

# Arthritis Myths Debunked!

## #1 Myth | Arthritis cannot be treated or prevented

**FACT** While there's no cure for arthritis at the moment, today's treatments are very effective in managing the condition. Early and consistent treatment can control symptoms and lead to higher rates of remission.

Arthritis is caused by varied factors, including some that cannot be controlled (gender, family history, genes and age) and thus cannot be prevented. But healthy lifestyle habits can reduce the risk: healthy weight, regular exercise, avoidance of injuries, good posture and not smoking.



Good posture



Avoidance of injuries



Not smoking



Healthy weight



Regular exercise

## #2 Myth | Arthritis can be treated with glucosamine

**FACT** The effects of glucosamine are not proven and research is mixed on whether they really help with arthritis pain and stiffness.

Glucosamine is safe to take and may provide pain relief for osteoarthritis but is generally not as helpful for inflammatory arthritis. Glucosamine does not slow down the rate of joint degeneration.



## #3 Myth | Arthritis gets worse on rainy or cold days

**FACT** Arthritis does not 'get worse' in cool weather, but affected areas can feel more sore and stiff, as colder temperature and lower air pressure cause fluid in the joints to thicken and stiffen. Tendons, muscles, and scar tissues also expand and contract, leading to more pain in the joints that are affected by arthritis.



## #4 Myth | Arthritis only impacts the elderly

**FACT** There are many different types of arthritis. Osteoarthritis, caused by degeneration of the joint cartilage tends to start in middle age and worsens with age. It can also affect people in their 20s and 30s due to joint injury or repetitive stress. Inflammatory arthritis, such as rheumatoid arthritis, tends to occur between age 30 and 50. It can also affect children.



## #5 Myth | Arthritis means you cannot exercise

**FACT** Exercise is beneficial in managing arthritis and helps:

- Reduce joint stiffness
- Improve range of motion
- Strengthen the muscles around joints
- Maintain bone and cartilage health
- Maintain healthy weight



Consult your doctor on suitable exercises and ensure your arthritis is under control. Listen to your body and do not overwork joints and muscles.

Contributed by Dr Lee Weixian, Associate Consultant, Division of Rheumatology, Department of Medicine

