

ARTHRITIS

A Systemic Disease

Arthritis is a disease of the whole body (a systemic disease) most dramatically affecting the joints. The word "arthritis" may include more than 100 conditions, many that were formerly known as "rheumatism."

Osteoarthritis (OA)

Osteoarthritis or OA, also known as degenerative joint disease, is the most common arthritis of all; almost everyone over the age of 50 has a touch of it: "it is almost as inevitable...as graying of the hair. In many people there are no symptoms, others have pain and some can be incapacitated by it. OA often results from an unbalanced spine creating stress on the joints. Your body grows extra bone material in the joints ("lipping" and "spurring") to help deal with this stress. Sometimes the growths compress nerves, causing pain and affecting internal organs.



Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)

This is the crippler! RA destroys joints, affects the heart, blood vessels, eyes, skin, muscles and other organs causing fatigue, weight loss and acute pain. It often appears suddenly around ages 30 to 40 and may disappear just as suddenly! No one knows what causes it. Many researchers believe RA is an autoimmune disease where the body attacks itself!

Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis

This is similar to adult RA but in over half the cases the disease simply disappears. In less than one sixth of the cases there is severe disability, organs are affected, with fever, rash and pain in the joints. Its cause, cure, treatment, how it comes about or why it disappears is unknown. The rubella vaccine has been

discussed as a cause—up to 40% of those vaccinated with rubella suffered joint pain arthralgia, with nearly 2% going on to develop arthritis. There now exists a growing theoretical concern which links immunizations to the huge increase of...rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, lupus erthematosus, lymphoma, and leukemia.

The Medical Approach to Arthritis

Medicine offers no cure for arthritis. Since the underlying cause is unknown, symptom treatments including a lifetime of drugs for the pain and inflammation, heat, hot packs or exercises in warm water are suggested. If a joint becomes severely deteriorated, then surgery may be considered. Aspirin, while it may reduce pain, stiffness and inflammation, may require eight to 24 tablets a day and can cause stomach irritation, bleeding and ulcers. Drugs such as Tylenol, Indocin, Advil and Naprosyn can cause kidney damage and hemorrhage of the esophagus,

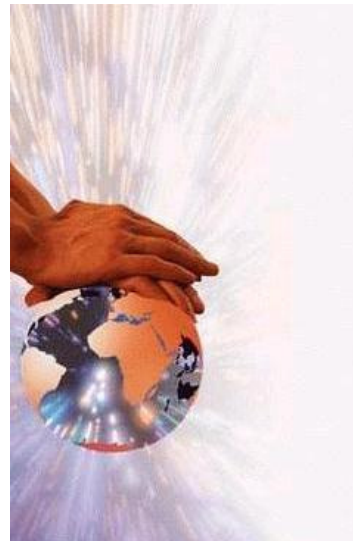


stomach, duodenum and small intestine. Approximately 10,000 arthritic sufferers die every year from the gastrointestinal complications of various arthritis drugs. Steroids, with prolonged use, may cause thinning and weakening of the bones. Gold salts may cause skin rashes and mouth ulcers. Robert Mendelsohn, MD cautioned people to be wary of new arthritis drugs, claiming that they have not been tested long enough to be assured of safety: "If you rush to take it, do so with [caution]...The longer a drug is on the market, the more will be known about its side effects...This occurred when Oraflex was removed from the market by its manufacturer, Eli Lilly, after 73 deaths from the drug were reported.



The Chiropractic Approach

For over a century arthritic patients have benefited from chiropractic care. Chiropractic care has even reversed osteoarthritis—something previously considered impossible. And yet chiropractic is not an arthritis treatment. It is a system of health care that improves the function of your entire body by removing or releasing blockages from your spin called vertebral subluxations. Vertebral subluxations weaken your nervous and immune systems, weakening your body. This can set the stage for sicknesses and diseases of all kinds—arthritis included.



What's In A Name?

Too many doctors...spend wasted time naming the patient's rheumatic diseases...More time should be spent on conducting chiropractic analysis to identify subluxations...and carefully research a patient's history to uncover personal habits that may have contributed to the development of the condition.



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