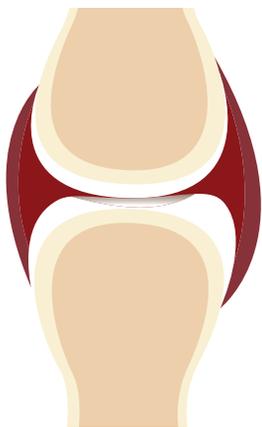


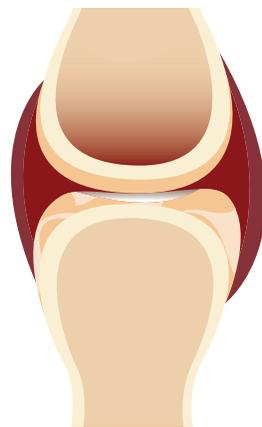
OSTEOARTHRITIS



Healthy Cartilage



Deconstruction of Cartilage



Bone on Bone

WHAT IS IT?

Osteoarthritis occurs when cartilage that cushions the ends of the bones in your joints gradually deteriorates. Cartilage is a firm, rubbery tissue that permits nearly frictionless joint motion and serves as a shock absorber. The shock-absorbing quality of normal cartilage comes from its ability to change shape when compressed, because of its high water content. In osteoarthritis, the slick surface of the cartilage becomes rough. Eventually, if the cartilage wears down completely, you may be left with bone rubbing on bone. Also known as degenerative arthritis, degenerative joint disease, and osteoarthrosis; osteoarthritis is the most common joint disorder in the U.S. The knees, hips, hands, lower back, and neck are most commonly affected, but osteoarthritis can occur in any joint. Women are three times more likely than men to develop osteoarthritis. Symptoms usually

begin after the age of 40 years, but they can affect younger people after a traumatic injury. Osteoarthritis is a progressive disease and symptoms typically worsen over time.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

There is no cure, but treatment can help the individual control pain and swelling, stay mobile and active, and increase their quality of life. Interventions include exercise, manual therapy, lifestyle modifications, and medication. Talk to your Primary Care Physician or consult with a rheumatologist to find a solution that best suits your needs. Prepare for your appointment by writing down your symptoms and what helps or makes them worse. Ask your doctor for an after-visit summary that reviews your discussion of symptom management strategies. Surgery is only recommended

Coming This Month:

Managing Osteoarthritis
..... Jan 11

How ConnectCare3 Can Help You
..... Jan 18

Low Impact Exercises
..... Jan 25

Quarterly Education:

Diabetes
..... March 30

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when other therapies have been ineffective or if one of the joints is severely damaged. Surgical examples include:

- **Arthroplasty** (total joint replacement) – The damaged parts are surgically removed and a prosthesis, or artificial joint, made of metal or plastic, is inserted. Arthroplasty may offer improvements in both appearance and function, allowing the patient to use the joint actively and painlessly.
- **Arthrodesis** – The joint can be realigned, stabilized, or surgically repaired to promote bone fusion. This may offer increased stability and reduce pain.
- **Osteotomy** – A surgeon adds or removes a small section of bone either above or below the knee joint. This can realign the leg so that the patient’s weight is no longer focused on the damaged part of the joint. Osteotomy can help relieve symptoms significantly, but knee replacement may be needed later.

RISK FACTORS

Inherited genetic factors play a role in many cases involving hand, hip, and knee osteoarthritis. Previous injuries and lifestyle can contribute to osteoarthritis. Obesity also puts greater strain on weight bearing joints and increases risk.

IMPROVE MOBILITY & FLEXIBILITY

Mobility is the range of uninhibited movement around a joint. Picture you bending your elbow. Your elbow can move freely, but at some points, it cannot move any further because it is limited by the bones of your arm, skin, and other body tissues. This can be improved with regular physical activity and stretching. Flexibility is a joint’s ability to move through the range of motion, stretching can improve this greatly. Stretch as many days of the week as you can and don’t forget to stretch each major muscle group! Calves, quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteals, low back, upper back, abdomen, chest, deltoid, and triceps.



GET PLENTY OF EXERCISE

If you don’t move it, you lose it. Exercise can help not only improve mobility and flexibility, but can also keep our hearts and muscles strong. It is typically recommended that individuals achieve 150 minutes of physical activity per week, that’s only a little more than 20 minutes each day! Biking, using an elliptical, or swimming may cause less stress on your joints than running, walking, or other weight-bearing exercise. Talk with your doctor to discuss any specific restrictions or limitations to exercise.

ACHIEVE A HEALTHY BODYWEIGHT

Achieving a healthy bodyweight by losing weight can help reduce the amount of pressure on your joints, particularly your knees. You can achieve a healthy bodyweight by drinking plenty of water, eating a variety of whole grains, lean proteins, low-fat dairy products, fruits and vegetables. Physical activity can also help you to achieve and maintain a healthy bodyweight. Check with your physician to discuss what a healthy bodyweight might be for you. For more assistance to reach your healthy bodyweight call ConnectCare3 to get matched with a health coach.

Sources:

<https://www.acefitness.org/>

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/>