

OSTEOARTHRISIS IS DEGENERATIVE JOINT DISEASE COMMON IN THE HANDS, FEET AND THE LARGE WEIGHT BEARING JOINTS-KNEES, HIPS, ANKLES OR SPINE. IT CAN OCCUR IN ANY JOINT OF THE BODY. OSTEOARTHRITIS, DISCARTHRISIS AND SPONDYLOSIS (LOCATED ON THE SPINAL VERTEBRAE), GENERALIZED OSTEOARTHRISIS ARE ALL ANOTHER NAMES FOR OSTEOARTHRISIS.

IT IS SLOWLY PROGRESSIVE DISEASE WITH THE SYMPTOMS DEVELOPING GRADUALLY DURING THE YEARS. BASIC PATHOLOGY PROCESS IN OSTEOARTHRISIS IS DEGENERATION OF THE CARTILAGE IN A JOINT. IT IS TYPICALLY CAUSED WHEN THE CARTILAGE COVERING THE ENDS OF THE BONES BEGINS TO WEAR AWAY, LOSES ITS STRUCTURE, AND RELEASES ENZYMES WHICH DECONSTRUCT IT. FURTHER PROCESS INVOLVES CARTILAGE EROSION, LOST OF ITS RIGIDITY AND CRACKING AS WELL AS ITS INADEQUATE REPAIR.

BONE TISSUE BENEATH CARTILAGE BECOMES EXPOSED TO MECHANICAL FORCES AND CREATES BONE OUTGROWTHS, CALLED OSTEOPHYTES WHICH RESULT IN JOINT DEFORMATION. DUE TO THE CARTILAGE LOSS IN MOTION, BONES BEGIN TO RUB TOGETHER. JOINT MEMBRANE TRIES TO DECREASE THE FRICTION BY INTENSIVE PRODUCTION OF JOINTS FLUID WHICH MAY HAVE FOR CONSEQUENCE SWOLLEN JOINTS.



MMA CLINIC FOR RHEUMATOLOGY

Military insured and patients with civilian health insurance coverage and GP's referral can seek an appointment scheduled via the Appointment Lines, every day from 07.30 a.m. to 03.30 p.m.

All citizens with civilian health insurance coverage who use the MMA service at their request are able to schedule the appointment Monday through Thursday, from 03.30 p.m. to 07.30 p.m.

APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING / CONTACT INFORMATION AT:

+381 11 2662 717
+381 11 3608 498
+381 11 3609 398
+381 11 3609 399

MILITARY MEDICAL ACADEMY

www.vma.mod.gov.rs
vma@mod.gov.rs
Belgrade, 17 Crnotravska St.

Contact telephone:

+381 11 2661 122
+381 11 2662 755
Fax:
+381 11 2666 164



OSTEOARTHRISIS



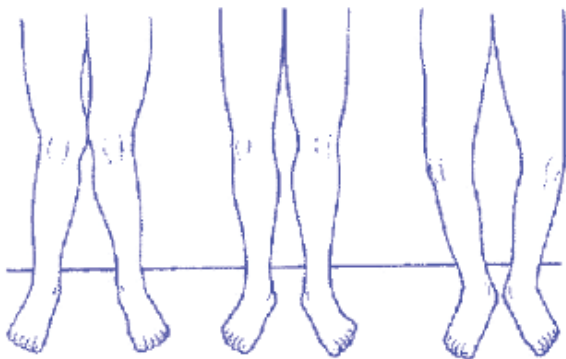
What Cause It?

Osteoarthritis is caused by numerous factors, among them the most important are genetics (bad cartilage quality) and abuse to already damaged cartilage in the weight bearing joints (knees, hips, ankles and lumbar spine part) from overuse, aging, obesity or potentially excessive, irregular or insufficient physical activity.

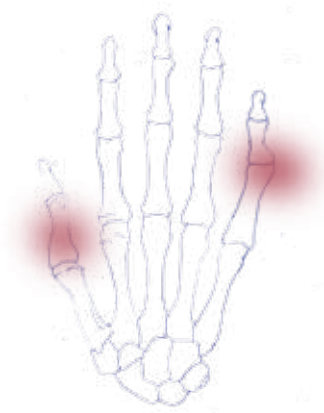
Osteoarthritis Clinical Manifestations

The most common signs of osteoarthritis are joint and spinal pains progressing during motion, while treatment includes rest and relaxation. People report increased pains disabling normal motion and locomotion of particular body parts.

Osteoarthritis can cause crepitus (a crackling sound) when the affected joint is moved or touched, while morning stiffness, if exists, is short term pain relief that may last about half an hour. People suffering from severe forms may experience joint stiffness and instability, limited motion and regional muscles may atrophy. A short leg syndrome (one leg shorter than the other) may appear in hip osteoarthritis whilst with the change of knee joint person have diagnosed bow legs (x-shaped or o-shaped legs).



In smaller joints, such as at the fingers, hard bony enlargements, called Heberden's nodes and/or Bouchard's nodes may form, and though representing functional and esthetic changes they are not signs of severe disease.



"No one said the life is easy. They only said that it is worth living. Thanks to all of you, I am still alive."

Diagnosing Osteoarthritis

Physical examination of the affected joints may help determine the presence of osteoarthritis. Concerning that laboratory finding usually do not demonstrate abnormalities, X-rays are used to assess the severity of joint damage and its progression.

How to Cope with Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis treatment is carried out by rheumatologist, physiatrist, and orthopedist along with the patient self-management. It includes the use of NSAIDs-non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, but it is very important to take these medications as recommended by rheumatologists not longer than 10 days continually in smaller doses, with the protection from gastrointestinal side effects. Aged persons should take more fluids. In case of swollen joint, rheumatologist may give injection to calm inflammation, but only one in three months. Physical measures prescribed by physiatrist have better effects than medications. In severe cases of damaged hip or knee, joint replacement surgery or resurfacing, if recommended, should not be delayed. Lifestyle modification such as weight loss and permanent and temperate exercise is the mainstay of treatment.

"I cannot believe there is still this kind of institution. People working in compassionate with us and our sufferings. I feel like being at the vacation, not in hospital. Their sacrifice, amiability and responsibility are impossible to be described by words. Each morning was starting with their smiles; you cannot imagine what that means for the ill person."

