

Osteoarthritis

What is Osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis is inflammation of one or more joints, usually as a result of wear and tear.

Signs & Symptoms

Joint pain; joint swelling; joint stiffness, especially in the early morning; grating sensation in the joint on movement.

Complications

Joint pain and stiffness may become severe enough to make daily tasks difficult. Some people are no longer able to work as a result of the pain and stiffness. In some cases, joints may become twisted and deformed.

What Causes Osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis results from the natural deterioration of body joints, usually starting in the late 40's, due to general wear-and-tear. The cushions (cartilages) between the joints' bones begin to break up, so bone-on-bone contact develops. Osteoarthritis is aggravated by being overweight, excessive weight carrying, and some hormonal changes. Osteoarthritis can start earlier in athletes and in people performing high-impact exercises over the long term.

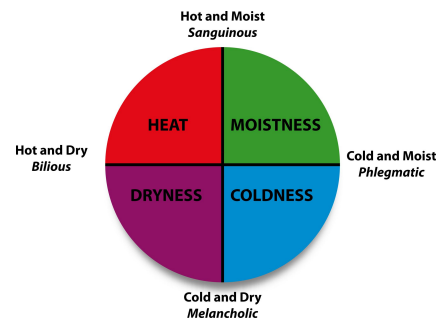
The Tibb View of Osteoarthritis

According to Tibb, osteoarthritis is associated with qualities of **coldness with dryness**, as it is generally worse during the colder seasons or colder times of the day.

Arthritic stiffness often worsens during periods of inactivity which exert a cooling effect on the body. With increased age, or over-use, the excessive heat created in the joint space due to movement can result in dryness. Increasing age also results in a slowing down of the body's metabolism, causing less blood to flow to the peripheral areas of the body. Blood brings about a balance of heat and moistness to the joints.

Individuals with a melancholic dominant/sub-dominant temperament are more predisposed to developing osteoarthritis. However, due to an improper diet and lifestyle, any temperament may develop arthritis.

People with a bilious temperament may develop osteoarthritis due to over-use, as these individuals are highly competitive and often unaware of, or ignore, their limits. Those with a sanguinous temperament, who are prone to over-eating and sedentary lifestyles, may also develop arthritis due to a build-up of metabolic wastes.



Management of Osteoarthritis

Management is aimed at **reducing the excess coldness with dryness**, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the qualities of heat and moistness**. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and causes of osteoarthritis.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors

Food and Drink

- Eat **mostly Hot & Moist foods** - such as dates, olive oil honey, turmeric and brown bread, **followed by Hot & Dry foods** - like celery, red pepper, garlic and oily fish.
- Eat **less of Cold & Moist foods** - such as rice, watermelon, cucumber and broccoli, and the **least amount of Cold & Dry foods** - like beans, beef, citrus fruit and yogurt.
- Increase body moisture by eating plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Drink two to three litres lukewarm water a day.
- Avoid dehydrating drinks (such as coffee, tea and alcoholic drinks), and sugar-rich fizzy drinks.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- **Breathing:** Early morning breathing exercises will help relax the joint-supporting muscles
- **Exercise:** Light to moderate aerobic or stretching exercises, such as a daily walk in the mornings and evenings. Cut down on strenuous exercise, as this damages the joint cartilage
- **Sleep:** Try for good quality sleep as this supports Physis. Listen to your body, and take adequate rest.
- **Meditation:** A Short meditation session will help deal with symptoms, especially pain
- **Elimination:** Boost regular bowel movements by eating high-fibre grains, such as brown rice, whole-wheat and oats.
- Massaging the affected joints also helps to increase the heat in that area, and so bring about increased blood circulation.

Herbal Remedies

- **Herbal:** Infuse a few slices of fresh ginger root in a cup of boiling water. Allow it to stand with the top covered for 30 minutes before drinking.
- **Detox:** Add Epsom salts to bathwater to help remove toxins and soothe inflamed joints.

