



## Article on Arthritis

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**Received:** December 23, 2022

**Published:** February 03, 2023

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When one or more joints swell and become tender it is known as Arthritis. With age the joints become stiff and painful, and these symptoms worsen. Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid arthritis are the most common types of arthritis.

Millions of people around the world are affected by this common condition. Pain, stiffness, and swelling in the joints are caused by this chronic condition. It is most common in adults after the age of 65, but it can affect people below 65 as well.

Wear and tear of the joints happens to be the most common type of arthritis and is known as Osteoarthritis. Rheumatoid arthritis, Psoriatic arthritis, and Gout are some of the other types of arthritis.

In Osteoarthritis the cartilage, which is the hard, slippery tissue that covers the ends of bones where joints are formed, breaks down. In Rheumatoid arthritis the immune system attacks the joints, beginning with its lining. In Psoriatic arthritis some people are affected with the skin condition psoriasis. In Gout there are sudden, severe attacks of pain, swelling, redness and tenderness in any of the joints, usually in the big toe.

A healthy immune system generates inflammation to clear infections and heal injuries and thus it is protective. When the immune system is overactive and attacks the healthy tissues, including joints in the spine, hands and feet, it is autoimmune inflammatory arthritis. When the inflammation becomes systemic, it damages the eyes, skin, heart and other organs in some people. As the immune system is not able to differentiate between self and not-self, it attacks the body it's supposed to protect. So most, but not all, types of inflammatory arthritis are looked at as autoimmune diseases

When there's too much uric acid in your blood then Uric acid crystals are formed and this can cause gout. Other types of arthritis

are caused by psoriasis or lupus which are infections or underlying diseases.

The usual symptoms of arthritis include joint pain, stiffness, swelling, and decreased range of motion but these can differ from person to person. In some cases, arthritis can also cause fatigue, fever, and weight loss. Arthritis can also cause permanent joint changes. Usually the damage can be seen only on X-rays but some may be visible, such as knobby finger joints. Sometimes the heart, eyes, lungs, kidneys and skin as well as the joints are affected by some types of arthritis.

The type and severity of the condition decides the treatment for the arthritis. To reduce pain and inflammation non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDs are frequently used. To improve joint mobility and reduce pain, Physical therapy and exercise is often advised. Surgery is needed to repair the damaged joints in some cases.

The type of arthritis decides the type of treatment needed. Reducing the symptoms and improving the quality of life are the main goals of arthritis treatments.

There are many ways to manage arthritis, although living with it is difficult. To reduce symptoms, eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and getting enough rest is required. Medications or treatments that may be beneficial would be advised by the doctor.

Arthritis is a chronic condition, but with proper treatment and lifestyle changes, it is possible to manage the symptoms and lead a full and active life.

Some of the risk factors for arthritis are

- Family history - Some types of arthritis are genetic, and you may be more prone to develop arthritis if your parents or siblings suffer from this disorder.

- Age - Usually the risk of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and gout increases with age.
- Your sex - Men have less chances of developing rheumatoid arthritis as compared to women, while men suffer more from gout as compared to women.
- Previous joint injury - While playing a sport, if people injure a joint, then they are more likely to suffer from arthritis in that joint later in life.
- Obesity - Knees, hips and spine joints suffer from stress if a person is overweight. Risk of developing arthritis is higher in people with obesity. Daily tasks become difficult if severe arthritis affects your hands or arms. Walking comfortably or sitting up straight becomes difficult if one suffers from Arthritis in the weight-bearing joints. Alignment and shape of the joints are slowly lost in some cases of Arthritis [1-5].

It is best to consult your doctor, in case you suffer from any of the above symptoms. Diagnosis of the condition and the recommendations of the best treatment plan for you can be given by him.

It is important to take care of yourself and stay active in any type of Arthritis. Symptoms can be managed, and a full and active life can be lived with the right treatment and lifestyle changes.

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