

Osteoarthritis is better known as the 'wear and tear' arthritis that develops over many years of wearing down the joints. Osteoarthritis can develop in any joint, and in the lower limbs, most often affects the knees, ankle, big toe and midfoot joints.

HOW OSTEOARTHRITIS AFFECTS THE JOINTS

Osteoarthritic joint pain develops because the cartilage that covers the ends of our bones is worn down. The purpose of cartilage is to help absorb shock, acting as a rubbery cushion. It also creates a slippery surface for bones to move smoothly and efficiently past one another. As the cartilage is worn down, bones start to rub against one another. This causes pain, restricts movement, and can ultimately change the shape of the joints, preventing them from functioning effectively.

WHAT DOES OSTEOARTHRITIS FEEL LIKE?

While the initial changes may be painless, the symptoms tend to progressively worsen as the bone damage worsens. You may experience:

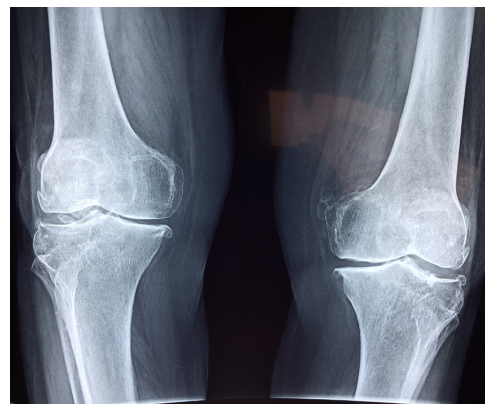
- ✓ Joint pain and tenderness, especially when moving them
- ✓ Swelling or redness
- ✓ Stiffness or restricted joint movement
- ✓ Creaking in the joints
- ✓ Changes to the bone shape (including irregular bony growth at the joints)
- ✓ Weakened muscles that surround or attach to the joints



WHAT CAUSES OSTEOARTHRITIS?

Osteoarthritis is caused by the natural use and loading of our joints over the years. The rate of the bony degeneration may be accelerated by:

- ✓ Injury to the joints
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ Infection
- ✓ Repetitive movements that overload and stress the joints



HOW IS OSTEOARTHRITIS TREATED?

While the degenerative changes to the cartilage from arthritis are irreversible, the painful symptoms can be managed to help improve your comfort and mobility. You can also reduce the rate of progression of osteoarthritis by addressing the potential causes, like misalignment in the joints. Here at Masterton Foot Clinic, we can help by:

- ✓ Assessing your footwear, ensure that it is helping you move comfortably and absorb shock, not putting extra loads on your joints
- ✓ Using custom orthotics to redistribute pressure away from painful joints and areas, cushion the feet, accommodate any prominent bones, help you absorb shock, and improve the overall biomechanics of the feet
- ✓ Prescribing low-impact exercises that can help maintain your joint strength and mobility
- ✓ Discussing your regular activities and how you can continue to do these while not speeding up the progression of osteoarthritic symptoms

Our Values – We:



love what we do



challenge the status quo



are stronger together



aim to continuously improve



do what we say, sometimes more, never less