

UNDERSTANDING

OSTEOARTHRITIS (OA)

Pain in the Joints?

Joint pain can be scary - our therapists are here with guidance, support, and positive energy.



All About Osteoarthritis (OA)

Googling OA can be overwhelming - terms like pain, degeneration, and stiffness often pop up first. But while OA is a progressive condition, it doesn't mean you're powerless.

Throughout May, we're sharing real facts and practical strategies to help you understand and manage OA with confidence.

What is OA?

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis. It occurs when joint tissues gradually break down over time, leading to reduced movement and pain.

The good news? There's a lot you can do to slow its progression and improve your quality of life.

Facts About OA

- OA is the most common form of arthritis, affecting 9.6% of men and 18% of women over 60.
- The knees and hips are the joints most commonly affected.
- Pain levels don't always match X-ray findings.
- Exercise and education are top-recommended treatments.
- Surgery isn't always necessary.

Understanding Osteoarthritis



BUSTING MYTHS ABOUT OA

A common myth: Walking or exercising causes cartilage thinning.

The truth: In most cases, OA is driven by inflammation. Your body produces chemicals that gradually weaken cartilage, often triggered by:

- ✓ Injury
- ✓ Genetics
- ✓ Diet
- ✓ Weight gain

Regular movement can actually help — not hurt!

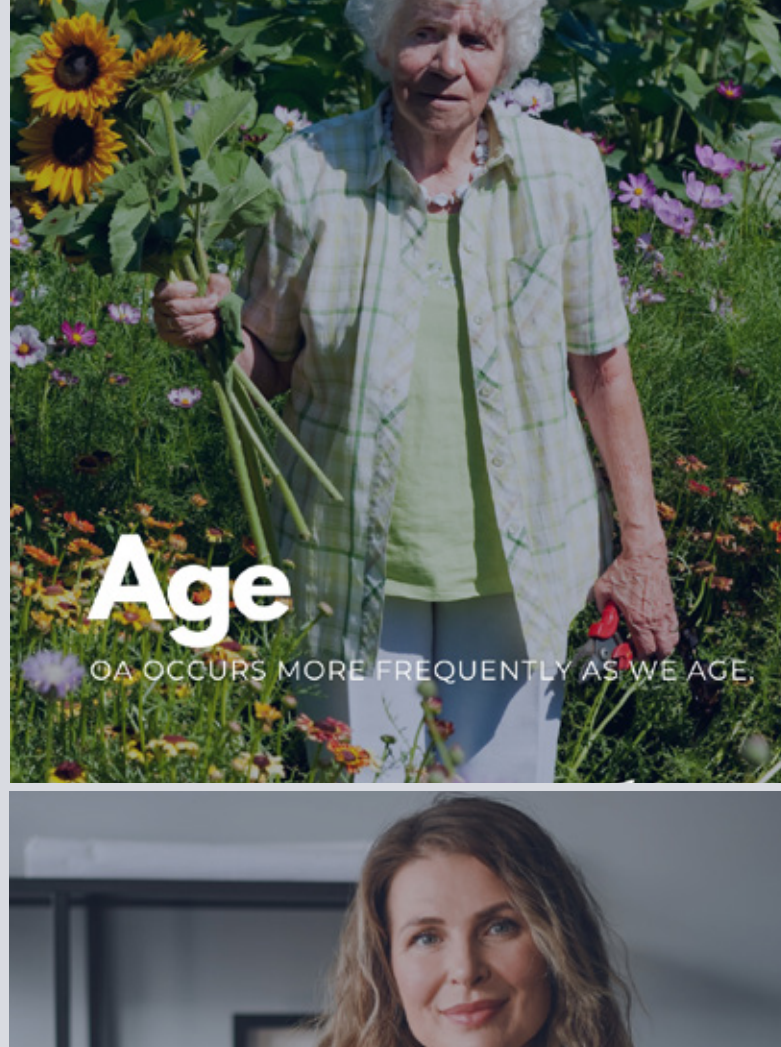


WHY IS OA PAINFUL?

Cartilage doesn't have pain receptors - but other joint structures do. Inflammation can make the synovium (joint lining) and periosteum (bone lining) more sensitive, leading to discomfort.

RISK FACTORS FOR OA

Understanding what increases your risk can help with early management:



Obesity & Diabetes

Both of these cause higher levels of inflammation in our bodies and can therefore facilitate the development of OA.



Injury

Significant injury, or repetitive injury, can eventually lead to OA.



Heredity

Various genetic factors influence the chemical balances in our bodies.



SYMPTOMS OF OA



How it is diagnosed?

OSTEOARTHRITIS

Blood tests help rule out other conditions. Diagnosis is typically based on symptoms and physical assessment. X-rays might be used but don't always reflect pain levels.

Research shows some people with severe X-ray changes have no pain at all!

5 JOINT-FRIENDLY EXERCISES TO SUPPORT OA

At Therapy in Action, we're often asked: "Should I still be exercising?" **The answer is YES!**

VIEW VIDEO HERE

Include joint-friendly movement – Try walking, swimming, or cycling.

A little pain is okay – Mild discomfort is normal; listen to your body.

Mix it up – Combine strength, cardio, and balance work.

Small lifestyle changes matter – A 5% weight loss can ease joint strain.

Eat to support your joints – Choose anti-inflammatory foods and reduce sugar.

We're here to support your movement journey. If you're unsure where to start, reach out — you're not alone.

Still Struggling?

LET'S LOOK AT SOME OTHER INTERVENTIONS



Other Interventions for OA

If exercise and diet aren't enough, here are other helpful tools:

Supportive Devices – Sleeves, splints, braces, and walking aids

Medication – Anti-inflammatories during flare-ups can reduce symptoms

Heat/Ice – Use whichever brings relief

What About Surgery?

Surgery is considered only when conservative treatments aren't helping. Joint replacement can be effective, but success relies heavily on proper rehab.

Important: Your scan doesn't decide your treatment — you do. It's about your quality of life.

For more guidance, tips, and support with managing OA, get in touch with us.

Let's move smarter — together.

