

# Is getting arthritis inevitable?

Arthritis and the limitations it can place on us, unfortunately and mistakenly, has become an accepted part of life.

It is important to note that there are many different types of arthritis, Rheumatoid, Psoriatic and Gouty Arthritis to name a few.

Osteoarthritis, wear and tear arthritis, is a type of arthritis which when inflamed can cause pain, stiffness and can restrict mobility.

Osteoarthritis can be general, affecting many joints (like in the hands and fingers), or it can be more specific, affecting a couple of segments of the spine or a hip or knee.

Most experts agree that osteoarthritis stems from trauma to a joint and the joint heals incorrectly.

This incorrect healing causes an increased friction in the joints when you move, causing the cartilage (the padding between the bones) to wear out prematurely.

A simple way to explain this phenomenon is to think about driving your car and hitting a pothole, which knocks your car's front end out of alignment.

This would cause more friction on your tires and they would wear out prematurely.

Many people are told that one of their joints, a hip or knee; is "bone rubbing against bone."

They may be told that they have spurs in their neck or back or that they have a degenerating disc.

It is common to only associate arthritis with the elderly; however, early signs of degenerative changes can be seen with simple x-rays in patients in their twenties.

Currently, the most common treatment of arthritis involves taking painkillers, often NSAIDs (non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs) to stop the pain.

NSAIDs include Naprosyn, Aleve, Advil, and Motrin, to name a few.

Next time you watch television, count how many times you view an advertisement on these drugs.

Look through your favorite magazine and see more ads for these products.



## The Cianci Chronicles

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*(As told to Bruce Hotchkiss)*

After doing this, it's easy to see how NSAIDs are the most frequently prescribed drugs worldwide.

Thousands of people would attest to the effectiveness of these drugs to relieve pain.

But there has been much interest in the side effects of these medications

There is what has been called a "silent epidemic" of aspirin and NSAID related deaths in this country.

It has been reported that about 16,500 people die each year due to long-term use of these drugs.

Human joint cartilage is continually remodeled during growth and development and during adult life.

NSAIDs have been shown to interfere with normal healing and may actually speed up the degenerative (arthritic) process.

Drugs can provide short-term pain relief but the long-term effects are significant.

An approach that emphasizes limiting the degenerative changes rather than speeding up the process makes the most sense.

Fortunately there are many non-drug approaches to minimize the limiting effects arthritis can have on our lives.

Therapies that promote joint mobility (when appropriate) appear to be the most popular.

There are nutritional supplements

including glucosamine sulfate that have shown significant clinical benefits for arthritis sufferers without the side effects of the drugs mentioned earlier in this article.

Many people consult a doctor of chiropractic for muscle, bone and joint problems.

After the proper examination and evaluation it may become apparent that osteoarthritis may be interfering with this person's life.

Chiropractors adjust the misaligned vertebra in the spine that reduces the friction on the joints, which decreases pain, increases mobility and has been shown to slow the degenerative (arthritic) process.

In a study that was published in *Topics in Clinical Chiropractic*, 56.5 percent of patients in the chiropractic group reported no arthritis, versus 34.3 percent in the non-chiropractic group.

This study went on to say that elderly chiropractic patients report that they have better overall health, have less chronic conditions, and spend fewer days in nursing homes and hospitals.

It was also found that elderly chiropractic patients are more likely to report strenuous levels of exercise and are more mobile in their communities than non-chiropractic patients.

Most of us, if given the choice, would choose quality of life over quantity.

How active can we be?

These are questions we all ask ourselves as the years pass.

By educating ourselves about what makes our quality of life better for the long and short term, we can better position ourselves for the healthy active lifestyle we all want and deserve.

*(Cianci Chiropractic Center is located at 8737 Brooks Drive in the Easton Industrial Park. You may schedule a discovery session or attend a free bi-monthly Wednesday evening health enrichment workshop. Contact Cianci Chiropractic at 410-820-4070. You can also find Cianci Chiropractic online at [www.drcianci.com](http://www.drcianci.com).)*

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