

OSTEOARTHRITIS

WHAT IS OSTEOARTHRITIS?

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a disease of the joints. A joint is where two bones come together. Normally joints are protected by a smooth, firm, cushioning material called cartilage. The role of cartilage is to absorb shock and allow bones to glide smoothly over one another. In joints with OA, the cartilage breaks down causing pain and stiffness in the joint.

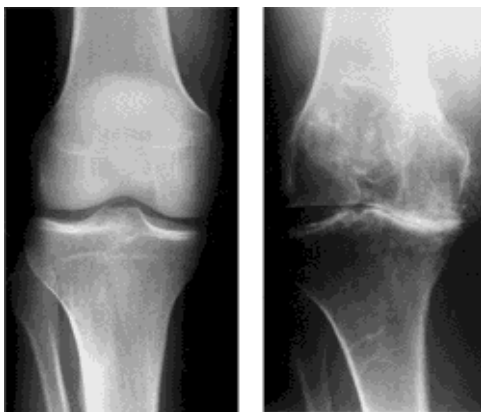
OA is one of the most common forms of arthritis. The joints most commonly affected are the knees, hips, hands and spine.



WHAT CAUSES IT?

The cause is not fully understood. There are certain factors that can put you more at risk of developing OA including:

- Over 45 years of age
- Being overweight
- Previous injury or overuse of a particular joint
- Jobs involving kneeling, lifting heavy loads, climbing and squatting
- Family history of OA
- Low bone density
- Reduced muscular strength
- Joint laxity and misalignment



DIAGNOSIS

Your health professional will diagnose OA from symptoms and a physical examination. However, an X-Ray is needed to show the extent of the changes in the joint.

Symptoms can include:

- Joint stiffness in the morning or after rest
- Reduced range of movement
- Pain with movement or at the extremes of movement
- Wasting of the surrounding muscles
- Swelling around the joint

WHAT IS MY PROGNOSIS?

Currently there is no cure for OA, but a balance of healthy lifestyle and medications when necessary can adequately control your symptoms.

For most people OA will be mild and not cause major issues. However, OA of the hip and knee can sometimes cause severe disability and require surgery to replace the joints. This is only proposed when conservative treatment, such as specific weight loss and exercise program, has been undertaken and not provided significant relief.



HOW DO I MANAGE MY PAIN?

It is important to keep the joint moving to maintain movement and function, improve muscle strength and maintain the health of the cartilage.

Low impact exercises such as walking, cycling, swimming, Pilates and yoga are fantastic. Other modes of treatment are aimed at improving quality of life. This involves:

- Physiotherapy: soft tissue release, joint mobilisation, acupuncture and other treatment modalities
- Pilates: Weight bearing and strengthening exercises have been shown to be beneficial for OA
 - Specific exercise program focused on strengthening and stretching
- Weight loss program
- Pain relief or anti-inflammatory medications e.g. Panadol Osteo or Nurofen
- Supplements that may help include: Glucosamine, Vitamin D, Fish Oil

TOP TIPS IF YOU SUFFER FROM OSTEOARTHRITIS

- Stay active and move!
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Modify your daily activities to minimize pain
- Speak to your health professionals about how to manage your pain ie. Physio, GP, psychologist



Check out the current guidelines for the management and treatment of hip and knee OA.
(Insert link/PDF here)

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/cp117-hip-knee-osteoarthritis.pdf

For further information on OA or if you needs to make an appointment give us a call on 99222212

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