

## Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: [Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca). You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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**Proposed publication date:** Nov. 8, 2021

**Content provided by:** Alberta Health Services

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## Living with Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is a condition that affects a person's joints. It's caused by cartilage breaking down. As the cartilage breaks down, it makes the bones rub against each other. It is painful and can cause everyday movements to hurt.

### Osteoarthritis causes

No one is sure what causes osteoarthritis but it has been linked to aging, joint injuries, obesity and genetics.

### Osteoarthritis symptoms

It usually affects the spine, hips, hands, knees and feet. It can cause:

- Pain
- Stiffness
- Muscle weakness
- Deformed joints
- Reduced range of motion and loss of use of the joint
- Cracking and creaking

### Osteoarthritis treatments



Treatment is available. Speak with your family doctor to find out what is best for you. Treatments may include:

- Pain medicine
- Pain-relieving gels or creams
- Steroid shots
- Physiotherapy
- Walking aids
- Applying heat or ice to the joint
- Losing weight, if you're overweight
- Exercising to strengthen your muscles
- Surgery
- Acupuncture
- Natural health products

For more information about living with osteoarthritis, search "osteoarthritis" at [myhealth.alberta.ca](http://myhealth.alberta.ca).