

ARTHRITIS CARE AND TREATMENT

Arthritis is an inflammation of one or more of your joints, with symptoms that include joint pain and stiffness, chronic aches, and swelling. These symptoms typically worsen with age in the two most common types of arthritis, which are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis is usually caused by normal wear and tear, while rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder. Other types of arthritis can be caused by uric acid crystals, infections or even an underlying disease, such as psoriasis or lupus.

An estimated 50 million U.S. adults (about one out of five) report doctor-diagnosed arthritis. As the U.S. population ages, the number of adults with arthritis is expected to increase sharply. In addition, research indicates that some form of arthritis affects one of every 250 children.

Treatments vary depending on the type of arthritis. The main goals of arthritis treatments are to reduce the symptoms and improve the patient's quality of life.

Other frequently occurring forms of arthritis include rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, fibromyalgia, and gout. Some forms of arthritis, such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, can affect multiple organs and cause widespread symptoms. Although arthritis is more common among adults over 65, people of all ages (including children) can be affected. Nearly two-thirds of people with arthritis are younger than 65.



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT ARTHRITIS?

Arthritis is manageable through a few basic lifestyle changes.

- **Educate yourself about arthritis.** Learning all you can about your form of arthritis will help you manage your symptoms. And, in the case of osteoarthritis, you might be able to prevent or slow the progression of it.
- **Be physically active.** For patients with arthritis, physical activities such as walking, bicycling, and swimming have been shown to have significant benefits, including reduced pain and improved physical function, mental health, and quality of life.
- **Maintain a healthy weight and protect your joints.** Weight control and other injury prevention measures can lower a person's risk of developing osteoarthritis. Weight management also can reduce symptoms for overweight or obese people with knee osteoarthritis.

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