



Chicago Chiropractic & Sports Injury Centers Dr. Alden Clendenin DC, CCSP

A BETTER WAY TO TREAT OSTEOARTHRITIS & CARTILAGE CONDITIONS

Arthritis refers to inflammation of the joints. The most common of all arthritides is Osteoarthritis, which is also known as Degenerative Joint Disease due to its characteristic joint degeneration and loss of cartilage. The loss of cartilage often plays an integral role in the development of arthritis because cartilage is the gel-like shock absorber of the joints.

If the cartilage degenerates first the result is bone on bone grinding which causes attrition of the bony surfaces, this results in inflammation of the entire joint capsule & arthritis ensues. Conversely, however the inflammation can precede the loss of cartilage. This occurs because the body, trying to fight off the inflammation, increases the phagocytic resorption (phagocytes destroy by devouring) of the entire soft tissue of the joint. The importance of early diagnosis & aggressive / comprehensive treatment is paramount to aid in the recovery and prevent its succession.

Where does Osteoarthritis occur? It affects the weight bearing joints such as the knees, hips & spine. It also affects the joints of the hands & fingers due to excessive use. In the words of Osteologic researcher, Deed Harris M.D., *"The skeleton will deteriorate if it loses its natural shape. When the spine has lost its shape from front or side, rich lubricating fluid is unable to penetrate the joints, causing them to wear unevenly, dry out & become stiff. When the spine is properly shaped lubricating fluids are imbibed into the joints"*.

The first warning signs of arthritis can be subtle. Morning joint stiffness is often the first symptom. As the condition progresses, there is pain during motion which is aggravated by prolonged activity and relieved by rest. Osteoarthritis is usually quite easy to distinguish from other types of arthritis. More inflammatory arthritides, such as rheumatoid arthritis or gout, will cause the joints to be red, spongy & warm. In Osteoarthritis the joint will be cooler & hard.

Symptoms: Mild early morning stiffness stiffens following periods of rest, pain that is aggravated by joint use, and loss of joint function. **Signs:** Local tenderness, soft tissue swelling, joint crepitus (grinding / popping sensation with certain movements), Heberdene's nodes (bony swelling), restricted mobility or signs of loss of cartilage.

Causes of Osteoarthritis? Osteoarthritis can be divided into two classes, primary & secondary. In primary the result of years of wear & tear on the joints of the body cause the shock absorbing cartilage to degenerate. Ironically, damage to the cartilage causes the release of enzymes that further destroy cartilage components. With aging, the ability to restore & manufacture cartilage & ligamentous structures diminishes. Secondary Osteoarthritis is associated with some predisposing factor such as surgical removal of cartilage, disease process' that destroy cartilage, trauma or most commonly joints that are altered in their normal movement or "fixated". The term used to describe the altered movement of a joint that impairs bodily function is *subluxation*. Conventional medical treatment for Osteoarthritis utilize drugs called "*non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDS*" such as aspirin. Although these drugs are extensively used in the U.S., research indicates that they may actually accelerate the progression of joint destruction with further complication down the road. Additionally, these drugs, which are foreign to the body, are shown to cause a host of other unrelated side effects such as; gastrointestinal disorder, headaches, dizziness & vascular fragility. The NSAIDS accelerate the problem by suppressing the enzymes that manufacture cartilage components. Yet another example of drugs suppressing the symptoms while promoting the progression of the condition. A person may feel free of the symptoms while the arthritis silently gets worse.

What can be used instead of NSAIDS for Osteoarthritis? **Glucosamine Sulfate in combination with decompressive manipulation!** Glucosamine is a simple molecule that is natural to the body. Its function is to stimulate the production of Glycosaminoglycans (GAGs), the building blocks of cartilage & the mortar of the discs. These high levels of healing molecules are found readily in **CHONDRO-RELIEF PLUS**. Additionally, restoring movement to any fixated or subluxated joint of the body aids in the ability to stave off chemical breakdown of the joint. Give your body the ability to defend against Osteoarthritis. If you know of someone who may have Osteoarthritis consult Dr. Clendenin to avail of these & other arthritic benefits.

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