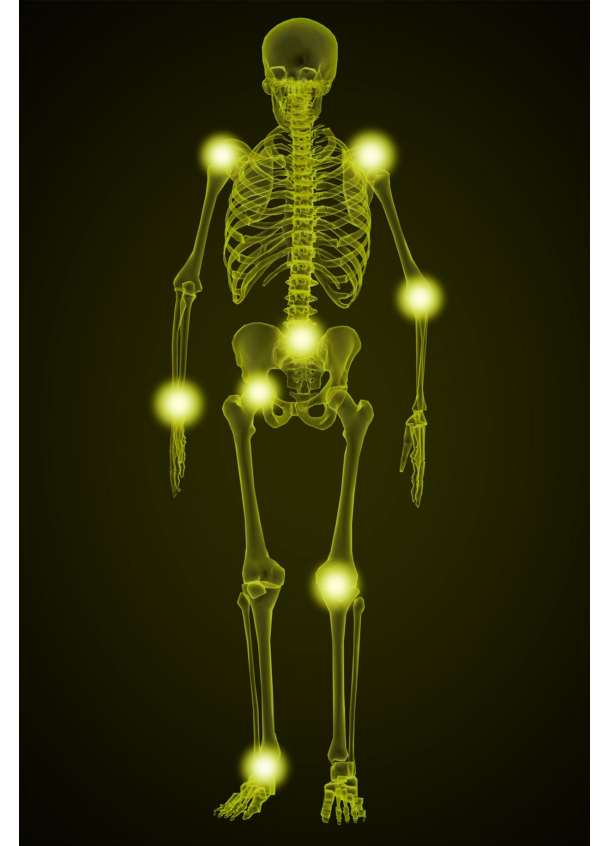




Arthritis

What Is Arthritis?

- Arthritis is a general term that refers to joint pain or joint disease. There are more than 100 different types of arthritis and related health conditions.
- Arthritis often worsens with age.
- There are many possible causes of arthritis, including, but not limited to, autoimmune disorders, infection, and uric acid build-up.



Symptoms of Arthritis

- Common symptoms of arthritis include joint pain and swelling, stiffness, and decreased range of motion.
- Symptoms can range from mild to severe and may come and go.
- Severe arthritis can lead to chronic pain, decreased ability to perform daily activities, and may limit the ability to walk or climb stairs.
- Arthritis can cause permanent joint damage that is sometimes manifested as knobby finger joints.
- Oftentimes, the damage from arthritis can only be seen on x-ray imaging.



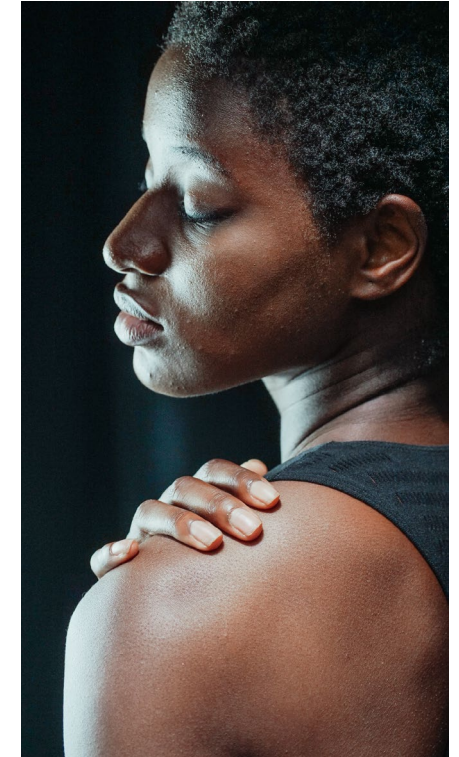
Common Types of Arthritis: Osteoarthritis (OA)

- Osteoarthritis (OA) affects more than 32.5 million adults and is considered the most common type of arthritis in the United States according to the CDC.
- OA is often thought of as “wear and tear” associated with aging.
- OA typically affects hands, knees, hips, lower back, and neck.
- Symptoms usually start after age 50 but can impact younger people, especially those who have had a previous injury to the joint.



Common Types of Arthritis: Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)

- Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder, meaning the immune system wrongly attacks joints resulting in pain and inflammation.
- Symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis are much the same as seen with osteoarthritis and may include tender, warm and swollen joints, joint stiffness, and fatigue. With RA, symptoms usually occur in the same joints on both sides of the body.
- RA can also cause symptoms that do not involve the joints. Some areas that may be affected include skin, eyes, lungs, heart, kidneys, salivary glands, nerve tissue, bone marrow, and blood vessels.
- People diagnosed with RA often experience flares in which symptoms worsen in severity.
- Early diagnosis and treatment can help to slow the progression of joint damage.



