

What is Osteoarthritis?

Arthritis is inflammation of one or more of your joints. The most common type is osteoarthritis or osteoarthrosis. It is a degenerative process that causes cartilage to break down. Cartilage cushions the ends of bones. It is most common in hips, knees, hands and back.



WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?

You feel pain in your joints and some stiffness. The pain may get worse as you get older. You may have swelling, or less range of movement in your joints and rarely redness.

WHAT CAUSES ARTHRITIS?

Older people are more likely to get osteoarthritis. Damage to your joint because of trauma or overuse, family history, and obesity could be a factor in osteoarthritis.

HOW CAN I FEEL BETTER?

KEEP MOVING

Low impact exercise can help decrease pain and stiffness. Pool exercises, biking, swimming, strength training, and flexibility exercises could help. Talk to your health care professional about what kind of exercise is right for you. It will also depend on which of your joints are involved. Remember, lack of exercise can make your joints feel more stiff and painful!



EAT HEALTHY

Being overweight can put stress on your joints. It is important to maintain a healthy weight. The anti-inflammatory diet is a good choice. Eat more vegetables and fruits, and healthy fats including oily fish. Eat fewer unhealthy fats like those that come from animal products like meat and dairy. This could help to decrease the inflammation and pain from the arthritis.

For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit nciph.org/osteoarthritis



TRY ANY OF THESE BODY THERAPIES

These types of therapies could help you reduce your symptoms.

- ❑ **Acupuncture:** This Chinese Medicine treatment involves inserting thin needles into the skin. It can reduce pain and improve movement in patients with osteoarthritis.
- ❑ **Massage Therapy:** This may provide you with short-term pain relief and improve your physical function.
- ❑ **Physical Therapy:** A physical therapist will show you exercises to get stronger and more flexible.

CONSIDER HERBAL AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

You can consider taking some herbal and dietary supplements. Ginger, turmeric, green tea and fish oil can help fight inflammation. Many of these can affect your medications, though. Be sure to talk to your healthcare professional before taking any herbal or dietary supplements.



EXPLORE THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

- ❑ **Yoga:** This mind-body exercise can help you improve your strength and flexibility. It can also help you feel better emotionally too! There are many types of yoga you can try. Find a teacher who can help you with your specific needs.
- ❑ **Tai chi:** This is a Chinese meditative practice. It involves gentle, flowing movements. It can help improve balance and stability. It may also reduce anxiety.
- ❑ **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):**

