pain. The Orthotist makes orthopedic devices for feet, ankle, and back (for example, foot orthotics, foot and ankle braces).

**Physical Therapist**

Physical therapists (PTs) work with people to decrease pain and restore or maximize mobility—people's ability to move around their environment. The PT often works to improve muscle flexibility and strength, balance, walking, and other functional activities.

**You!**

You are the most important part of the team! Your role is to identify problems and take a full part in making and carrying out your treatment plan. You can choose the team of medical professionals who will be of benefit to you. Your rheumatologist will refer you to these health professionals.