



Summer sore points

Your natural guide to osteoarthritis.

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Four million Canadians have this in common: degenerative arthritis (also known as osteoarthritis or OA). Due to hormonal imbalances — which makes the joints more vulnerable to injury — three times as many women than men suffer from this painful and debilitating disorder. In fact, the prevalence of OA is two to tenfold between age 30 and 65 and it continues to increase after age 65.

Osteoarthritis involves the deterioration of the cartilage that protects the end of the bones, which is sometimes caused by injury or an inherited defect in the protein that forms cartilage. Joints often affected are the hands, knees, hips and spine.

Symptoms are characterized by pain, swelling and stiffness, especially in the morning or end of the day. Simple activities that can be taken for granted (think getting dressed or walking) may be challenging as the joints are inflamed and distorted. In fact, some sufferers find that damp and cold weather intensify their symptoms.

MOVE NATURALLY

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for pain and swelling are often recommended. However, there are a few OA sufferers who find that their long-term use of NSAIDs can cause stomach ulcers or gastrointestinal bleeding. According to a study reported in the *Annals of Internal*

Medicine, NSAIDs can lead to serious health problems, especially if you have mild kidney dysfunction. With that being said, here are a few natural approaches that can help enhance the repair and processes within the joints.

SUPPLEMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are many supplements for you to choose from for relieving symptoms of OA. Speak to your health care practitioner about glucosamine sulphate, omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin D. (See chart below for details.)

CONSUMPTION MATTERS

Some people with arthritis are sensitive to the alkaloids found in the nightshade family, which are also known as solanaceae.

SUPPLEMENTS FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS

TYPE:	Glucosamine sulphate	Omega-3 fatty acids	Vitamin D
RECOMMENDED DOSE:	1,500mg per day	2,800-3,000mg EPA + DHA per day	1,000 IU
WHAT IT DOES:	Improves joint mobility and slows deterioration of cartilage.	Reduces stiffness and pain; known to reduce inflammation, it helps produce anti-inflammatory prostaglandins.	Research suggests that low levels of vitamin D are associated with the progression of OA.
CONTRAINDICATIONS:	Talk to your doctor as some glucosamine products are derived from the skeletons of shellfish.	Not recommended if you are taking blood-thinning medications.	None.

As studied by Dr. Norman Childers, PhD, these alkaloids inhibit normal cartilage repair in the joints or promote the inflammatory degeneration of the joints. Childers conducted an informal study with over 5,000 arthritis sufferers and reported a 70 percent improvement in aches and pains when participants did not ingest nightshades such as: white potatoes, eggplant, tomatoes and peppers.

If you smoke cigarettes and you experience joint pain, you may want to consider putting the habit to rest. Although it's not a food, tobacco is part of the nightshade family.

EXERCISE

In the journal *Arthritis & Rheumatism*, it was reported that combining a weight loss program with exercise is more effective in managing knee pain than choosing either

technique alone. So get moving; walking, swimming and riding your bike are sound choices as they put the least amount of strain on your joints.

OUT AND ABOUT

When you're on-the-go, there's no reason to let your health derail. So check out these natural tips for relieving any sore joints:

1. Prepare some hot or cold green tea in a thermos. According to the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, green tea polyphenols work as antioxidants to protect the body from oxidative stress. In one study, mice that were given green tea were less likely to develop arthritis.
2. When the red light hits, use this time to tilt your head and roll your shoulders to relieve stiffness.

3. Ask your doctor about cushions for your car, as they can absorb vibrations during bumpy rides.

4. Pack a container full of fresh cherries. As reported by the *ARS Western Human Nutrition Research Center*, natural compounds found in plump Bing cherries may reduce inflammation due to their powerful antioxidants. ♡

REFERENCES

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NOTE
 Don't forget to consult your health care practitioner for any health concerns.



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