

Osteoarthritis & Inflammatory Arthritis

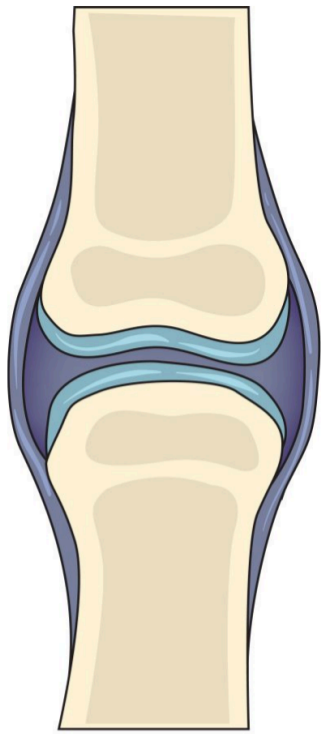
Arthritis is a term used to describe a group of over 100 diseases characterized by acute or chronic inflammation of the joints, often accompanied by pain and structural damage.

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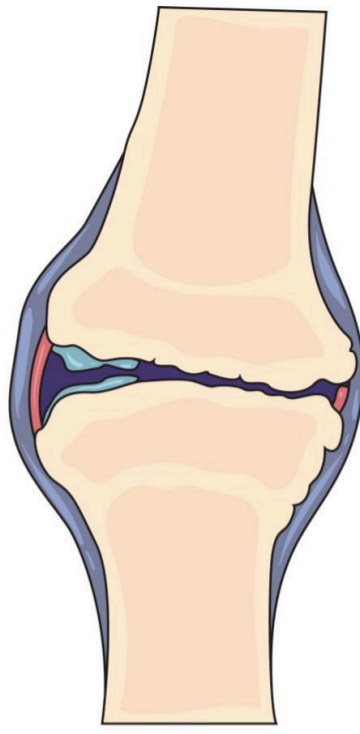
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What is Arthritis?

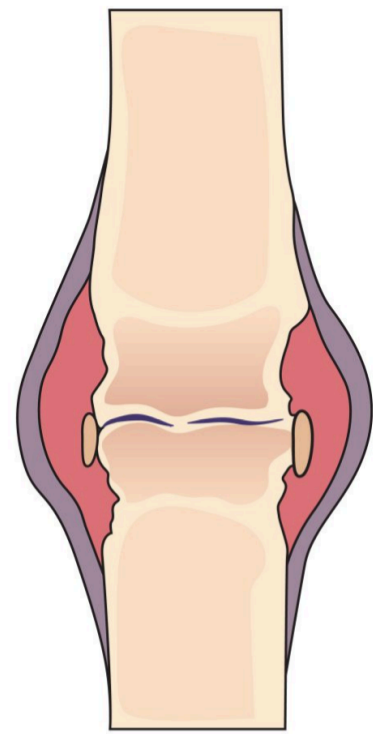
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Healthy joint



Osteoarthritis



Rheumatoid arthritis

Comparison of Osteoarthritis & Inflammatory (Rheumatoid) arthritis. The light blue section is the cartilage. The red is the inflamed synovial fluid and membrane. source: <https://www.addmoretolives.com/arthritis-showdown-unraveling-the-differences-between-osteoarthritis-and-rheumatoid-arthritis>

Types of Arthritis

The two main types of arthritis are Osteoarthritis and Inflammatory Arthritis.

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis happens when the cartilage that lines your joints wears down and your bones rub against each other.

Osteoarthritis can affect any joint, but it most commonly develops in the hands, knees, hips, neck, or lower back.

Experts estimate that over 80% of adults over 55 have Osteoarthritis, even if some never experience symptoms. Anyone can develop Osteoarthritis, but adults

over 55 and postmenopausal individuals are at higher risk.

The most common symptoms include joint pain, deformity, stiffness, swelling, and a decreased range of motion.

Doctors are unsure about the cause of Osteoarthritis. It usually develops slowly as you age due to the wear and tear on your joints, leading to cartilage breakdown.

A healthcare provider will diagnose Osteoarthritis through a physical examination and imaging tests. X-rays, MRI, CT scans, or blood tests may be necessary to eliminate other conditions or issues with similar symptoms.

There's no cure for arthritis, and you can't regrow the cartilage in your affected joints.

The most common treatments for Osteoarthritis include:

1. Over-the-counter pain relievers.
2. Topical pain relievers (creams, ointments, or patches).
3. Low-impact exercising your joints (ie, swimming).
4. Supportive devices such as shoe inserts or braces.
5. Using a cane or walker.
6. Applying heat or cold to your affected joint
7. Complementary therapies such as acupuncture, massage, meditation, or tai chi.

Your healthcare provider may recommend **surgery** if you are experiencing severe symptoms and other treatments have not worked.

The two most common types of arthritis surgery are joint fusion and joint replacement.

Healthy lifestyle modifications such as increasing physical activity and exercise and reducing excess body weight can have the most significant impact on osteoarthritis.

Developing relaxation and coping skills can help you maintain balance in your life, providing a greater sense of control over your arthritis.

Inflammatory Arthritis

Inflammatory arthritis differs from Osteoarthritis in that joint damage results from inflammation rather than the wearing away of cartilage.

Most forms of inflammatory arthritis are also autoimmune diseases, where the immune system mistakenly attacks the body's healthy tissues.

Inflammation from these conditions can lead to pain, stiffness, limited mobility, fatigue, and damage to joints and other tissues.

As a result of this damage, some joints may gradually change shape, leading to deformities.

Once a joint is injured, the damage is irreversible. It's crucial to seek early treatment to reduce inflammation and prevent further damage.

Inflammatory arthritis includes every form of arthritis except Osteoarthritis – including rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, lupus, gout, and psoriatic arthritis.

Your Healthcare professional will make a diagnosis based on your medical history, a physical exam, and diagnostic tests that may include blood tests and X-rays.

Inflammatory arthritis affects people of all ages and genders. Genetics, age, and lifestyle all play a role in increasing the risk of developing inflammatory arthritis.

Medications to treat inflammatory arthritis can be quite complex, so you are encouraged to ask for in-depth explanations from your healthcare team.

The Arthritis Society Canada has a [comprehensive expert guide](#) that delivers detailed information on medications to treat inflammatory arthritis. (see link

below)

Many people find that adjusting their diet, doing specific exercises, improving sleep habits, and supporting mental wellness can help manage inflammation or joint pain symptoms on a day-to-day basis.

Sources:

Osteoarthritis

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/5599-osteoarthritis>

What is Arthritis?

<https://arthritis.ca/about-arthritis/what-is-arthritis>

Inflammatory arthritis

[https://arthritis.ca/about-arthritis/arthritis-types-\(a-z\)/types/inflammatory-arthritis](https://arthritis.ca/about-arthritis/arthritis-types-(a-z)/types/inflammatory-arthritis)

Arthritis Society Canada medications reference guide

<https://arthritis.ca/treatment/medication/medication-reference-guide>

Inflammatory Arthritis Self-Management

<https://arthritis.ca/treatment/self-management/inflammatory-arthritis-self-management>

Arthritis Showdown: Unraveling the Differences Between Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis

<https://www.addmoretolives.com/arthritis-showdown-unraveling-the-differences-between-osteoarthritis-and-rheumatoid-arthritis/>

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