

Arthritis Explained - Know Your Pain.

The condition of arthritis is defined as a problem with the musculoskeletal system where there is stiffness, inflammation, pain and damage to the cartilage in the joints. The bones are protected in the joints by tissue called cartilage which acts as a buffer between the ends. Cartilage cells are called Chondrocytes and their needs are same as the other organs and glands in the body. All chondrocytes have a life cycle and when they die, new ones are made to take their place.

The swelling that is caused due to arthritis damages more cells of the cartilage and most of the time the body takes time to generate new cells. This is more so if the body is undernourished and lacks the required nutrients to repair or the joint has suffered an injury. The condition causes damage where instability, deformities and joint weakness can obstruct daily life. Arthritis is normally treated with physical therapy, medication and includes changes to the person's way of life or lifestyle. The last option left for the physicians to relieve the patients from discomfort is joint replacement surgery.

Arthritis has two main categories which is based on the areas of the body affected, 'localized' or 'generalized'. This is further divided in to sub categories. Localized conditions are bursitis and tendonitis and they affect the soft tissues surrounding the bones and joints. A sub-category of localized arthritis affects one or some of the joints like hip or knee joints. A generalized condition is a condition where the muscles and the soft tissues get damaged, in this condition there is no swelling or any kind of inflammation on the joints. This condition does not indicate joint damage. A common type of arthritis in this category is fibromyalgia.

The second sub category is one where there is inflammation and the whole body is affected. Under this category, rheumatoid arthritis would be an example of a condition you would see, along with psoriatic arthritis and gout. Other generalized conditions are polymyositis (muscles); systemic lupus erythematosus (skin, kidneys, or other organs); and vasculitis (any organ).

Arthritis and related illnesses are the cause of major disability in the U.S. and costs over 124 billion dollars a year in medical care and indirect expenses. Maintaining the right weight, eating fresh fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C and D are simple but effective measures to prevent and arrest osteoporosis, Regular exercise and consumption of up to 1000 to 1500 mg of calcium per day for adults would help them avoid injuries caused by sports activities.

However a person may suffer from multiple kinds of arthritis, in the United States of America around forty six million adults and about three hundred thousand children suffer from hundred medical conditions. As early on as infancy, this condition can begin, even though it is most commonly seen in adults that are over the age of sixty, in the primary form of osteoarthritis. The number of people suffering out of this condition is increasing proportionally with the increasing average age of the American population. With old age setting in people suffering with arthritis is increasing day by day.

About the Author

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