

# Osteoarthritis

## National clinical guideline for care and management in adults

Developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Chronic Conditions at the Royal College of Physicians

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis and one of the leading causes of pain and disability in the UK. Frequently described as 'wear and tear', its symptoms vary from minimal to severe pain and stiffness and its prevalence increases steadily with age. OA brings an immense burden to the patient, their family and carers, the NHS and society at large. This guideline for its care and management in adults is the full version of the most recent recommendations from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE).

OA is responsible for considerably morbidity and is a common reason for GP consultation. It is also difficult to treat and the varied treatment options need to be carefully matched to the person's needs and lifestyle. The guideline contains a number of recommendations which are not currently routine practice for many clinicians, such as early consideration of topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for knee and hand arthritis.

People living with OA and those involved in their care also need to be fully aware of the possibilities for self-management, and the options for thorough assessment of the condition and the optimal sequencing of therapies.

The guideline is an invaluable resource for researchers and healthcare professionals who can contribute to the better care and management of OA in adults. We hope and expect it can be used both to practical benefit and to raise the profile of this sometimes neglected condition.

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