



How to fight the pain of osteoarthritis

Registered osteopath Nicky Sharp, who practises at the Nova Dental Care centre in East End Road, explains the pain of osteoarthritis and how to treat it.

One of the most common conditions I treat as an osteopath is osteoarthritis, which is inflammation resulting from wear and tear of the cartilage on the joint surfaces.

It is mainly found in the large weight-bearing joints, the hips and knees, although it can also occur in the spine, the hands, the finger joints and the big toe.

Sufferers experience pain after prolonged use of the joint and often stiffness first thing in the morning, or after a period of inactivity.

Your gender, genetics, hormones, skeleton, immune function, weight and injuries can all play a part in the onset and progress of this condition. Unfortunately we have no control over our parentage or sex, but we can try to control the other factors.

Available treatment

The main aim of any treatment is to relieve pain and to keep the joint working. This can be achieved by physical therapies such as osteopathy, chiropractic or physiotherapy, as well as hands-on treatment and the prescription of strengthening and stretching exercises. Acupuncture, ultra sound, and electronic stimulation (for example, a TENS machine) have also proved beneficial.

Medical pain relief will range from simple analgesics, anti-inflammatory drugs and creams to steroid injections and surgical replacement.

In addition, dietary supple-

mentation with glucosamine sulphate and essential fatty acids can reduce pain, as can avoiding foods from the night-shade family (aubergine, potatoes, tomatoes and peppers), and reducing your intake of red meat and caffeine.

Tips for managing your arthritis:

- Take regular exercise such as walking or swimming.
- Use a walking stick in the opposite hand to minimise weight-bearing on the affected joint.
- Take a daily supplement of glucosamine sulphate (1,500mg per day). This should be taken with vitamin C to help absorption - vitamin C with flavonoids is best. A period of at least three months should be allowed before the benefits are felt.
- Take a daily supplement of essential fatty acids, either cod liver oil or evening primrose oil. Alternatively, eat grilled or baked fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel or tuna.
- Avoid caffeine, red meat, alcohol and cigarettes.
- Cut down on dairy products, citrus fruit, wheat, fried foods and refined carbohydrates.
- Avoid potatoes, tomatoes, aubergine and peppers.
- Use hydrotherapy on the joint (daily hot and cold showers) to

improve blood flow to the area and reduce inflammation.

To make an appointment with Nicky, contact her on 020 8815 9433.

Party day for Barnet carers

By Daphne Chamberlain
Barnet Carers Centre celebrated its tenth birthday with an Open Day and party at its Ballards Lane headquarters. Among the party balloons were letters and cards of appreciation, including several from children.

A surprisingly large number of young people aged between five and 18 years care or help care for a relative, and BYCAS (Barnet Young Carers and Siblings) supports them with clubs, parties, outings, newsletters, help with homework, and general advice and friendship. The siblings are young people who, though they may not themselves provide care, are affected by brothers or sisters who need it. BYCAS is one of several specialised services available from the Centre.

Another is help and support for carers of people with mental health problems, and the Centre is looking at setting up a practical, problem-solving course for coping with dementia. Carers of adults with learning disabilities will be welcomed at Valuing Carers Day, 10am-3pm, Wednesday 26 April, at Avenue House, N3.

As we reported last month, there are currently 3,000 carers registered on Barnet's database, but the last census revealed ten times that number in the borough. 98% are reached through GPs, and the Trust is looking for outreach volunteers to help identify carers in their local surgeries.

Staff at the Centre were pleased with the response to the Open Day. Their aim is to build up a friendly, helpful relationship with carers, which will continue even if those cared for die or move away.

For more information, or to help in any way, please contact Barnet Carers Centre on 020 8343 9698, or e-mail admin@barnetcarers.org.

Were you fooled?

This being the April edition of *THE ARCHER* we thought we'd pull your leg with one of our stories. Did you spot the April Fool? Thanks to David Tupman for his entirely fictional account of plans to bring an Olympic training centre to East Finchley on page 3.

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, at publication.

Letters to the editor

Medical emergency, office hours only

Dear Editor,

I sympathise with Miss Schweizer, who waited an hour and a half for a response from Barn Doc, the local medical telephone service, and was then advised to call an ambulance (*THE ARCHER*, February 2006).

Recently, after accidentally taking a second dose of my daily medication, I called NHS Direct. It was midnight, and I was anxious. The instructions issued with the medication tell you to get medical advice immediately if anything like this happens. I waited over half an hour before anyone took my call, with a recorded message telling me that this was a busy time. Between nine and five was a better time to call, the message said.

