



TIP OF THE MONTH

Living with Arthritis

Do you know that there are over 100 forms of arthritis? On this Arthritis Awareness Month, we want to highlight the top two that we see on a regular basis. Osteoarthritis, the most prevalent, and rheumatoid arthritis, the most disabling. Those with arthritis do not have to live in pain, as there are treatment options beyond medication and surgery available.

Osteoarthritis (OA)

According to the Arthritis Foundation, osteoarthritis affects nearly 31 million people in the US. It occurs frequently in males before the age of 45 and in women after the age of 55. 70% of people over the age of 70 have x-ray evidence of osteoarthritis. OA is caused by the breaking down of joint cartilage and usually begins in a single joint.

SYMPTOMS OF OA INCLUDE:

- Pain in the joint after activity
- Morning stiffness that lasts less than 30 minutes
- Pain is worse later in the day
- Affected joints may swell, feel warm and become stiff after prolonged inactivity
- Characteristics include bone spurs, bony enlargements and decreased motion

Treatment for OA focuses on pain relief and the restoration of function to the affected joint. Medications are commonly used including NSAIDs, analgesics and steroid injections to reduce pain and inflammation. Physical therapy for OA patients focuses on exercise to reduce the stress applied to affected joints and distribute it to alternative tissues, and to stabilize the affected joint. Late stages may require surgical intervention, usually involving joint replacement.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)

Rheumatoid Arthritis affects nearly 2.1 million people in the US. It typically onsets between the ages of 30-60. The joints are primarily affected, but it can spread to integral organs as well. No single causes of RA have been discovered.

SYMPTOMS OF RA INCLUDE:

- Joint pain
- Joint swelling
- Stiffness
- Limited motion
- Redness / warmth near the joint
- Morning stiffness lasting over 1 hour

RA is primarily treated with medication that may include steroid injections and other complementary treatment. Extreme cases may require joint replacement or fusion.

As physical therapists, we utilize different approaches to the problems caused by arthritis, including:

- Developing a customized home exercise program
- Implementing stretches to keep joints more loose and flexible
- Working through a customized exercise program to increase muscle function for endurance and strength
- Incorporating modalities such as paraffin and heat to decrease pain
- Educating patients about joint protection, energy conservation and work simplification to protect and reduce external stresses on joints

If [arthritis pain](#) is limiting your ability to do your day-to-day activities, give us a call. We can work with you to reduce pain and improve function.

Call today to ask us how we can help you get back to enjoying the activities that are important to you!



“Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own.”

— Charles Dickens

TELL A FRIEND

The greatest compliment we can receive is for our patients to tell their friends and family about their positive experience with us. If you know someone who is experiencing pain or limitations and you believe they could benefit from therapy, please tell them about us.

We will ensure that they will receive great care and have a positive therapy experience with us!

A RECIPE FOR YOU

Roasted Brussel Sprouts

This side dish is so easy and tasty that it will easily become one of your favorites.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 lb brussel sprouts
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°
2. Rinse, cut the bottom of the sprouts off and halve them
3. Put the sprouts and the rest of your ingredients into a
4. Lay the sprouts evenly on a baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes
5. Flip them over halfway through for an even bake – and enjoy!



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