

6 Common Mistakes When It Comes To Treating Knee Arthritis



The world of knee arthritis can sometimes be a confusing place, and when you're in pain, even day to day activities can become a struggle. The key element to relieving arthritis knee pain is access to the right information as a means of understanding the right way to manage your pain. What you may instinctively think is best may actually be causing further aggravation. In this section, we take a look at the most common mistakes people make when addressing their arthritis knee pain.

Mistake #1:

Relying only on pain when choosing therapy and physical exercises.

Reacting to the pain is a natural and instinctual way to respond. However, relying on pain, alone, is not the most effective way to determine which exercises to engage in or which form of therapy is the best.

Why is it wrong to rely only on the feeling of pain?

While pain is the most obvious indication that something is wrong, pain is subjective to each individual and an unreliable indicator.

Does the presence of pain signal the existence of a problem? Yes.

Does the pain inform about the intensity or significance of the problem? Only partially.

Does the pain pinpoint the exact source of the problem? Not always.

For instance, when an individual is experiencing kidney problems, their lower back area will be painful. However, the kidneys are not actually located in the lower back area, but slightly below the shoulder blades. Or, when an individual is experiencing heart

problems, the pain can be perceived as gastric or even felt in the left hand, despite the fact that the heart is not located in these areas.

The same principle applies to arthritis pain: the area an individual feels pain does not fully coincide with the area where inflammation is present. In addition, inflammation can be present without pain being felt, meaning that the intensity of pain does not correlated exactly with the intensity of the inflammation. Instead, knee arthritis pain is more dependent on the friction between partially damaged parts of the cartilage of the knee joint and on the mechanical pressure of the fluid in the joint. This is the reason why almost all arthritis patients are meteo-dependent (sensitive to changes in the weather, for instance) as the pressure of the joint fluid reacts to changes in atmospheric pressure, which affects the level of pain felt in the joint.

These are some of the reasons why it's incorrect to be guided by the presence of pain, alone. While it's tempting to listen to the pain, by doing this, you may be able to ease the pain of today, but it can ultimately lead to a stronger arthritis flare up tomorrow. Letting pain guide your treatment and actions for an ongoing length of time can also cause usual remedies and methods to lose their effectiveness, leading to an increase of pain and limited mobility.

Mistake #2:

Incorrect application of topical medication based on using pain as a guide.

It's natural human behavior to apply medication to the area that hurts. Even other modalities, like self-massage, can often help ease pain, even without pain medication.

Why doesn't this work with arthritis pain?

The self-massage element of relieving pain has little to do with effective application of topical medication. While the sensation of pain may be very strong in one area, it does not often coincide with the skin's projection of the arthritis, which is the actual area where you want to apply the anti-inflammatory medication most intensively.

The sensation of pain is generated by very complex mechanisms involving a variety of nerve endings, receptors and other varying elements. Oftentimes, the most painful area is not where the most intense inflammation takes place. Inflammation is the site where the majority of structures that *generating* the sensation of pain are located, and this is where those suffering from knee arthritis pain get mistaken. The sensation of pain signals a problem, and this area gets the focus of the attention. However, by applying the anti-inflammatory medication only where it hurts, the medication isn't being used effectively. What happens? Because the *root* of the arthritis focus does not receive a sufficient amount of medicine, the pain does not go away. As a result, the exacerbation continues or gets even worse.

In addition, since topical oral forms of all NSAIDs have a number of side effects and can cause complications or even overdoses is used incorrectly. Extended improper use can

have negative effects on the gastric tract, liver, kidneys and heart. Topical anti-inflammatory medicines can cause local irritation and allergic reactions and after being absorbed through the skin and have negative effects on stomach, liver and kidneys.

Mistake #3:

Choosing pain relief medicine for arthritis without basing the decision on the objective data of the medicine's effectiveness.

Deciding which pain medication to use is challenging, so it's no wonder we listen to the latest advertisement, recommendations from friends, or comments on social networks. Comparing products online and hearing positive feedback from others who've experienced great results seems like the easiest way to decide which medication is best.

Why aren't online recommendations and reviews the best way to decide on medication?

The effectiveness of any medication is strictly individual. What helps one person can be ineffective for another, and drug effectiveness depends on many factors, like genetic characteristics of metabolism, diet, lifestyle, and even climate. While side effects are something that we typically understand can vary person to person, not everyone knows that the effectiveness of a drug or medicine can always vary drastically from person to person, which is why they should be evaluated based on objective indicators.

With regards to chronic diseases that last for years (knee arthritis being one of them) it's natural for people to research the latest remedies on the market. However, it's important to note that no drug for arthritis treatment will ever meet 100% of patients' needs. A survey conducted by the American Academy of Pain Medicine found that even comprehensive treatment with painkilling prescription drugs helps, on average, only about 58% of people suffering chronic pain.

Common examples of complaints coming from arthritis patients include: “one medicine does a good job at easing pain, but does not prevent flares” and “my NSAID was working for me last year, but it is useless now!”.

