

Arthritis: Inflammation of the joints

ARTHRITIS = Inflammation of the joints.

SYMPTOMS: cracking joints, stiffness (especially early in the morning), pain, deformation of the joint; usually affecting first the knees, hips, fingers and vertebrae.

TYPES: Over 100 different forms have currently been identified. Here are the most common:

1. **Rheumatoid arthritis**, an auto-immune disease, is a more destructive form of arthritis because the inflammation can cause crippling and deformation of joints at an early age. Rheumatoid arthritis is characterized by early morning joint stiffness, pain and inflammation in symmetrically located joints, with the fingers and toes usually the first to be affected; though pain may wander from joint to joint throughout the body. In addition to the joint symptoms; flare ups can cause pronounced fatigue, low grade fevers, poor appetite and weight loss. There are many types of rheumatoid arthritis categorized from age of onset, to severity; as well as related issues such as psoriasis or colitis. It is complex and the true causes are unknown; therefore, also work with the biological terrain and immune system.
2. **Osteoarthritis**, also known as degenerative arthritis, results from the breakdown of joint cartilage and underlying bone.
3. **Gout** is caused by elevated levels of uric acid in the blood which crystallizes and deposits in joints, tendons, and surrounding tissues.
4. **Viral arthritis** is swelling & irritation (inflammation) of the joints from a viral infection.

CAUSES:

1. A long process of joint deterioration due to **mineral deficiencies** or imbalances. Calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper, manganese, silicon, boron, strontium and numerous other trace minerals are involved in bone syntheses, breakdown and repair. Given that the average North American diet has been shown to be deficient in these and other vital nutrients, it is easy to see why mineral deficiencies are part of the reason for the increasing incidence of osteoarthritis.
2. **Hydrochloric acid deficiency** may be present in up to 40% of patients. Low levels of stomach acidity prevent complete protein digestion. The undigested polypeptides are absorbed eliciting allergic reactions leading to joint inflammation, as well as inflammation in other tissues.
3. **Fluoride** levels as low as 1 part per million in the drinking water give rise to an increase in the urine concentration of certain biological chemicals that signal the breakdown & irregular formation of collagen in the body. Collagen is crucial as it makes up more than 30% of the body's protein and serves as the major structural component of skin, ligaments, tendons, muscles, cartilages bones, and teeth. Fluoride disruption of the body's collagen results in premature wrinkling of the skin, weakening of ligaments, arthritis and stiffness of the joints.
4. Mechanical **Wear & Tear** of the cartilage lining the joints leaves abrasive tissue in place of the once smooth cartilage. The aging process also depletes glucosamine from the cartilage, causing it to thin, leading to arthritis. Injury or repetitive motion can start the arthritis process. Also, obesity increases stress on weight-bearing joints.
5. **Auto-immune**, as in rheumatoid arthritis, the body attacks its own tissues as a result of a faulty immune system reaction. Incidence increases with a genetic tendency. Food allergies and a sensitivity to environmental toxins are problems in some cases; therefore, it is best to avoid all toxins, including alcohol, cigarettes and coffee.

NUTRITION: As with all diseases, a nutritional approach to treatment does not produce immediate results, but it is the main road to a biological rebuilding of the body which goes beyond masking symptoms.

1. Excess weight must be reduced first.

2. Limit protein consumption to plant sources, especially if gout is a concern. An overload of protein, especially animal protein, causes painful uric acid deposits in the joints. Incomplete digested proteins can act as allergens which trigger arthritic pain. Digestive enzymes, found in raw food, break down proteins into amino acids. Papaya, pineapple, apple cider vinegar all would improve digestion of proteins. Nature's Sunshine's **PDA** is an excellent combination designed as a Protein Digestive Aid.
3. Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits for they produce an alkaline environment in the body. The less acidic, the less inflammation.
4. The essential omega-3 fatty acids contain oils which lubricate the joints and help generate and deposit bone material. Also, they prevent the absorption of toxins and food allergens in the body. Fish oil, such as **Super Omega** or **Evening Primrose** oil are helpful.
5. Antioxidants, vitamins and minerals should be added to the regime as they protect the joints from free-radical damage. Vitamin C & selenium are often found to be especially low in individuals with rheumatoid arthritis, but have been shown to be helpful with all types of joint inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTS THAT MAY HELP:

