



Fact Sheet

Arthritis Pain

About

Arthritis comprises over 100 different diseases and conditions, the most common of which is osteoarthritis. It also encompasses rheumatoid arthritis and gout. Common symptoms include pain, aching, stiffness, and swelling in or around the joints. Some forms of arthritis can affect multiple organs and cause widespread symptoms.¹

“ Many people with arthritis experience pain that impairs physical and psychological function. ”

osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis are to determine what can be done to slow or correct the underlying disorder and to identify pain as an issue to be addressed as soon as the disease is diagnosed.²

Despite the recent advances in pain management, many people with arthritis experience levels of acute and chronic pain that affect their ability to function. Many people with arthritis experience pain that impairs physical and psychological function. The goals of optimal care for people with

According to the Arthritis Foundation, arthritis pain is caused by several factors, such as:³

- Inflammation, the process that causes the redness and swelling in joints
- Damage to joint tissues, which results from the disease process or from stress, injury or pressure on the joints
- Fatigue that results from the disease process, which can make pain seem worse and harder to handle
- Depression or stress, which results from limited movement or no longer doing activities
- A cycle of pain, limited/lost abilities, stress and depression can make managing pain and arthritis seem more difficult

Arthritis and related conditions cost the U.S. economy nearly \$128 billion per year in medical care and indirect expenses, including lost wages and productivity.⁴

Facts

Arthritis is the nation's most common cause of disability. An estimated 50 million U.S. adults (about 1 in 5) report doctor-diagnosed arthritis. As the U.S. population ages, these numbers are expected to increase sharply. Nearly 21 million U.S. adults report activity limitations because of arthritis each year. Among all U.S. adults of working age (18–64 years), 5.3% (6.9 million people) report that they have arthritis that limits their work. Among the 23 million adults with arthritis in this age group, arthritis-attributable work limitations affect about 1 in 3 people.¹

45%

A recent community study estimated that the lifetime risk of developing knee osteoarthritis serious enough to cause painful symptoms is 45%.

Risk increases to 57% among people with a past knee injury. Lifetime risk for knee osteoarthritis goes up with increased weight, up to 60% for people who are obese.¹

The number of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis is projected to increase to 67 million by 2030, and more than one-third of these adults will have limited activity as a result.¹

Research shows that pain, fear of pain, fear of worsening symptoms or damaging joints, and lack of information on how to exercise safely prevent people with arthritis

from being physically active. To manage chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity effectively, people with arthritis need help finding ways to overcome arthritis-specific barriers to physical activity.¹

Additional Resources

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

6300 North River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018-4262
Phone: (847) 823-7186
Fax: (847) 823-8125
www.aaos.org

American Pain Society

4700 West Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025
Phone: (847) 375-4715
Fax: (866) 574-2654, (847) 375-6479
www.ampainsoc.org

Resources verified July 2011.

American College of Rheumatology

2200 Lake Boulevard NE
Atlanta, GA 30319
Phone: (404) 633-3777
Fax: (404) 633-1870
www.rheumatology.org

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases National Institutes of Health

1 AMS Circle
Bethesda, MD 20892-3675
Phone: (877) 226-4267
Phone: (301) 495-4484
Fax: (301) 718-6366
E-mail: niamsinfo@mail.nih.gov
www.niams.nih.gov

References

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<http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/AAG/arthritis.htm>. Accessed May 27, 2011.
2. American Pain Society, "Guideline for the Management of Pain in Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Juvenile Chronic Arthritis," 2002.
3. Arthritis Foundation. Pain Center, <http://www.arthritis.org/causes-of-pain.php>, Accessed May 27, 2011.