

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



*February 2019*

## **OSTEOARTHRITIS**



## **What is osteoarthritis?**

[Unsubscribe](#)

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common chronic condition of the joints, which affects about 27 million Americans. While OA can affect any joint: the knees, hips, spine, small joints of the fingers, and big toe are affected most often.

We have cartilage within our joints, which lines the ends of the bone. The cartilage provides a smooth, gliding surface when moving the joint and also acts as cushioning. With OA, the cartilage wears down leading to pain, swelling, and reduced motion of the joint.

## **Who can be affected?**

OA can occur in people of all ages, but is most common in people over the age of 65 years. Risk factors include increasing age, obesity, previous injury, overuse, and genetics.

## **How do doctors diagnose OA?**

The doctor will collect a medical history and ask about the symptoms. Next, the doctor will perform a physical examination, looking for range of motion, tenderness, swelling, and painful areas. After a medical history has been obtained and the physical examination has been completed, the doctor may order diagnostic tests if OA is suspected. The diagnostic tests include x-rays and an MRI.

## **So, I was diagnosed with OA, now what?**

### **· EXERCISE!**

Research has shown that exercise will reduce pain, improve function, increase strength, improve balance, increase cardiovascular fitness, improve psychological state, and help with weight loss.

- **WEIGHT LOSS**

Losing weight will decrease the pressure on the joints and help relieve pain. Weight loss will also lower your risk of other health problems.

- **MEDICATIONS**

Your doctor can prescribe you pain relievers, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), corticosteroids (oral or injection), or hyaluronic acid (injection).

**Physical Therapy (PT) can help you on this journey with OA.**