

## 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

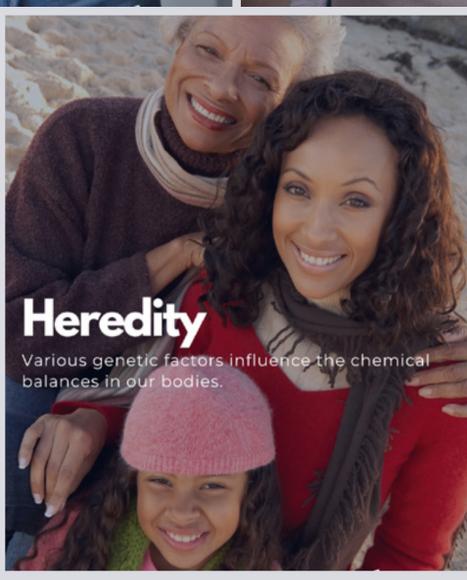
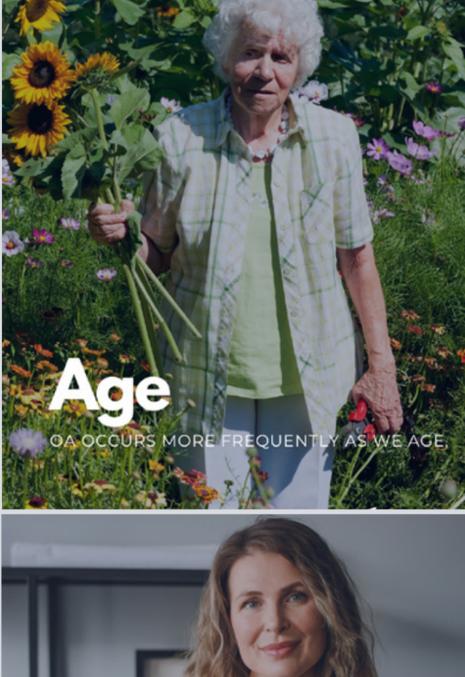
**Regular movement can actually help — not hurt!**

## WHY IS OA PAINFUL?

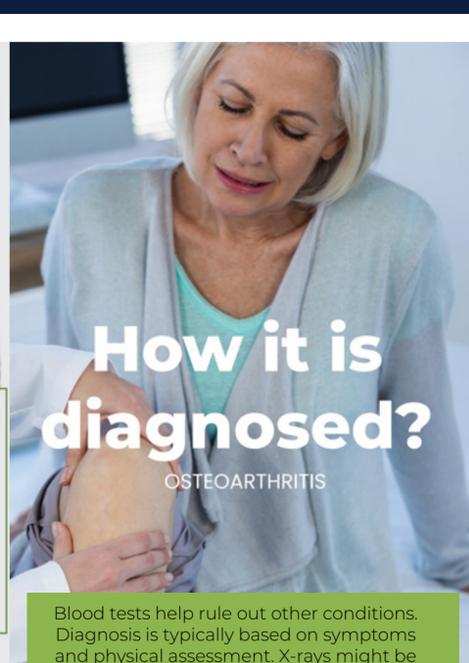
Cartilage doesn't have pain receptors - but other joint structures do. Inflammation can make the synovium (joint lining) and periosteum (bone lining) more sensitive, leading to discomfort.

## RISK FACTORS FOR OA

Understanding what increases your risk can help with early management:



## SYMPTOMS OF OA



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.

