

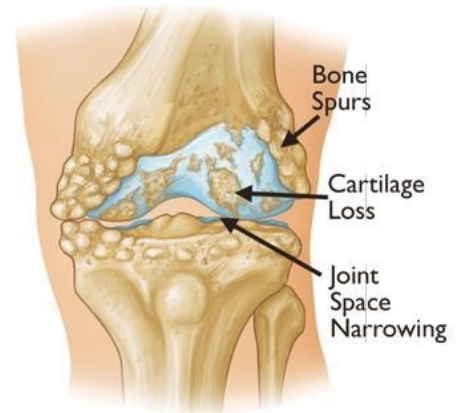
OSTEOARTHRITIS & KNEES

MANAGING THE PAIN

A diagnosis of osteoarthritis doesn't mean you are *doomed* to live in pain for the rest of your life. While there is no "cure" for osteoarthritis, you can decrease the pain and prevent further deterioration with physical therapy.

What You Need to Know About Managing Osteoarthritis

As physical therapists, we can't tell you how many times our patients have come to us with a diagnosis of osteoarthritis, believing that there's nothing they can do for the pain besides medication. Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis, and is usually caused by the deterioration of the surfaces at a joint. An estimated 27 million Americans have some type of OA, and over half of those cases are knee OA. While knee OA cannot be completely prevented, you can slow the progression of the condition and manage the pain associated with it. **Many people don't realize the benefits of physical therapy (PT) for OA, but it can be the game changer when it comes to managing the pain.**



- Osteoarthritis is part of normal aging, but you can make changes to slow the progression and manage the pain.**
 - The progression of your OA can be influenced by age, BMI, bone structure, genetics, muscular strength, and activity level. Physical therapy can help to address three of these main influences through targeted exercises and movement.
- Osteoarthritis is just a small part of why your joints hurt.**
 - Abnormal range of motion at the knee can cause additional stress on the joint, leading to the worsening of knee pain.

- Weak muscles around the knee (quads and hamstrings) increase the amount of force passing through the bones of your knee, causing pain.
- Physical therapy can address these two factors and drastically decrease your pain.



3. Exercise can help prevent/delay the onset of osteoarthritis.

- Research has shown that individuals with knee OA who walked more steps per day were less likely to develop functional problems in the future.
- Physical therapists can develop exercise programs that increase your activity level, while avoiding excessive stress on the knee joint.

What About Surgery?

In the past, surgery was a common treatment for patients with knee OA. However, current research has shown that most patients (60%-70%) that were deemed surgical candidates, **who first participated in a physical therapy program, did not have to undergo surgery.** One year later the results remained unchanged. Sometimes surgery is required, and physical therapy can assist you prior to and following the procedure to make sure you get the most out of the surgery and recover quickly.

Where Do I Start?

Whether you've just received a diagnosis of osteoarthritis or have been dealing with the pain for years, physical therapy can help. **While osteoarthritis cannot be entirely prevented, you can slow the progression, decrease your pain, and sometimes delay or even prevent surgery.**

CHECK OUT OUR YOUTUBE VIDEO WHERE ANDREW MASON, PT DISCUSSES HOW HE TREATS ARTHRITIS

Youtube Search: **Treating Arthritis - Pearson PT**
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