Eventually, a receptionist asked me the required questions, and then said a nurse would phone me back in up to an hour's time. It was, in fact, an hour before this happened. She told me that there was probably not too much to worry about, but if any adverse symptoms appeared to call back.

"What, wait another hour and a half, with symptoms this time?" The nurse was pleasant and sympathetic. She apologised for the delays, blaming shortage of staff.

Would I have done better to have phoned a hospital A&E department? Apparently not. I was told they would only have referred me to NHS Direct.

As I hung up, I thought of all the accounts we hear of ambulances being called out needlessly. Like most people, I hope I would never do this, but for the first time, I could imagine that someone perhaps elderly, infirm, very nervous, without transport or money for a cab, might be driven to do so. And that is a sobering thought.

Yours faithfully,
Eveline Nicholas,
High Road, N2.

CCTV to protect our property

Dear Editor,

We have had two cars broken into within the last month outside our home at the tube station end of East Finchley and one car broken into at the end of last year. The break-ins occur either on a Friday or over the weekend and it is costing a great deal of time and money to repair the broken windows and regain the use of our cars. Apart from receiving a crime number, nothing appears to be done to stop this criminal vandalism.

As a payer of a high council tax and a payer for parking permits, I feel that we should have some protection from criminals in this area and hope that CCTV could be installed, as the police force is spread so thinly in the area.

Regards
Deanna Kaye
Address supplied

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

An accident waiting to happen

Dear Editor,

We have a number of one-way streets in East Finchley designed to keep traffic moving smoothly. I've been alarmed recently to see No Entry signs being openly flouted.

At the bottom end of Trinity Road, cars are forbidden to turn right into Church Lane over the railway bridge towards East End Road but I've often seen a morning driver do just that (the same culprit each time).

He or she turns right where they shouldn't and goes over the one-lane bridge into the face of oncoming traffic. Not only are they disobeying the law but they are putting the lives of other motorists and pedestrians at extreme risk, all to cut a couple of minutes off their journey, I suspect. This is criminal recklessness.

I've seen the same disregard of one-way systems and No Entry signs on Park Road and Market Place near Holy Trinity School where many cars seem to drift through the No Entry sign without caring. Needless to say, this is particularly dangerous near a primary school where there will be a large number of children and parents crossing the road.

Please, all drivers, take notice of the road signs. They are there for a reason, not to make your life difficult. If you don't, it's simply an accident waiting to happen.

Yours faithfully,
Ian Chavasse
Leslie Road, N2.

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KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Hope I die before I get old

Welcome to the world of eternal youth where 50 is the new 30 and 30 is just a new pair of trainers away from teenage kicks. So what if The Who hoped to die before they got old, now what's left of them is getting in another tour before they collect their bus passes. But I can live with that, what I can't live with is my youthful excesses turning up on BBC4 as a history programme.

The thought police at brainwashing house destroyed another outpost of rebellion by sanitising the history of the NME and allowing the historians to poke around in the entrails. OK, so they allowed Nick Kent to be the licensed joker amongst the apologists and nostalgia merchants. It wasn't pretty, but that's never worried the NME before, so why should it now?

That's the problem with the Getting Old business, what starts out as being dangerous and edgy ends up as nostalgia. What was banned by Radio 1 when it was released is now someone's record of the week on the 'do you remember this?' show on Radio Back End of Beyond, somewhere between the Carpenters and Westlife. Even the Pistols re-formed for the money, but John Lydon had the honesty to admit it was a nightmare. All right, maybe not his, he got paid, but it sure was mine.

Rebellion has gone the same way. There are kids out there who grew up hearing their parents' Jam and Buzzcocks 45s. How do they rebel against rebels like that? They can't refuse to wear anything but black because their dad did that; they can't even bring home a Green Day disc because their mum will nick it to play in the Volvo. Fair bets a tattoo won't faze mum and dad because they got matching ones at Glastonbury back in '85.

See, that's the problem with rebellion. It gets turned into nostalgia and leaves you with nothing left. The only way to really wind up the oldies is to embrace something bland and as safe as possible. Maybe that explains Dido, James Blunt and this sudden interest in the long-dead Nick Drake. Who cares? I'm going to wind up the kids with the Only Ones and then hit the streets. The Buzzcocks are playing and it really is yesterday once more...