Why does this happens? As it stands, the best arthritis pain relief medication is being chosen without relying on the objective data about the effectiveness of therapy. As a result, a person will keep trying the newest drugs on the market, even without getting the desired result. Remember: different medicines will work differently for different people. Without relying on the objective indicators of the effectiveness of the medicine on a specific individual, the process of choosing the medicine is a game of hit and miss..

Mistake #4:

Choosing the wrong physical exercises.

The wrong physical exercise means the activity is either insufficient or excessive, and almost always on an irregular basis.

Why can exercising incorrectly be dangerous?

Inadequate exercise for the current condition of the affected joint may actually worsen the condition, because even arthritis sufferers need regular physical exercise. While inadequate exercise is a problem, excessive, uneven and irregular load bearing causes prolonged and frequent exacerbations, rapid destruction of the joint, progressive stiffness and possible future joint surgery. This isn't just relating to sports or high levels of fitness and can include simple movements during the day, such as the number and the duration of walks, going up and down the stairs and more. All these everyday activities greatly affect the condition of the knee joints.

Arthritis patients may find the level of activity easy to determine when it comes to sports and fitness, but the day to day physical activities aren't the main focus for many patients, despite the fact that a lack of physical activity does not help healing. In fact, a lack of physical activity can even accelerate the progression of stiffness in the joint. The lack of adequate exercise leads to developing of stagnation of processes in the joint, and the inflammatory process is aggravated causing the joint to quickly stiff and become immobile.

In addition to the deterioration of the knee joint, a lack of mobility causes obesity, and being overweight is especially dangerous for knee arthritis patients as excess body weight increases the mechanical load on the affected joint.

The right balance of physical activity is the key to maintain health on every level. The right level of exercise, without exerting too much, is necessary in terms of achieve a natural, non-inflamed state.

Mistake #5:

Choosing the wrong diet avoiding foods that aggravate arthritis.

We all know about the importance of maintaining a healthy diet, but when you already have a certain illness, like rheumatoid arthritis or osteoarthritis, it becomes even more important to choose the right diet. Certain diets can provide enough nutrients while also helping ease the effects of knee arthritis by curbing inflammation and even supporting weight loss, which makes a huge difference in managing joint pain.

Why do patients with arthritis often have problems selecting a 'personal' diet?

Many patients with any form of arthritis are unaware of specific requirements for their diet. People with other chronic diseases are far more informed in this regard. Patients with diabetes, gout, urolithiasis and others have clear recommendations and meal plans as well as means for estimation of their health changes depending on different type of diet. For example, diabetes patients have blood glucose meter, easy to use home device for monitoring their condition.

In case of arthritis patients, the task of choosing the right arthritis diet is more complex. It is not enough to follow a healthy diet with a balanced amount of carbohydrates, protein and fat for people with arthritis. Their diet should have anti-inflammatory properties and help to control weight. Both weight control and adequate physical activity decrease joint load, which allows being more active and improving joint condition.

Particular foods can aggravate arthritis and some can significantly ease the symptoms by decreasing inflammation. For example, many people report significant symptom relief and improvement in overall health condition by eating more fruits, vegetables, fish, and food rich in antioxidants or by following the Mediterranean diet. On the other hand,

sugar, processed and fried foods, and nightshades may trigger inflammation. Choosing an arthritis diet depends on many factors; including or avoiding certain products can help one person and be ineffective for another. Therefore, it is important to 'test' foods and supplements for each individual with arthritis and objectively monitor the individual's joints' condition to achieve positive results.

Mistake #6:

Not tracking inflammation levels and when inflammation occurs.

Inflammation is a key symptom of knee arthritis and can cause swelling and tenderness in the knee area.

Why is tracking inflammation an important part of treating knee arthritis?

Since inflammation can often be present in the knee even before any signs of pain start to surface, tracking inflammation can be a useful element in the overall pain treatment of knee arthritis. By keeping an ongoing log of when inflammation occurs, it can help determine the following:

- Which activities are causing inflammation (and which activities aren't)
- Which foods tend to increase inflammation (and which foods don't)
- Which medications are effective in treating the inflammation

Regularly tracking inflammation can offer greater insight into managing knee arthritis pain and determining the right course of action when it comes to leading a healthy, active lifestyle. Since many knee arthritis pain sufferers using pain medication when they feel pain, rather than targeting the area of inflammation, tracking inflammation can lead to a more targeted pain relief. In addition, certain activities may be aggravated the area, without you even knowing it. By tracking inflammation on a regular basis, you can help determine those activities that are causing inflammation and focus on those that don't.

The same principle applies to diet: certain foods cause inflammation in arthritis knee sufferers, but tracking inflammation can help identify foods that cause inflammation and those that are safe to eat.

Arthritis treatment is an ongoing journey, and by learning from these five common mistakes that people with arthritis, you can make sure you are on the right path to living a high quality life. SMA®T Arthritis is an objective device for monitoring your health and an essential element for those looking to improve their knee arthritis treatment and pain management.

For more information please visit our website:

<http://www.smart-arthritis.com/>