

The Capsule

August- Quarterly Newsletter

Overview:

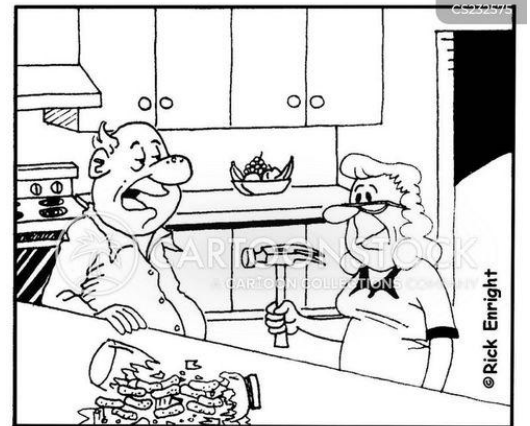
Arthritis is a general term for conditions that affect the joints, tissues around joints, and other connective tissues. There are more than 100 types of arthritis. The causes of some forms of arthritis are unknown. **54,000,000 people** in the USA have arthritis.

Risk Factors:

Some behaviors and characteristics can increase your chances of developing arthritis.

Several of these risk factors are within your control, including:

- Smoking.
- Having [overweight or obesity](#).
- Joint injuries—like from sports, falls, and accidents.
- Work-related activities that lead to joint injury—like bending, squatting, and other repetitive motions.



Symptoms and Diagnosis:

Symptoms vary by arthritis type but usually include joint pain and stiffness.

Health care providers can diagnose arthritis by:

- Reviewing your health and family history.
- Doing a physical exam.
- Taking X-rays.

Living with arthritis:

- Be physically active.
- Manage your weight.
- Protect your joints.
- Talk to your health care provider if you have symptoms.

Treatment:

There is no cure for arthritis, but it can be treated and managed. Treatments vary depending on arthritis type. They may include:

- Over-the-counter medicines
- Prescription medicines
- Physical therapy



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- Surgery, if needed

Expert Care:

Rheumatologists are doctors who are trained as experts in diagnosing, treating, and caring for people with arthritis.

Most Common Types of Arthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA)	• Caused by damage or breakdown of joint cartilage between bones – aka “wear and tear” arthritis • Symptoms include pain, swelling, and stiffness • Most frequently in the hands, hips, and knees • Most common in women
Rheumatoid Arthritis	• Autoimmune response in which the body’s immune system attacks its own healthy cells. The lining of the joint becomes inflamed, causing damage to joint tissue. • Symptoms include chronic pain, unsteadiness (lack of balance), and deformity (misshapeness) • Commonly affects joints in the hands, wrists, and knees
Fibromyalgia	• Condition that causes pain all over the body (also referred to as widespread pain) • Very commonly associated with mental and emotional distress • Symptoms include pain and stiffness all over the body, sleep disturbance, depression and anxiety, digestive problems, tingling or numbness of hands and feet
Gout	• Inflammatory arthritis due to increase in uric acid • Usually affects one joint at a time (often the big toe joint), ankles, and knees • Symptoms include very painful, swelling, redness, and heat • Most common in men

Resources: www.cdc.gov/arthritis, <https://www.rheumatology.org/>

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