

ARTHRITIS AND SENIOR CARE

AWARENESS



World Arthritis Day

What You Need to Know about Arthritis and Senior Care

Arthritis is a medical condition many seniors struggle with. World Arthritis Day takes place on October 12th. This month, learn more about this type of disease.

Did you know that arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States? Many seniors struggle with this type of disease.

Over 54 million adults in the US have been diagnosed with a form of arthritis. Since the condition is common among seniors, it is important to understand the symptoms and effects of arthritis when caring for them.

(arthritis.org)



Basic Facts about Arthritis

A word used to describe joint pain and joint disease, arthritis comes in many forms. Some of the most common types of arthritis include osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Seniors often develop osteoarthritis.

What Is Osteoarthritis?

This form of arthritis occurs when the cartilage breaks down. Cartilage is the tissue that covers the ends of bones at joints. Cartilage is found largely in joints like the knees, hips, and shoulders. When the cartilage breaks down, the bones can rub against each other, wearing away at the bones, reducing mobility, and causing both stiffness and pain.

Who does Osteoarthritis Affect?

Typically, osteoarthritis occurs in older adults. It tends to occur as a part of aging since the cartilage is worn down over time and with extensive use.

How to Prevent Osteoarthritis

Although osteoarthritis is caused by wear and tear, it is preventable to a point. Adults should take care to stretch and to use their joints safely by bending to lift properly. This may reduce or delay osteoarthritis if a person is prone to the condition.

(Mayo Clinic)

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Supporting Seniors with Arthritis

Unfortunately, osteoarthritis cannot be completely cured or reversed. However, there are ways to reduce the pain and difficulties that result from the condition.



Medications like Tylenol or NSAIDs can relieve pain.



Physical therapy can reduce stiffness and improve mobility.



Occupational therapy can offer alternative motions to avoid aggravating affected joints.



Yoga, tai chi, and other gentle exercises can relieve pain and stress.



Medical injections can relieve pain.



Surgeries can protect bones or replace severely damaged joints.

(Mayo Clinic)

Risk Factors & Arthritis

Seniors are at greater risk of osteoarthritis if they:

- Have struggled with obesity
- Overused various joints
- Maintain poor posture
- Are genetically predisposed
- Have previously injured their joints

([healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com))

Signs of Arthritis

- Stiffness in the joints
- Stress related to pain
- Decreased flexibility in the joints
- Noise when the joints move
- Swelling around the joints
- Pain in the joints during cold weather or after activity



Home Care Tip

Seniors' "feeling the cold in their bones" isn't a joke. Cold weather can exacerbate osteoarthritis pain. Support seniors with arthritis by helping them stay warm and offering extra help with physical tasks when it's chilly.

([Very Well Health](https://www.verywellhealth.com))



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