

## Natural Approaches For Eliminating Arthritis

**D**o you find you are experiencing pain in your joints? Are your knees, shoulders, hips or hands causing you discomfort? Osteoarthritis (OA) is a disease in which the cartilage breaks down causing pain, swelling, and loss of motion in the joint.<sup>1</sup> It is common for most people to experience symptoms of OA by the time they are 80 years old; however, many experience these life altering symptoms in their 40s or 50s. The cause of OA is multi factorial. Lack of exercise and poor diet play the largest role. What you may not know about Osteoarthritis is that most medications only offer you a solution to the symptoms and not a path to improving the condition.

The current treatment of Osteoarthritis is based primarily on the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and analgesics.<sup>2</sup> Examples include aspirin, ibuprofen, Naproxin™, Celebrex™, and Diclofenac™. There are disadvantages to routinely using these prescription and over the counter drugs. Some of them contribute to nutritional deficiencies of folic acid, iron, and vitamin C. This can lead to secondary problems. The side effects from these medications can range from slight to severe. Nausea, abdominal pain, heart burn, headaches, rash, diarrhea, liver damage, chest pain, and vomiting are all possible.<sup>3</sup> Included in this type of prescribed treatment is the fact that these medicines have been shown to reduce the ability of our

body to create cartilage. Therefore, the treatments may actually perpetuate the condition rather than assisting the joints in healing and recovery.<sup>4</sup>

Research confirms that natural treatments for OA can be more effective than the commonly prescribed medications.<sup>5-8</sup> Some common options include omega-3 derived epa and dha, proteolytic enzymes, glucosamine, chondroitin, SAM-e, and tumeric. The key in determining which options would be effective lies in adequate laboratory testing and history.

We must not lose sight on the foundational role that diet plays. Studies show that diets high in hydrogenated oils and other processed foods actually inhibit healing and worsen the symptoms of OA. Most cases of OA can be relieved indefinitely with simple alterations to diet and lifestyle.

Additionally, a number of low impact exercise programs are available. Many tend to discontinue exercise when experiencing joint pain. Often times, this is a big mistake. Cartilage in the joint does not have a direct blood supply and will deteriorate in the absence of movement. Use it or lose it!

While modern medicine continues to focus on symptoms, natural and functional medicine focuses on the causes of the disease. Addressing dietary and nutritional deficiencies can help the joint structure by increasing compounds that aid in the development of cartilage.<sup>5-8</sup> The best way to identify these issues is through individualized

genetic and laboratory tests, a thorough physical examination, and a meticulously detailed history. How to use the information to promote health is where Functional Medicine and traditional methods may differ. Functional Medicine is best described as putting the patient at the core of the treatment plan. The emphasis is patient-centric and focuses on diet, environment, and natural treatments that work with the body to aid in healing. Traditional medicine focuses on pharmaceuticals as the core of treatment and typically does not adequately address the foundational issues of health and wellness. For a free report on alleviating arthritis pain visit [www.TownCenterWellness/free\\_oa\\_report.com](http://www.TownCenterWellness/free_oa_report.com)

#### References:

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