- **SINGLE HERBS:**
 1. **Devil's claw** is for both rheumatoid and osteoarthritis. Proven effective in reducing the inflammation of connective tissues as it dispels uric acid and, also, decreases stiffness.
 2. **Dandelion** also dispels uric acid— 3capsules or 1 cup tea twice daily for 4-6 weeks to reduce the frequency and intensity of pain and to strengthen the connective tissue. (Especially for gout. Consider alfalfa for osteoarthritis.)
 3. **Yucca** lubricates joints. It was used by Native Americans because they knew that it allowed the joints to move freely. This freedom of movement was due to the saponin content of the herb. Saponins are properties of the herb that act as a lubricant in the joints, much like putting oil on a squeaky hinge. They also act in a similar manner to cortisone as an anti-inflammatory.
- **COMBINATIONS:**
 1. **CurcuminBP** – a strong antioxidant proven to reduce inflammation.
 2. **Joint Support**– a traditional combination with bromelain, hydrangea, yucca, and much more for arthritis that reduces acid waste, thins blood, reduces inflammation and promotes structural healing.
 3. **Joint Health** - an Ayurvedic formula with Boswellia which has anti-inflammatory effects.
 4. **KB-C** - helps reduce acid in the body and aids the healing of bones, joints and connective tissue. (kidney/back/joint)
 5. **Skeletal Strength**—a formula with nutrients to build healthy bones. Helps with bone density and growth spurts.
 6. The favorite combination is **Everflex w/HA** which has **MSM**, a sulfur compound. Sulfur, the eighth most abundant element in the human body, has a long history as a healing agent. For centuries mankind has soaked in sulfur-rich mineral hot springs to help heal a variety of ailments. MSM supplies biologically active sulfur. Some of MSM's essential functions include maintaining structure of the proteins in the body; helping the formation of keratin, which is essential for hair and nail growth; aiding in the production of immunoglobulin, which maintains the immune system; and catalyzing the chemical reactions that change food into energy. Dr. Ronald Lawrence, assistant clinical professor at UCLA School of Medicine conducted a double blind study with degenerative arthritis. The preliminary study indicates that MSM offers a safe, non-toxic way to help ease the pain of arthritis with more than 80% of the patients studied getting improvement from pain.
-Glucosamine is an amino sugar normally found in the human body and is the base material that makes up mucous membranes, ligaments, tendons, and synovial fluid in the joints. It addresses the underlying cause and supports the body's natural ability to heal itself.

-Chondroitin is a long chain of repeating sugars found naturally in the joints and connective tissues. It helps to produce new cartilage and protects existing cartilage. It interferes with enzymes that destroy cartilage molecules and enzymes which prevent nutrients from reaching the cartilage.

7. **Collatrim** contains collagen used to build cartilage, ligaments, and tendons. Collagen helps to prevent hardening of the tissue. A few grams of **Collatrim** a day will help restore mobility to the joints. It also increases lean muscle, making it helpful for weight loss.

TOPICALS

1. **Everflex Cream**
2. **Essential Oils: Clove, Eucalyptus, Ginger, Lavender, Sweet Marjoram and Rosemary** can be used in baths and for massage and compresses on the affected joints for analgesic and anti-inflammatory benefits.
3. **Recover Essential Oil** is a nice combination formula to apply topically for pain and inflammation.

EXERCISE

Smooth and healthy joints are strengthened by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, as well as going for a daily walk. So, don't use "wear and tear" as an excuse not to exercise. No blood vessels go directly to the cartilage and bone of a joint. Rather the joints must receive the oxygen and nutrients needed for healthy growth and healing from the nearest blood vessel. Exercise moves the nutrients from the nearest blood vessels into the joint fluids and squeezes waste products from the joints to the vessel. In this way, exercise prevents cartilage and joint deterioration.

Weight bearing exercise also increases bone mass. Women between the ages of 40-54 who were physically active had significantly stronger and denser bones in their spines and arms than a group of women the same age who did not exercise.

SUMMARY

By making daily exercise, healthy whole foods and supplements a daily part of our lifestyle we can have the strong bones and flexible joints we were designed to have.

This information is not designed to provide advice on the treatment of individual cases of disease. It is an educational program providing information about alternatives. Any disease is a serious condition and we highly recommend that you consult a competent health practitioner before beginning a course of treatment.