

OSTEOARTHRITIS OF THE KNEE

Are Your Knees Wearing You Down?

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common cause of pain and disability in the knee joint. It occurs when the protective cartilage on the ends of your bones wears down over time.

The following has been prepared to educate patients about the condition – including symptoms, risk factors, and treatment options of OA of the knee.

01 | Risk Factors

Following is a list of the most common risk factors for OA:

- **Age** – when the body ages, the cartilage loses its ability to heal, thus increasing the risk of OA
- **Weight** – excessive weight increases pressure on the joints, which can break down the cartilage of the knee
- **Heredity** – inherited abnormalities and genetic mutations may make a person more prone to develop OA
- **Gender** – women over 55 are more likely than men to develop OA
- **Repetitive Stress Injuries & Athletics** – the stress to the knee caused by work-related or exercise-related activities or injuries put you at greater risk for OA

02 | Symptoms

OA symptoms often develop gradually and worsen over time. They may include pain, swelling, tenderness, stiffness, loss of flexibility and bone spurs.

03 | Treatment

As indicated in the list of risk factors, there are steps you can take to manage OA. These, along with the following are all important steps in slowing the

progression of OA as well as minimizing the associated pain and discomfort:

- Weight management
- Using proper gear during exercise or sports activities
- Following precautions at work and when participating in athletics

Common treatment options include strengthening and stretching exercises, pain relievers and anti-inflammatory medications and knee braces. In more advanced cases, your medical provider may recommend physical therapy, injections of corticosteroids or hyaluronic acid and, in some circumstances, surgery.

04 | Conclusion

Whether young or old, joint and knee health is important. Do your part to prevent OA of the knee. If you have already been diagnosed, there is still much you can do to slow the progression of the disease and improve your mobility and well-being. To learn more about OA, please visit: <http://www.arthritis.org/about-arthritis/types/osteoarthritis/>

Did You Know?

Every pound of weight you gain adds 3-4 pounds of extra weight on your knees

References

<http://www.webmd.com/osteoarthritis/guide/ostearthritis-of-the-knee-degenerative-arthritis-of-the-knee>
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/osteoarthritis/basics/definition/con-20014749>