

What You Should Know About Arthritis

What you think you know about arthritis is probably not the whole story...

- Arthritis is not a single disease. It means “joint inflammation.” There are more than 100 types of arthritis and related conditions.
- People can have arthritis at any age, even children.
- Individuals experience arthritis in different ways, based in part on what type of arthritis they have, what joints are affected, what other conditions they have as a result of arthritis and how well controlled their arthritis is by medications and lifestyle.
- Osteoarthritis, or “wear and tear” arthritis, often affects older employees, but it also can cause pain and limit functions in younger adults.
- Autoimmune forms of arthritis are systemic diseases in which the body attacks its own tissues. It typically creates pain and fatigue and may be accompanied by other health issues, ranging from heart disease and vision impairments to depression.
- Arthritis is often invisible, which causes many people to question whether a person with arthritis is truly experiencing pain, stiffness, fatigue or other symptoms.
- Arthritis is unpredictable; a person may feel fine and energetic one day and wake up in pain and be so fatigued that they can’t function the next.
- There are no cures for arthritis.
- There are, however, treatments that, for some people, can control the disease very effectively, so you might not even know a person has arthritis.
- Some medications used to treat arthritis require the patient to receive regular infusions, given in a doctor’s office, as well as regular medical visits.
- These medications, as well as the disease itself in some cases, can cause the person to be more vulnerable to infections, such as flu, colds or COVID-19.
- There are no truly effective treatments for the “wear and tear” form of arthritis except for joint replacement. Many patients resort to this major surgery when they can no longer tolerate the pain and loss of ability to do the things they love.
- Like people with other conditions or disabilities, people with arthritis often face discrimination, especially because their disease is invisible and unpredictable.



Source: Arthritis Foundation ([Arthritis@Work](#))