

Focus On: Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is the most common type of arthritis.

It happens when the tissues in the joint break down over time. The cartilage that cushions your joints can break down, causing the bones to rub against each other.

Osteoarthritis can also damage the tendons, ligaments, bones, and tissues lining the joint.

Over time, the joint may change shape. Small bone growths may form on the edges of the joint. And bits of bone or cartilage may break off.

Many people get this type of arthritis as they age, but it can happen to anyone.

Osteoarthritis most commonly affects the hands, knees, hips, neck, and lower back.

The symptoms include pain, swelling, and stiffness in the affected joints.

Osteoarthritis also makes it harder to bend the joint or get the full range of motion.

The symptoms may be mild to severe.

Treatment for osteoarthritis includes lifestyle changes like changing your activities or losing weight if needed, pain medicines, injections, physical therapy, and self-care techniques.

You may need to try several types of treatment to find what works for you.

If your pain doesn't get better with treatment, surgery may be an option.

To learn more about osteoarthritis, talk to your doctor.