



Osteoarthritis

Senior' Health and Wellness Institute
COSCO

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INTRODUCTION

- Osteoarthritis (OA) is a degenerative joint disease that is the result of wear and tear of cartilage in the joints.
- It is the most common type of arthritis.
- Affecting one in ten Canadians, it is a leading cause of long-term disability.
- It affects men and women almost equally.

GETTING TO OA

- Cartilage protects and cushions your bone when you move.
- Over years of use cartilage around a joint breakdown and wears away. Now bone rubs on bone when you move causing pain and swelling.
- Ligaments around the joint weaken and stiffen.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- An achy feeling
- Less flexibility
- Joint pain, stiffness, swelling
- Cracking, creaking, crunching
- Stiffness for more than ½ hour after you get out of bed
- Simplest movements can cause pain

CAUSES

- Aging
- Heredity
- Repetitive activities
- History of other types of arthritis
- Old injuries: joints, fractures, surgeries

MORE RISK FACTORS

- Risk factors commonly include:
 - High blood pressure
 - High cholesterol levels
 - High sugar levels
 - Being overweight
- All of the above play a significant role in raising the risk of cardio-vascular disease.
- Inflammation is a key factor in the development and progression of heart disease.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- There is no cure, BUT taking an active role in managing this chronic disease will help:
 - Improve the quality of life
 - Slow the progress of the disease
 - Slow the development of complications

- Reduce pain
- Exercise (check with your doctor before beginning any new exercise program):
 - Keeps cartilage nourished
 - Strengthens muscles
 - Improves joint flexibility
 - Reduces pain
 - Helps improve function
 - Enhances your well-being
 - Improves quality of life

FIVE TYPES OF EXERCISE

- Stretching
- Range of motion
- Strengthening
- Low impact aerobics
- Balance

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES & TIPS

- Losing a few pounds will not reverse OA -or create new cartilage- but a modest weight loss can reduce pain, improve mobility and prevent more joint damage.
- Some medications for arthritis interfere with the absorption of important nutrients.
- Contact a dietician to learn what foods to eat and what to avoid.
- Some foods are linked to more symptoms.

LIVING WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS

- Eat well-balanced meals that focus on fresh foods vs. processed.
- Avoid sugary and alcoholic beverages.

- Excess weight means it is 4-5 times more likely knee problems will appear as you age.
- Participate in regular physical activity.
- Consider alternate therapies to support your pain management such as:
 - acupuncture
 - chiropractic
 - meditation
 - tai chi
 - yoga
- Sleep well:
 - Go to bed and get up at regular times.
 - Consider a new and softer mattress.
 - Take a warm bath before bed.
 - Have a drink of warm milk before bed.
 - Take only short naps during the day, a maximum of 20 minutes.

PROTECTING YOUR JOINTS

- Use walking aids such as a cane, walking sticks or a walker.
- Hold onto railings when going up and down stairs.
- Use assistive devices for getting dressed.
- Support your neck when sleeping.
- Place a pillow between your knees when sleeping on your side.
- Carry items close to your body.
- Use your knees to get up, not your back.
- Use chairs with back support and armrests to help you get up.

PAIN MANAGEMENT & MEDICATION

- Apply moist heat to sore joints and stiff muscles. This increases blood flow and relaxes muscles.
- Wrap an ice pack in a towel and apply for 15 minutes to reduce pain and swelling.
- Take pain medication **before** activities that hurt your joints.
- Any over the counter drug should be used with caution if you are over the age of 65.

SETTING GOALS

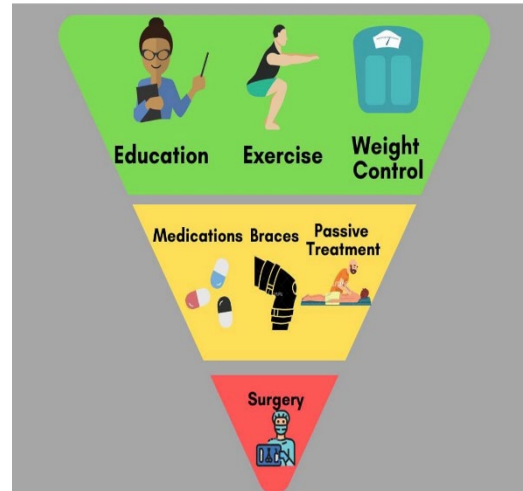
- Set some **SMART** goals:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Action-based
 - Realistic
 - Timely
- Record your goals.
- Have a back-up plan.
- Post goals somewhere visible.
- Share your progress with others.
- Review/modify goals regularly.
- Celebrate and reward yourself for your success!

RESOURCES

Arthritis Answers Line 604-714-5550 or 1-800-321-1433

Arthritis Society www.arthritis.ca/bc
Arthritis Foundation (resources)
www.arthritis.org

WHAT WORKS FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS



OASIS (Osteoarthritis Service and Integration System) provides information about self-management, prevention and alternatives to surgery, in addition to resources and support services in languages other than English.

<https://www.vch.ca/en/service/oasis#short-description--6221>

Osteoarthritis and Exercise This short, interactive lesson from McMaster Optimal Aging teaches you more about Osteoarthritis

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/e-learning/mobility>

Therapeutic Exercises for Osteoarthritis of the Knee and Hip McMaster University's Optimal Aging portal offers exercises specific to knee and hip.

https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/docs/default-source/oa-and-exercise/knee_exercises_for_oa_ua.pdf?sfvrsn=850d03d6_2