

What is Arthritis?

Arthritis is a painful degenerative condition of joints which disable millions of people every year. Arthritic hip and knee joint can make the patient totally dependent on others for daily activities. In addition make a patient prone to fall and fracture as they are the major weight bearing joints of the body.

Arthritis is not a single disease - it is a term that covers over 100 medical conditions.

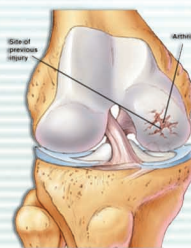
Who develops arthritis?

- Usually 50 years or above age.
- Overweight people as it increases wear out of joints.
- Genetic predisposition: Arthritis runs in families.
- Old traumas to the joint with secondary meniscal damages and fractures.
- Diseases like Rheumatoid Arthritis and Gout.
- Overuse of joints due to occupation lifestyle like squatting sitting cross legged etc.

Signs and symptoms of arthritis:

Arthritic pain is known to regress and exacerbate. The pain is always worst in cold climate. The most common symptoms are:

- Pain which increases with activities.
- Limitation in range of movement.
- Stiffness of joint particularly in the morning
- Swelling of joints
- Tenderness along the joints
- Deformity of joint (knock knee and bow legs)

**Diagnosis:**

Medical History and Clinical Symptoms; Physical examination, blood tests, X-Ray imaging studies. Recognizing early arthritis symptoms and getting an accurate diagnosis are important for preventing joint damage and managing arthritis symptoms.

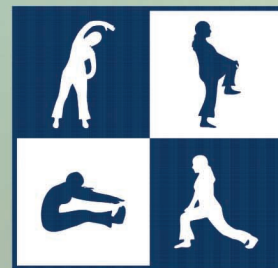
**Prevention and treatment of Arthritis:**

Treatment options vary depending on the type of arthritis and include:

- Lifestyle changes (including exercise and weight control)
- Medications
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Surgery. It is considered a last resort treatment for arthritis patients usually done when damage to a particular joint severely interferes with the mobility and function.

Types of exercise best for people with Arthritis:

- Range-of-motion exercise: (e.g. dance)
- Strengthening exercise: (e.g. weight training)
- Aerobic or endurance exercise: (e.g. bicycle riding)



Weight control is important to people who have arthritis because extra weight puts extra pressure on many joints. People with arthritis should always discuss their exercise plans with a doctor and other health care providers.