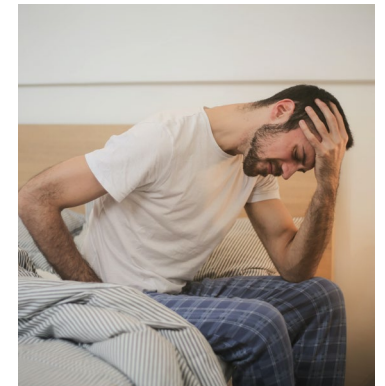
Common Types of Arthritis: Gout

- Gout is characterized by sudden, severe attacks of pain, swelling, redness, and tenderness in one or more joints, most often in the big toe.
- The symptoms often come and go.
- Gout is the result of an accumulation of urate crystals in the joint, which causes inflammation and intense pain.
- Urate crystals form when you have high levels of uric acid in your blood, which can be caused by a diet high in red meat, shellfish, fructose, and alcohol (especially beer).
- Certain medical conditions and medications may also increase the risk of developing gout.



Common Types of Arthritis: Fibromyalgia

- Fibromyalgia involves widespread musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, sleep, memory, and mood issues.
- It is believed that the brain and spinal cord of those affected by fibromyalgia process pain signals differently, which amplifies the body's response.
- Symptoms often follow an event such as physical trauma, surgery, infection, or significant psychological stress.
- Fibromyalgia is more likely to affect women than men.
- Those suffering from fibromyalgia often also experience tension headaches, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, and depression.
- Some medications may help ease the symptoms of fibromyalgia. Regular exercise, relaxation, and stress reduction techniques may also prove helpful.



Common Types of Arthritis: Lupus

- Lupus is an autoimmune disease that can cause inflammation in the joints, skin, kidneys, blood cells, brain, heart, and lungs.
- A facial rash resembling the wings of a butterfly occurs in many but not all cases of lupus.
- Symptoms of lupus can vary depending on which body systems are affected.
- Common symptoms include fatigue, fever, joint pain, stiffness and swelling, skin lesions that appear or worsen with sun exposure, butterfly-shaped rash on the face, shortness of breath, chest pain, dry eyes, headaches, confusion, and memory loss.



Common Types of Arthritis: Psoriatic Arthritis (PsA)

- Psoriatic arthritis is an autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system errantly attacks healthy joints and skin.
- Like other forms of arthritis, this results in joint pain, stiffness and swelling (especially in fingers and toes), skin rashes, nail changes, decreased range of motion, and eye problems.
- Most people develop psoriasis years before being diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis, but for some, the joint problems begin before skin patches appear.



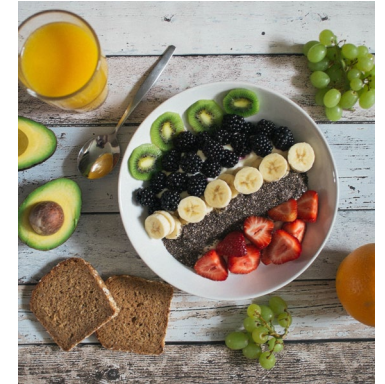
How Is Arthritis Diagnosed?

- Your healthcare provider will obtain a detailed health history including symptoms, general health, and family history.
- A thorough physical exam may reveal joint tenderness and inflammation that may be indicative of arthritis.
- Additional testing may be ordered, including X-rays and sometimes MRI.
- Your healthcare provider may also order blood tests, skin or muscle biopsies, and sometimes nerve tests to further aid in diagnosing different types of arthritis.



How Is Arthritis Treated?

- Treatment can vary depending on the type and severity of your arthritis. A healthy diet and routine exercise can play an important role in controlling the severity of your arthritis symptoms. Learning to manage stress and to get adequate sleep are also important factors in arthritis treatment.
- Your healthcare provider may suggest over-the-counter medications to treat pain and inflammation. For more severe cases, prescription medications may be needed. Steroid medications can help to reduce inflammation and pain and slow joint damage. Other medications known as DMARDs (disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs) may be used to help slow the progression of rheumatoid arthritis. A newer class of DMARDs known as biologics, or biologic response modifiers, may be used in combination with conventional DMARDs.
- Physical and/or occupational therapy may be recommended to teach you exercises to help maintain flexibility and to teach new methods of performing daily tasks that will be less stressful to your joints.



Sources

- Arthritis Foundation
 - <https://www.arthritis.org/>
 - <https://atwork.giveworx.com/caterpillar-arthritis>
- Mayo Clinic
 - <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/arthritis/symptoms-causes/syc-20350772>

Total health



Emotional



Financial



Physical



Purpose



Social