



Next Step Newsletter

Next Step
Physical Therapy
(516) 681-8070

April, 2010

Giving you information and answers to any physical therapy, health or fitness related questions

The scoop on osteoarthritis!

Practically everyone has heard of arthritis, but the truth is that most people don't really understand what arthritis truly is. That's perfectly OK because in reality, there is a lot that we in the healthcare field still don't fully understand about this increasingly common disease. Let's talk about what we know, and then tell you what we don't know.

Technically speaking, arthritis means inflammation of a joint (arth = joint, itis = inflammation osteo = bone). The name, unfortunately, doesn't do a very good job of describing the disease. I could fall on my knee and have it swell up—that's inflammation in my knee joint—but that would not be considered arthritis. The disease osteoarthritis is a deterioration of a joint. Another good word to use would be degeneration. An arthritic joint looks like it's been worn out. The pristine and smooth cartilage that lines the bone may be wearing or worn away. The bone may be deformed, no longer having a nice smooth shape, or having additional bumps, or spurs. These are the major reasons why one of the classic symptoms of arthritis is painful and/or limited joint range of motion.

Unfortunately, arthritis is considered a progressive disease, which means that it does worsen as time goes by. The question is, what can we do to either prevent or delay the progression of the disease? Better yet, how do we avoid getting it at all?

Common sense tells us that if arthritis looks like a worn out joint, then you get arthritis from doing too much—from being too active and wearing the joint out. This doesn't seem to be the case. Research has looked at this question and has been unable to directly link physical activity with an increased risk of arthritis. It also doesn't explain how people who have been completely sedentary their whole lives can develop arthritis. Genetics must play a role in the development of the disease, but we have also identified several risk factors that we may be able to control. Obesity seems to be highly correlated with an increased risk of arthritis. Losing weight lessens the forces on the joints. Having a bone or cartilage injury to that joint also greatly increases your risk of arthritis down the line. You had a knee scope to remove some cartilage when you were twenty—guess what—unfortunately, you have a higher risk of developing arthritis in that knee as you get older. Minor or mild knee injuries are less of a risk than larger, more major injuries. Arthritis continues to plague many, and while there is not a cure, there is certainly relief available. Research has shown that physical therapy can be very effective at relieving arthritic pain.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
★ **Next Step Physical Therapy would like to thank the following** ★
★ **people this month for referring someone to us:** ★
★ **Lindsay Delorenzo, Marie Mezzapesa, the** ★
★ **Santo family, and Peg Mancuso.** ★
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Updates

Welcome to the Next Step Newsletter!

Win a pair of movie tickets!!

The first 2 people to call us with the answer to this question wins a pair of movie tickets.

Is too much physical activity a cause of arthritis???

- If you have a friend or family member that you think could use our help please let us know or have them call us.
- If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed here please give us a call.
- If you have a question that you would like to have answered (maybe in the next newsletter) please don't hesitate to call.
- What topics are you interested in and would like to see in the newsletter? Let us know.

(516) 681 - 8070