

Understanding Arthritis And Osteoporosis

Arthritis is the swelling and tenderness of one or more joints. The main symptoms of arthritis are joint pain and stiffness, which typically worsen with age. The most common types of arthritis are:

- **Osteoarthritis** - This causes cartilage to break down. Cartilage is the hard, slippery tissue that covers the ends of bones where they form a joint.
- **Rheumatoid arthritis** - When the immune system attacks the joints, beginning with the lining of joints.

Osteoporosis causes bones to become weak and brittle — so brittle that a fall or even mild stresses such as bending over, or coughing can cause a break. It occurs when the creation of new bone doesn't keep up with the loss of old bone. Osteoporosis-related breaks most commonly occur in the hip, wrist or spine.

Who Is At Risk?

Arthritis or osteoporosis can affect anyone. For osteoporosis, Caucasian and Asian women, especially older women who are past menopause, are at highest risk. Common risk factors include:

- Family history
- Poor diet - low calcium and excessive sodium intake
- Previous joint injury
- Excess weight - Carrying extra weight puts stress on joints, particularly the knees, hips, and spine.
- Body frame size - Men and women who have small body frames tend to have a higher risk of osteoporosis
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Excessive alcohol consumption or tobacco use



RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/arthritis

Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org

Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation
www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org

ARTHRITIS AND OSTEOPOROSIS: STAY ON THE MOVE



**HEALTHY
DIRECTIONS**

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**HEALTHY
DIRECTIONS**



Reduce The Risk Of Arthritis

Some of the best things to do to prevent different types of arthritis are: avoid smoking, eat a healthy diet that is low in sugar, and maintain a healthy weight. For osteoporosis, medicines, healthy diet and weight-bearing exercise can help prevent bone loss or strengthen already weak bones.

Symptoms

Depending on the type of arthritis, signs and symptoms may include:

- Pain
- Stiffness
- Swelling
- Redness
- Decreased range of motion

Once your bones have been weakened by osteoporosis, you might have the following:

- Back pain
- Loss of height over time
- Stooped, hunched-forward posture
- Bones that fracture or break much more easily than expected

How Are They Treated?

If you are suffering from arthritis or osteoporosis the first step is always to talk to your healthcare professional.

Arthritis

Medications

Commonly used arthritis medications include:

- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) that can relieve pain and reduce inflammation. Examples include Advil® and Aleve®.
- Counterirritants – A variety of creams and ointments can be rubbed on the skin over your aching joint and may interfere with the transmission of pain signals from the joint itself.
- Steroids – Corticosteroids reduce inflammation and pain and slow joint damage. They may be given as a pill or as an injection into the painful joint.

Therapy and Surgery

Physical therapy can be helpful for some types of arthritis. Exercises can improve range of motion and strengthen the muscles surrounding joints. In some cases, splints or braces may be warranted. If conservative measures don't help, doctors may suggest: joint repair, replacement, or fusion.



Osteoporosis

If your risk isn't high, treatment might not include medication and might focus instead on modifying risk factors for bone loss and falls.

Medications

- Bisphosphonates or other drugs that improve bone density.
- For men, osteoporosis medications have been better studied and thus are recommended alone or in addition to testosterone.

Hormone-Related Therapy

- Estrogen in particular, can help maintain bone density, especially when started soon after menopause.

If you have severe osteoporosis or if the more common treatments do not work well enough, additional medicines are available. Talk to your healthcare professional.

By The Numbers

- 21.2 % of all adults, or 53.2 million people, have arthritis.
- Arthritis is a leading cause of work disability, with annual costs for medical care and lost earnings totaling more than \$300 billion.
- More than half of US adults (51.7%) with arthritis are of working age (18 to 64 years).
- 54 million Americans, half of all adults aged 50 and older, are at risk of breaking a bone.
- One in two women and up to one in four men will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis.

