

Conditions We Treat

Arthritis

Pain Relief For Arthritis

Does arthritis pain stop you from exercising, pursuing the hobbies you love, or even from enjoying quality time with your family? You're not alone. Arthritis affects more than 50 million Americans, and it's the most common cause of disability today. One of the worst things about arthritis is that its effects are often progressive. With each passing year, you might find it harder and harder to live without pain and to enjoy full mobility. Physical therapy with an experienced physical therapist can help you feel and move better, now and for the rest of your life. Contact our office now to get pain relief for arthritis.

What is Arthritis?

Arthritis is a disease that causes problems with your joints. While the majority of people who suffer from arthritis are adults, it can also affect children. There are several symptoms that may lead your doctor to consider a diagnosis of arthritis.

Those symptoms can include:

- Swelling in your joints
- Skin redness around your joints
- New bone growth around your joints
- Chronic fatigue
- Weight loss
- Restricted movement

Your family physician or medical specialist typically diagnose arthritis by taking a comprehensive medical history, performing a physical examination, and analyzing urinalysis and blood test results.

Causes of Arthritis

There are many different kinds of arthritis, but the two most common types are rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. In osteoarthritis, which is also called degenerative arthritis, the cartilage within your joints is damaged. In rheumatoid arthritis, which is also called inflammatory arthritis, your immune system turns on itself to start attacking your joint lining. Damage can include both cartilage and bone destruction over time.

Although the exact cause of arthritis isn't always known, the most common contributing factors are:

- Heredity: if your parents, siblings, or other immediate relatives suffer from arthritis, you're more likely to have it yourself.
- Age: the odds of arthritis increase as you age.
- Obesity: when the body has to support a lot of extra weight, it puts a major strain on weight-bearing joints.
- Joint injury: previous joint injury leaves your joints more vulnerable to developing arthritis.
- Infection: both bacterial and viral infections can have residual effects that contribute to arthritis.

No matter what the cause of your arthritis, there is hope. Your physical therapist can help you live a full life again.

How Physical Therapy Helps Arthritis

Although there isn't currently a cure for arthritis, there are highly effective solutions for arthritis pain and mobility issues. While medication can help with pain, it provides only temporary relief that does nothing to solve your long-term issues.

Physical therapy is a powerful and non-invasive way to get pain relief for arthritis as well as freedom from your other symptoms — all without medication. To get the best possible outcome, physical therapy should begin as soon as you're diagnosed with arthritis. This can help ensure that your symptoms don't become debilitating in the long term.

Physical therapy helps with arthritis in many ways. Your therapist will help you strengthen your body while still protecting your joints using a customized exercise plan. You will learn how to maximize your range of motion, stretch tight areas and learn how to use proper posture and body mechanics. Your physical therapist will use manual therapy to optimize your joint and muscle mobility. If you need a medical device like a walker, you'll learn the best usage techniques to guard against injury while still growing stronger. When your body is strong and your joints are properly protected, you'll experience fewer symptoms and have a lower chance of injury.

Your physical therapist also helps with natural pain relief. You'll use effective pain relief methods such as heat application, cold pack application, and ultrasound therapy. You'll have some of these pain relief treatments here at our facility, and you'll also learn how to perform natural pain relief treatments like heat or ice application at home or self tractioning as needed. Ask us about the Class IV laser and see if it would benefit you. Your physical therapist will make sure that you have the tools you need to feel your best.

Arthritis pain, stiffness, and mobility problems don't have to rule your life any longer. Our physical therapy team delivers expert evaluation, customized treatment programs, and great results. **Contact us** anytime. We're ready to help you put arthritis pain in your past. Visit us at Healing Hands Physical Therapy 58 Parkland Plaza, Suite 100, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

FAQs

What causes arthritis pain?

Because arthritis is a catch-all term, pinpointing what causes arthritis may be difficult. In most cases, arthritis is caused by overuse, wear and tear, or injuries. It is also possible for arthritis to be caused by infections, such as Lyme disease, an immune system dysfunction, such as rheumatoid arthritis, or an abnormal metabolism, which can lead to gout.

What are the different types of arthritis?

There are over 100 different types of arthritis, containing monoarthritis (where only one joint is affected) and oligoarthritis (where multiple joints are affected). Some of the most common forms of arthritis are osteoarthritis, which develops from "wear and tear" of cartilage, and rheumatoid arthritis, which develops from overactive immune systems.

Is exercise good for arthritis pain?

Targeted exercises can help ease your arthritic pains. It is possible to maintain an active lifestyle while living with arthritis, but you may need some assistance. Your physical therapist will conduct a physical evaluation to determine what the best course of treatment will be for you. Your physical therapist will then guide you through prescribed gentle exercises that become more intensive as you progress in your treatments, in order to help you achieve your highest levels of physical capability.

What is the best pain relief treatment for arthritis?

Regardless of the cause of arthritis, physical therapy plays a major role in the treatment of its symptoms. Physical therapy should always be the first method of treatment, before resorting to more aggressive procedures, such as surgery. In fact, in many cases, physical therapy can even eliminate the need for risky treatment methods altogether, such as harmful pain-management drugs or invasive surgical correction. If the condition is severe and surgery is required, physical therapy can also help you prepare and recover from your procedure.