

# LIVE WELL WITH ARTHRITIS

Omega 3 oil is an 'essential fatty acid' meaning your diet needs to provide it in sufficient amounts or a deficiency will develop over time. The reason for this is that the body has an ability to convert fats from one type to another, however it is not able to create sufficient amounts of the Omega 3 type from other fat types.

Although increasing the intake of omega 3 fats has been associated with improvement of a long list of health problems including learning difficulties and brain development in children, improved blood pressure regulation, arthritis, skin disorders, bowel disease and arthritis to mention a few it is best to avoid developing these problems in the first place by insuring regular sufficient intake. That is why we recommend supplementing with Nordic Oil if you do not regularly consume oily fish for example Anchovies, Sardines, Herring or Mackerel.

At **best practice chiropractic** our purpose is to help you and your family achieve optimal health by providing you with evidence based advice and treatment to encourage you back to a physically active life.

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# Either you have it – or you will develop it !

If you don't already have osteoarthritis, it is almost a certainty that you will develop it. Statistics show that about half the population have it at 40 years of age and that almost everyone over 60 is affected by it to some extent – although many are not aware of it.

Osteoarthritis is a chronic disease, which is characterised by gradual damage and destruction of the joint cartilage.

Symptoms of osteoarthritis vary depending of the joint it affects.

## Common symptoms:

- **Acute locking and stiffness of the neck or lower back.**
- **Headaches**
- **Back and neck pain**
- **Pain and stiffness in the affected joint (hip, knee, toes and fingers).**



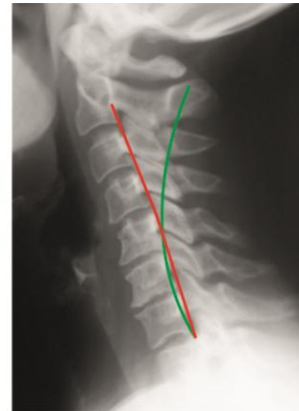
## HOW IS OSTEOARTHRITIS DIAGNOSED?

The diagnosis is made on the basis of an X-Ray examination. The appearance of cartilage thinning and the formation of bone changes is indicative of the disease. It is not possible to see the earliest changes of osteoarthritis on an X-Ray but we know that abnormal curves of the spine and abnormal joint position already within a few weeks begin to affect the cartilage adversely.

In addition to an X-Ray examination the complete assessment should also include a clinical examination where effects on nerves or other problems can be identified.



Normal Neck Curve



Straight neck

## TREATMENT OPTIONS

There are two types of treatment for osteoarthritis. One is treating the **symptoms** whereas the other is focussed on improving and minimising the **impact** of the disease itself.

## Symptom Masking Treatment

Symptom based treatment involves most commonly either pain killing anti-inflammatory medication (Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Diclofenac Sodium, Naproxen) or joint injections (corticosteroids). For more advanced disease the treatments involve either burning of the nerves (denervation) or as a last resort joint replacement surgery. The side effects of anti-inflammatory medication can be stomach ulcers and long term use can cause an acceleration of the osteoarthritis itself.

## Functional Recovery Based Treatment

This treatment approach has the aim to improve and later maintain the joints' function as close to normal as possible. Keeping the joints mobile can delay the further advancement of the disease process. Treatment often combines the following:

- **Chiropractic treatment / Adjustments of the restricted joints**
- **Massage / Triggerpoint Therapy**
- **Stretching & Exercise**
- **Glucosamine sulphate**
- **Omega 3 oil supplement**
- **Vitamin D supplement (September-April)**

The above treatment as a 'package' is an effective strategy aiming not only to minimise or remove pain, but also to achieve the best possible function of joints and muscles, and reduce the likelihood of setbacks.