







Your self-care checklist

Suggestions to help you get the most out of your self-care plan.

Physical Activity		Modify Activities	
Walking, water based exercise and cycling are "joint friendly"		Protect or support joints when necessary by using splints or braces for affected joints	
Perform aerobic, range of motion and muscle strengthening exercises to help keep joints well supported, flexible and aligned		Modify your home or change how you do things when joints are painful	
Diet		Medications	
Eat healthy balanced portions from all food groups, and avoid "fast food" high in saturated fats		Follow your medication routine as closely as possible to best control osteoarthritis symptoms	

Check out these resources

Community Recreation Centres

Most cities have recreation facilities that often include swimming pools, water-based exercise programs, fitness rooms, walking tracks and gyms.

Walking Clubs

- www.walks.ca
- www.verywellfit.com/how-to-find-and-join-a-walking-club-3436714

Water Based Exercise

- <http://getswimming.ca/en/>
- <https://www.swimming.ca/en/>
- <https://ymca.ca/What-We-Offer/Aquatics>

Patient Resources

- www.arthritis.ca
- www.jointhehealth.org
- <https://oaction.unc.edu/>
- <https://gladcanada.ca/index.php/how-to-participate-in-glad-canada/>

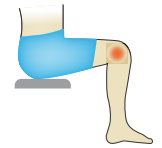
Talk to your doctor about your joint pain

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The facts will help

- Osteoarthritis occurs when there is a breakdown of joint tissues including the smooth cartilage that covers the ends of bones.
- The risk of getting osteoarthritis goes up if:
 - the person is female;
 - someone else in the family has it;
 - the joint is loaded abnormally and/or used improperly;
 - the person is over their ideal body weight;
 - the joint is injured.
- Young and old people get osteoarthritis, but as you get older your chance of getting it increases.
- Knees, hips and joints in the hands are most commonly affected by osteoarthritis.
- The most common symptoms of osteoarthritis are pain and stiffness, but can also include swelling.
- The best proven ways to treat osteoarthritis are through physical activity and getting to a person's ideal body weight.
- Osteoarthritis is a serious chronic condition that increases the risk of:
 - Diabetes;
 - Heart disease;
 - Stroke;
 - High blood pressure.

Common Symptoms



Pain and/or stiffness in or around a joint lasting for more than two weeks



Pain in joints, especially in hands and feet



Reduced strength and mobility in a joint or joints

Information for your doctor

What to share

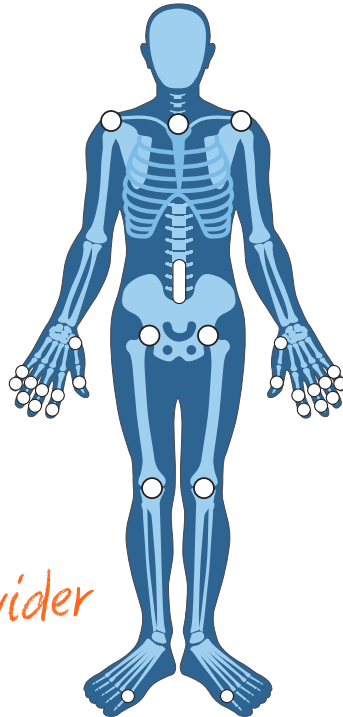
Rate your pain



Describe how your pain impacts your quality of life:

- Physical activity
- Sleep
- Mental Health (like mood or depression)
- Relationships
- Worklife

Which joints are hurting?



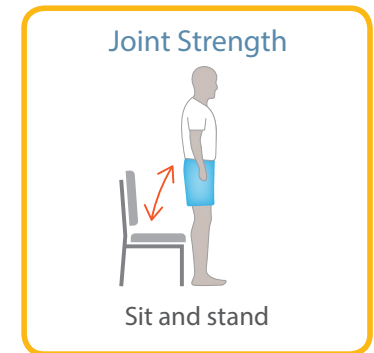
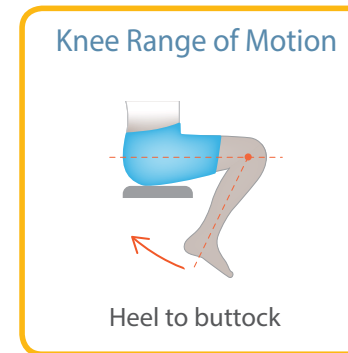
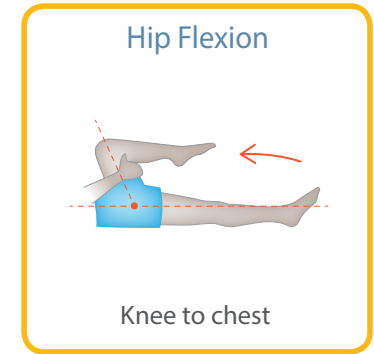
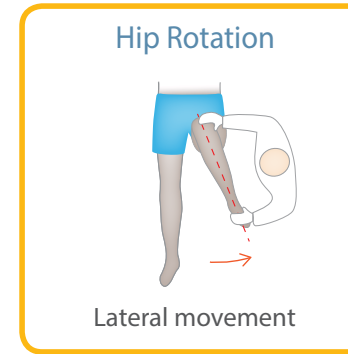
Qs for your healthcare provider

Here is a list of suggested questions to ask your healthcare providers about osteoarthritis:

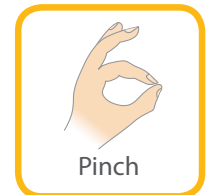
- Q Is my joint pain caused by osteoarthritis?
- Q What can I do to help my symptoms of pain and stiffness?
- Q What ways are proven to reduce my pain symptoms?
- Q Do I have to take medicine or are there other things I can do to help myself?
- Q How long will it take for the prescribed medication(s) to take effect?
- Q What can I do to help prevent further joint damage?
- Q Should I exercise if I have joint pain? How much and how often?
- Q What are reliable websites with more patient information on arthritis?

Your joint examination

What to expect



Hand function and strength



Other tests beyond the physical examination are not usually required and will only be ordered if there is a concern