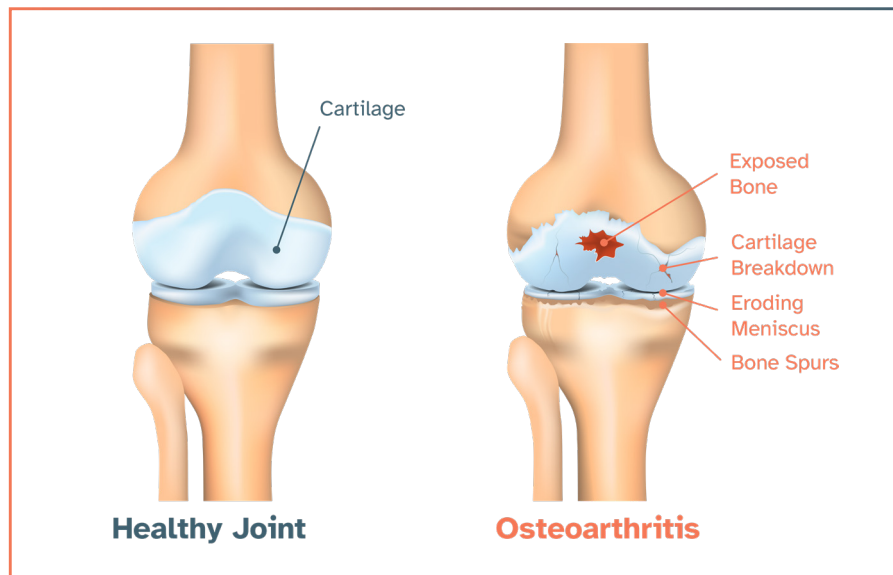


OVERVIEW

Osteoarthritis affects more than 240 million people around the world, making it the most common joint disease. Osteoarthritis can affect any joint in the body but more commonly occurs in the knees, hips, hands, lower back and neck. In individuals with knee osteoarthritis, the cartilage wears down and becomes rough, and the protective joint space decreases. These changes can lead to the bones of the knee joint rubbing against each other, and also to the development of bone spurs. These changes within the joint can cause inflammation, pain, and decreased joint function.



CAUSES OF OSTEOARTHRITIS

Osteoarthritis can be caused by genetic factors, natural aging processes, overuse injuries, and other factors that can affect the wear and tear on joint cartilage.

SYMPTOMS OF OSTEOARTHRITIS

- Pain around the knee joint – pain can be dull or sharp, range in severity from mild to debilitating, may be constant or come and go. Pain may come on suddenly or develop over time. Pain typically flares up with strenuous activity. Pain may worsen over time, becoming more frequent in nature and may occur during rest/sleep.
- Decreased joint range of motion
- Morning joint stiffness or stiffness after prolonged sitting that typically loosens up within 30 minutes
- Decreased muscle strength
- Grinding or popping from the joint
- Swelling of the joint
- Locking or a giving way sensation
- Difficulty climbing stairs, walking, and performing normal every day tasks
- Increased joint pain with weather changes

TREATMENT FOR KNEE OSTEOARTHRITIS

By understanding osteoarthritis is degenerative and progressive in nature, treatment is focused on controlling symptoms, improving joint function, and maintaining quality of life. The typical treatment plan for knee osteoarthritis includes exercise, weight management, and education in addition to other at home therapies such as heat and cold application. Topical or oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) may also be used. Corticosteroid injections into the joint as well as duloxetine may also provide short-term relief. In some cases, surgical intervention may be necessary to provide symptom relief.

Leading a sedentary life is hazardous to the health of the knee joint as the absence of stimulation promotes quicker degeneration of the knee cartilage. Light to moderate low impact physical activity is encouraged for individuals with knee osteoarthritis to help maintain knee joint function. Further, physical activity has numerous other benefits including a decreased risk of diabetes, heart disease, falls, and disability, and also helps to improve mental health.

EXERCISE 1: Sidelying Hip Abduction with Resistance



Instructions:

Begin by lying on your side with a resistance loop secured around your thighs just above your knees.

Extend your leg slightly backward until your toes are at the level of your bottom heel.

Raise your leg toward the ceiling, keeping your knee and foot straight.

Make sure not to roll forward or backward during the exercise.

EXERCISE 2: Single Leg Balance



Instructions:

Begin in a standing upright position holding onto a chair for support.

Lift one leg off the ground and hold it at a 90 degree angle in front of your body. Maintain your balance in this position.

Try to balance without leaning on the chair for help.

Important:

The therapeutic exercises described on this page are for reference purposes only and may or may not apply directly to your condition. Only perform the exercises assigned by your physician. By using this information, you understand the potential risks connected with activity in any exercise, physical fitness or training program.