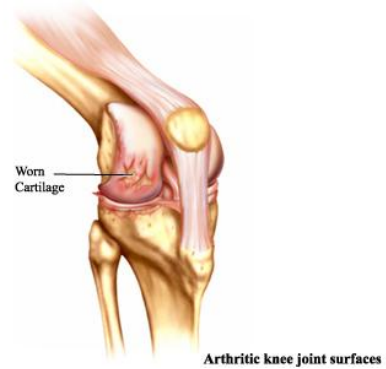


## OSTEOARTHRITIS

### DEFINITION:

Osteoarthritis, the most common form of arthritis, is a degenerative disease in which the cartilage that covers the ends of the bones in the joints deteriorates, causing the bones to rub together. This causes pain, loss of range of motion around the joints, and loss of movement.

Osteoarthritis is a condition typically associated with the aging process. It is caused by use and abuse/overuse of the joints. Joints that have suffered injuries are particularly affected. It is more common in women than men. It is also found in younger people.



### SYMPTOMS OF OSTEOARTHRITIS:

- Pain could range from mild to severe. This pain may occur at rest or may be experienced during activity.
- The most commonly affected joints are the knees, hands, spine, hips, ankles and shoulders.

### RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS:

- Age (the leading risk factor)
- Lack of exercise which keeps joints flexible and improves muscle strength
- Being a woman
- Overweight, leading to excess stress on the joints
- Strain from recreation or occupation
- A joint injury that never healed properly
- Poor posture
- Genetic defects that cause the cartilage to break down faster
- A combination of these factors.

### TEACHING TIPS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS:

- Plan low impact exercises on a daily basis such as walking, water exercises, and cycling.
- Utilize relaxation techniques.
- Plan stretching exercises and range of motion activities.

### RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ACTIVITIES:

#### High-risk activities:

- Baseball/softball

- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Football
- Handball/racquetball
- Downhill skiing
- Karate

Moderate-risk activities:

- Bowling
- Bicycling
- Rowing
- Ice skating
- Mountain climbing
- Ballet
- Canoeing
- In-line skating

Low-risk activities include:

- Recreational swimming
- Golf
- Fishing
- Ballroom dancing
- Walking

**RECOMMENDED WEB SITES:**

[Arthritis Foundation](#)

[Osteoarthritis Is Not Inevitable For Older People Who Play Sports](#)

Osteoarthritis fact sheet from [Medinfo](#)

This content was written by Andrea Woodson, Ph.D. student in Adapted Physical Education, Texas Woman's University, November 1999.

*Information on this sheet contains only suggested guidelines. Each student must be considered individually, and in many cases, a physician's written consent should be obtained.*