

# Wellness

## REVIEW

### Are Your Joints Wearing Thin?

Do you experience swollen and painful joints? Do your knees, hips and knuckles feel like they are on fire? Are you finding it harder to be active and agile? These complaints are common symptoms of arthritis. The word arthritis, when translated from the Greek words, *arthron* and *itis*, simply means "joint inflammation". There are many different types of arthritis, the most common being osteoarthritis. Osteoarthritis is a debilitating condition that is commonly seen in middle aged and older people; the constant pain and reduced mobility can make simple, everyday tasks more challenging and greatly impair quality of life.

#### The Impact of Arthritis

Osteoarthritis is a slowly progressing disease that involves degradation of the soft cushioning around the joints. It can lead to significant pain and inflammation in the joint, as well as loss of movement. The condition commonly targets the hips and knees, however many smaller joints such as the fingers and spine can also be affected. Unfortunately, the damage may already be done by the time you notice the discomfort. With the aid of quality nutrients, the symptoms of arthritis can be reduced and managed more effectively, enabling you to do things that may have been previously limited.

*Do you suffer from pain, swelling and inflammation in your joints? Ask us how we can help alleviate these symptoms.*

#### Nutrients for Knees and Hips

The following nutrients are a fantastic way to provide therapeutic benefits to help alleviate pain, swelling and inflammation in your joints:

- **Glucosamine:** Is a key building block for your joints. It may stimulate the production of substances which lubricate and act as shock-absorbers for the joints. Glucosamine encourages the rebuilding of cartilage that has been damaged and can be used as long-term support to protect against joint degeneration.
- **Gelatin:** Supports healthy joint structure and connective tissue repair. Gelatin may help reduce the pain of osteoarthritis and reduce requirements for pain relief medication. Patients with osteoarthritis noticed an increase in mobility and strength in affected knees after gelatin supplementation.
- **Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM):** Is a naturally-occurring nutrient found in small amounts in fruits and vegetables. As well as having antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, MSM is an essential building block especially for joints and cartilage. Combining glucosamine and MSM has been shown to be superior compared to using either nutrient alone, resulting in greater reductions in the pain and swelling of osteoarthritis.

- **EPA/DHA:** The omega-3 essential fatty acids (EPA/DHA) from fish oil can help to reduce the intensity of pain, inflammation and morning stiffness associated with arthritis.

#### Looking After Your Joints

Adopting the following simple dietary and lifestyle tips, can help keep your joints healthy and happy for years to come:

- Stay active. Exercising is essential to keep those joints mobile so try activities such as swimming, walking, cycling, yoga and daily stretching as these are great ways to keep your joints moving.
- Maintaining a healthy weight is essential for supporting joint health. Carrying extra weight can put pressure on your joints, especially hips and knees.
- Enjoy at least eight glasses or two litres of pure water each day. Reduce caffeinated beverages to one to two per day and minimise alcohol intake.
- Eating a diet that is full of anti-inflammatory foods can optimise your long-term health and vitality, as well as support your joints from top to toe. Aim for a diet plentiful in fruits and vegetables, unrefined grains and protein-rich foods such as fish, poultry, nuts and seeds. Also remember to limit lean red meats and sweets.

#### Use It or Lose It

There is a great deal of truth in the old adage "use it or lose it". Stay active and take positive dietary and lifestyle steps to keep you and your joints healthy and happy. Looking after the nutritional needs of your joints can help minimise their degeneration, as well as improve the pain, inflammation and impaired mobility of arthritis. If your joints have worn a little thin over the years, come in and talk to us today. We can help you optimise your joint health, reclaim your freedom and live the life you wish to lead.

*For advice on dietary changes, lifestyle modifications and supplements to minimise your osteoarthritis symptoms, talk to your Healthcare Practitioner today.*

