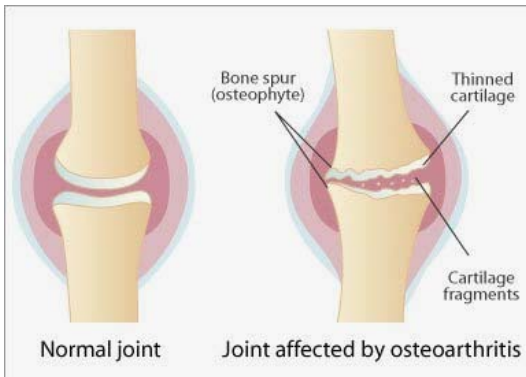


# OSTEOARTHRITIS

## (DEGENERATIVE JOINT DISEASE)

**Definition:** Chronic arthritis characterized by degenerative changes in articular cartilage and bony overgrowth at the joint margins<sup>1</sup>.

**Pathophysiology:** Caused by mechanical, dystrophic, and genetic factors. Degenerative changes in articular cartilage are more common and more severe with advancing age, in weight bearing joints (ex. knee, hip), joints that have become incongruent, or have been used abnormally. The cartilage in the joint loses some of its ability to withstand mechanical stresses. The cartilage undergoes splitting, fibrillation, gradual thinning, and wide spread degeneration. In the late stages, the underlying bone may become denuded.<sup>1,2</sup>



### Affected people/population:

Commonly found in middle aged and elderly people. In people over 45 years of age have greater susceptibility if their parents have suffered arthritis late in life.<sup>1</sup>

**Medications:** Analgesics (ex. ibuprofen, aspirin, mefenamic acid) are used to relieve pain. Steroids have no permanent value and antiarthritic drugs with harmful side effects should be avoided.<sup>1,3</sup>

**Surgery:** Operations are used primarily to relieve pain on motion and secondary to correct deformity, restore mobility, or provide stability. (ex. Osteotomy to improve alignment, Arthroplasty to replace part/s of the joint)<sup>1,2</sup>

**Physical Therapy Treatment:** Physical therapy proves helpful in relieving the symptoms, maintain joint mobility, and improve body mechanics<sup>1</sup>. Heat in form of hot packs, whirlpool, or paraffin baths<sup>6</sup>, or diathermy is beneficial<sup>1</sup>. Active, non-weight bearing exercises are helpful in preventing muscle atrophy<sup>4,5,6</sup>

### REFERENCES:

1. Handbook of Orthopaedic Surgery 10<sup>th</sup> Ed. By Brasher and Raney
2. Physical Rehabilitation by O'Sullivan 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.
3. MIMS (Medical Index of Medical Specialties) 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2006
4. Rehabilitation Medicine De Lisa and Ganz 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.
5. Therapeutic Exercise by Kissner 4<sup>th</sup> Ed.
6. Clayton's Electrotherapy by Kitchen and Bazin 10<sup>th</sup> Ed.

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