

MONTH OF MAY IS ARTHRITIS MONTH

What is Arthritis?

Arthritis is an inflammation of the joints. It can affect one joint or multiple joints. There are more than 100 different types of arthritis, with different causes and treatment methods. Two of the most common types are osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

The symptoms of arthritis usually develop over time, but they may also appear suddenly. Arthritis is most seen in adults over the age of 65, but it can also develop in children, teens, and younger adults. Arthritis is more common in women than men and in people who are overweight.

What are the symptoms of arthritis?

Joint pain, stiffness, and swelling are the most common symptoms of arthritis. Your range of motion may also decrease, and you may experience redness of the skin around the joint. Many people with arthritis notice their symptoms are worse in the morning.

In the case of RA, you may feel tired or experience a loss of appetite due to the inflammation the immune system's activity causes. You may also become anemic — meaning your red blood cell count decreases — or have a slight fever. Severe RA can cause joint deformity if left untreated.

What Causes arthritis?

Cartilage is a firm but flexible connective tissue in your joints. It protects the joints by absorbing the pressure and shock created when you move and put stress on them. A reduction in the normal amount of this cartilage tissue cause some forms of arthritis.

Normal wear and tear cause OA, one of the most common forms of arthritis. An infection or injury to the joints can exacerbate this natural breakdown of cartilage tissue. Your risk of developing OA may be higher if you have a family history of the disease. Another common form of arthritis, RA, is an autoimmune disorder. It occurs when your body's immune system attacks the tissues of the body.

These attacks affect the synovium, a soft tissue in your joints that produces a fluid that nourishes the cartilage and lubricates the joints. RA is a disease of the synovium that will invade and destroy a joint. It can eventually lead to the destruction of both bone and cartilage inside the joint.

The exact cause of the immune system's attacks is unknown. But scientists have discovered genetic markers that increase your risk of developing RA fivefold

How is arthritis diagnosed?

Seeing your primary care physician is a good first step if you're unsure who to see for an arthritis diagnosis. They will perform a physical exam to check for fluid around the joints, warm or red joints, and limited range of motion in the joints. Your doctor can refer you to a specialist if needed.

If you're experiencing severe symptoms, you may choose to schedule an appointment with a rheumatologist first. This may lead to a faster diagnosis and treatment

Treatment?

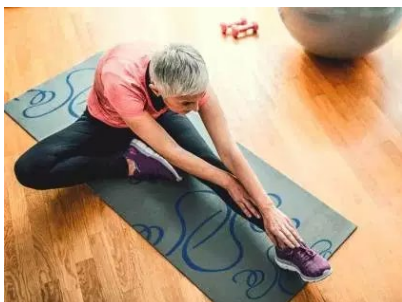
The main goal of treatment is to reduce the amount of pain you're experiencing and prevent additional damage to the joints. You'll learn what works best for you in terms of controlling pain. Some people find heating pads and ice packs to be soothing. Others use mobility assistance devices, like canes or walkers, to help take pressure off sore joints.

Improving your joint function is also important. Your doctor may prescribe you a combination of treatment methods to achieve the best results.

- Surgery
- Physical therapy
- Medication
- Change in diet
- Regular exercise, ----- swimming is often a good form of exercise for people with arthritis because it does not put pressure on your joints the way running, and walking do. So, stay active but you should also be sure to rest when you need to and avoid overexerting yourself.

Online help?

- <https://www.healthline.com/health/osteoarthritis/arthritis-hand-exercises>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/osteoarthritis/easy-exercises-knee>



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