

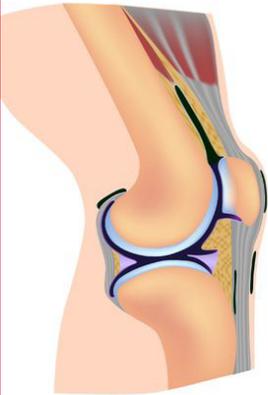
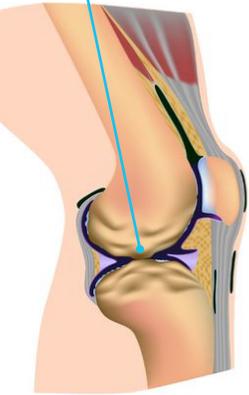
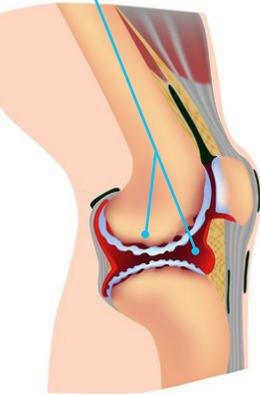
Arthritis

Arthritis is a condition affecting the joints, causing pain, stiffness and swelling. Arthritis is most commonly associated with knees and hands, but the truth is arthritis can affect nearly every joint in your body, and even your eyes. The most common types of arthritis in older adults include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and gout.

Almost 20% of American adults have arthritis, but young people can get it, too. In fact, arthritis can affect everyone regardless of age, gender or race, causing pain and making simple, everyday activities like walking, climbing, kneeling and more, difficult.



Most Common Types of Arthritis

<i>Healthy Joint</i>	<i>Osteoarthritis</i>	<i>Rheumatoid Arthritis</i>	<i>Gout</i>
	<p>Bone ends rub together and thinned cartilage</p> 	<p>Inflamed synovial membrane and bone erosion</p> 	<p>Uric acid crystals and inflamed joint</p> 

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Warning Signs

The most common symptom of arthritis is joint pain. If you experience other symptoms such as warmth and redness, see your doctor sooner than later as these may be indicative of a condition that should be treated. Early symptoms related to arthritis usually include:

- **Joint Pain**
- **Joint Stiffness**
- **Swelling around the joint**
- **Redness and warmth**
- **Limited range of movement**
- **Fatigue**
- **Weight loss**

How is arthritis treated?

Your doctor may include a combination of treatment options:

- **Exercise:** low-impact activities, like walking and swimming will keep your joints moving, strengthen the muscles surrounding the joints and reduce stress.
- **Medicines:** anti-inflammatory drugs or corticosteroids help to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Rest:** avoid activities that will strain or injure your joints.
- **Heat or cold:** ice packs or warm pads treatments can bring relief and some reduction of inflammation.
- **Diet:** a balanced diet and healthy weight can help manage pain, swelling and loss of movement caused by arthritis.



Those at Risk

With a better awareness of the risk factors for arthritis, you can learn how to avoid arthritis or at least identify the condition early on.

- **Obesity:** People carrying more weight are putting a great amount of wear and tear on their legs and thus are at a higher risk for arthritis of the knees and hips
- **Joint injuries:** Traumatic injuries to a joint can accelerate the development of osteoarthritis
- **Infections:** Infected joints are at a greater risk to develop arthritis
- **Work:** Jobs that require an inordinate amount of knee bending, squatting, lifting of heavy things, standing, or repeated motions could be at a higher risk for arthritis
- **Age:** It is assumed that the older you are, the more you have used your joints
- **Gender:** Gout is more commonly found in men, while arthritis is more commonly found in women
- **Genetics:** Certain kinds of arthritis can be passed down genetically

Steps toward prevention

Simple lifestyle changes you can make to prevent arthritis or ease the pain and slow joint damage:

- **Maintain a healthy weight** to lessen the load on your knees, hips and ankles
- **Stay hydrated** by drinking 6-8 glasses of water everyday
- **Stay active** to strengthen your muscles, and ease pain and stiffness
- **Be careful** and protect your joints from overuse
- **Know the warning signs and seek early medical advice**

Do you have questions or comments for your doctor?

Take a few minutes to write your own questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.