



# Clinic Newsletter

April - May 2016

## Osteoarthritis

Each joint in your body consists of two bony surfaces that are covered in a protective tissue called cartilage. The cartilage acts to cushion the joint and prevent's excess rubbing caused through movement.

Osteoarthritis is the term used when this cartilage erodes and breaks down leaving the soft nerve sensitive bone exposed, causing pain and difficulty moving the joint.

The term "Arthritis" is a term used for the inflammation of joints. This differs from the symptoms of osteoarthritis where minor inflammation is caused in the joint. For many healthcare professions the symptoms of osteoarthritis are age-related and caused through long term wear and tear. For this reason they have term this "degenerative joint disease"

There are many factors which contribute to osteoarthritis, age is a leading risk factor. Other factors include repetitive strain associated with sports and occupation, trauma , operations, genetics and obesity.

### Medicinal Treatment

The aim of treatment is to manage pain and maintain the ability to use the joint. Your GP will provide or suggest using a suitable painkiller or Nonsteriodal anti-inflammatory such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or arthrotec. Blood tests may also be conducted to look for evidence of other arthritic conditions.

### Osteopathic Treatment of Osteoarthritis

Many patients seen in clinic suffer from arthritic symptoms. In many cases individual have resumed to the fact that arthritis is untreatable and they must learn to live with there symptoms. In many cases osteopaths are able to help considerable.

The focus of treatment is to reduce pain, improve mobility and tissue elasticity by using gentle osteopathic techniques on muscle's, joint's and ligaments.

Exercise's at home or in water may also be prescribed to further compliment treatment.

Osteopathy is not a cure all and there are many situation's when GP referral is necessary so further examinations can be conducted.

### Symptoms of osteoarthritis include:

- Joint pain and swelling after activity or in response to changes in weather.
- Stiffness and limited flexibility after sitting or standing for long periods.
- Bony lumps at the end of fingers, termed Heberden's nodes, or on the middle joint's of fingers, termed Bouchard's nodes
- A grinding sensation when the joint is moved i.e turning the head.
- Pin's and needles, loss of sensation and power loss of limbs, which may occur in arthritic bone changes in the cervical or lumbar spine, termed foraminal enchroament
- Sufferers of osteoarthritis often complain of a deep ache within the joint. Typically the pain is relieved with rest and aggravated by activity. As osteoarthritis worsens the pain becomes more constant and can often worsen during the night interfering with sleep patterns.
- An X-ray will provide evidence of Osteoarthritis in its later stages.

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