

NON-OPERATIVE HIP AND KNEE PAIN MANAGEMENT

General recommendations to help alleviate pain and improve mobility without surgery:

Medications

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs): these include medications such as ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), naproxen (Aleve), or meloxicam (Mobic).
 - o *If you have kidney disease or take blood thinners, please check with your primary care provider before taking these medications.*
- Topical diclofenac sodium (Voltaren) is an over-the-counter medication that can be used.

Injections

There are two types of injections that are commonly performed and can be repeated every three months as needed:

- Cortisone injections can provide you with pain relief and reduce inflammation.
- Viscosupplementation (knees only) is a treatment in which hyaluronic acid (HA) is injected into the joint. It can help joints to work properly by acting like a lubricant.

Please note, we cannot do a joint replacement surgery for 3 months after an injection.

Weight Loss

Weight loss can reduce stress on your weight-bearing joints, such as the hip or knee. You put three to five times your body weight across these joints throughout the day – especially during stair climbing and getting in and out of a chair. Every ten pounds of extra weight that you carry can result in fifty pounds of weight-bearing pressure across your hips and knees. Losing weight can result in reduced pain and increased function, particularly in walking.

Exercise

An exercise routine can help increase your range of motion and flexibility as well as help strengthen the muscles in your legs. We understand that when you have advanced arthritis, exercise can sometimes increase pain in your hip and knee joints. Therefore, we can work together to help develop an individualized exercise program that meets your needs and lifestyle.

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Physical Therapy

Physical therapy to strengthen the muscles around your joint may help absorb some of the shock imparted to the joint. Physical therapy can help to reduce the pain, swelling, and stiffness of osteoarthritis, and it can help improve joint function. It can also make it easier for you to walk, bend, kneel, squat, and sit.

Braces and Splints

Braces may be especially helpful in knee arthritis if the arthritis is centered on one side or the other. A brace can assist with stability and function. Braces are not for everyone, and they can be difficult to fit for some people.

Alternative Therapies

Examples of alternative therapies include the use of biologic treatments (stem cell and PRP injections), acupuncture, massage, supplements, and magnetic pulse therapy. While there is some evidence suggesting these treatments can help ease the pain of arthritis the data is somewhat inconclusive.

When you feel like you have exhausted all these non-surgical therapies and have joint pain that limits you on a daily basis, it may be time to consider surgery. Please contact your orthopedic surgery team for more information.

Additional Resources

The [American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons](http://www.aahks.org) (AAHKS) website has more evidence-based and peer reviewed information for patients with hip and knee arthritis like this resource.

SOURCE CITATION:

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