

## Joint Pain: Could It Be Arthritis?

People of all ages experience those little twinges in the joints - but could they be arthritis? This article takes a brief look at the symptoms and effects of this common condition.

**Definition of Arthritis.** Not all aches and pains in the joints are caused by arthritis and the definition of the condition is fairly broad. It's typically described as 'a disease that causes pain and loss of movement of the joints'. The word arthritis literally means joint inflammation (arth=joint, itis=inflammation), and refers to more than 100 different diseases, not all of which involve joint pain.

**Description of Arthritis.** Arthritis affects the movements you rely on for everyday activities - walking, kneeling, sitting down and so on. Arthritis is usually chronic, meaning that it can last on and off for a lifetime. Arthritis can affect many different areas of the body, and some forms of arthritis are associated with diseases of other tissues and organs in the body. People of all ages, including children and young adults, can develop arthritis.

**Inflammation,** one of the main symptoms of arthritis, is a reaction of the body that causes swelling, redness, pain, and loss of motion in an affected area and it is the major physical problem in the most serious forms of arthritis. Normally, inflammation is the way the body responds to an injury or to the presence of disease agents, such as viruses or bacteria. During this reaction, the body's immune system concentrates on the injured area, wiping out the cause of the problem, cleaning up damaged cells and repairing tissues that have been hurt. Once the immune system has done its job, the inflammation normally subsides and the area affected returns to a healthy state. In many forms of arthritis the inflammation does recede as it should, instead becoming part of the problem and damaging healthy tissues of the body. This may result in more inflammation and more damage - a continuing cycle that can change the bones and other tissues of the joints, sometimes affecting their shape and making movement hard and painful. Diseases in which the immune system malfunctions and attacks healthy parts of the body are called autoimmune diseases.

**Arthritis pain and inflammation of joints has many forms. Two of the most common are Rheumatoid arthritis and Osteoarthritis.** Rheumatoid arthritis can be one of the most disabling types of arthritis, with three times as many women as men affected, usually at a fairly young age (between 25 and 50). The disease may come on slowly or appear suddenly and typically affects the small finger joints, wrists, knees and toes. Along with swelling and pain of joints, some of the early symptoms of the disease may include fatigue, loss of appetite, weight loss and fever. Stiffness in the joints and surrounding muscles that lasts for several hours after getting up in the morning is a regular symptom. Many people with rheumatoid arthritis feel that it is influenced by the weather, stress, temperature and exercise. A few have periods when the disease seems to have gone away. Unfortunately, in most cases, the symptoms eventually return. The cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown. It is thought in some scientific fields that it may result from an infection, but there is no evidence that it is contagious. Whatever the cause, the joint lining becomes very inflamed and thickened, slowly destroying cartilage and bone and the treatment goal is to halt the inflammation and prevent the destruction of joints. Some recent studies indicate that omega-3 fatty acids (found in certain fish and plant seed oils) may reduce the inflammation of rheumatoid arthritis.

**Osteoarthritis causes the breakdown of joint tissue, leading to joint pain and stiffness. It commonly occurs in the hips, knees, feet and spine. It also may affect some finger joints, the joint at the base of the thumb and the joint at the base of the big toe.** It's one of the oldest and most common diseases in humans and probably affects almost every person over age 60 to some degree, even though by no means all people have it badly enough to notice any symptoms. Although there is no cure for osteoarthritis, proper treatment can help relieve the symptoms and prevent or correct serious joint problems. Therapy for any form of arthritis includes physical and occupational therapy to maintain mobility and range of motion in the affected joints. The proper kind and amount of this therapy will vary depending upon the underlying cause and upon individual factors that your doctor can discuss with you if appropriate. If you suspect that you may be suffering from the onset of any form of arthritis, it is advisable to seek medical help immediately as this will, if not cure the condition, at least help with long-term relief and continued mobility.

## About the Author

Urine Therapy is one of the most powerful, most researched and most medically proven natural cures ever discovered.

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