

The Top 5 Must-Know Facts

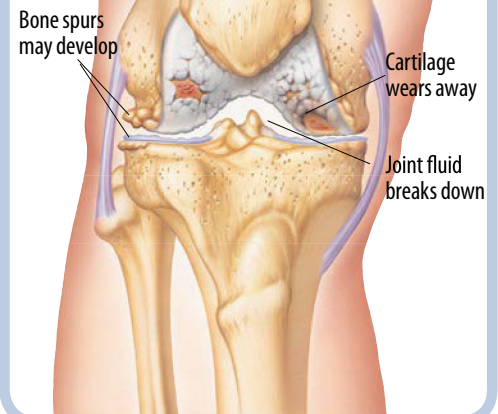
About Managing Your Osteoarthritis Knee Pain

1 It's Not Just Cartilage Loss

What we know about what causes knee pain.

Osteoarthritis develops as the cartilage that helps protect your knee begins to deteriorate, and the joint space between the bones narrows. In addition, knee joint fluid begins to break down and lose its ability to cushion and lubricate the knee. Bones may begin to rub against each other, all helping to cause the common symptoms of knee osteoarthritis.

Knee with osteoarthritis



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2 You Can't See Pain on an X-Ray

Only you know how much knee pain you're in.

While an X-ray can show the grade or stage of your osteoarthritis, it can't tell a doctor how much pain you're in. You can have mild osteoarthritis with considerable pain or severe osteoarthritis with little pain. So although it's helpful to know your grade or stage, make sure you and your doctor discuss your pain and treatment options in detail.

3 There is No Single Known Cause or Cure

Osteoarthritis knee pain needs to be actively managed.

Osteoarthritis is a chronic condition, meaning once you have it, you have it for life. But that doesn't mean you have to live in pain. You may be able to reduce knee pain with the right combination of diet, exercise and knee pain management strategies. Talk to your doctor about a clear treatment plan.

4 More Weight Can Mean More Pain

Maintaining a healthy weight is key.

For each extra pound of weight on your body, your knee joint feels an extra four or five pounds of pressure. Less weight means less strain on your knees — lose just ten pounds and you'll be getting over 40 pounds of pressure off your knees.

5 Exercise is Crucial at Any Stage

Motion is lotion for knees with osteoarthritis.

Contrary to popular belief, activities like running don't cause osteoarthritis. But once you have osteoarthritis, high-impact exercise can aggravate it. Fortunately, there are many low-impact exercises, like swimming or biking, that can be helpful — so be sure to ask your doctor or physical therapist about the best exercises for you.