

# BACKDOOR READING FROM YOUR PARISH NURSE

MAY, 2011

## LIVE BETTER WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS

If you've been diagnosed with Osteoarthritis(OA) you're not alone. This chronic disease affects some 27 million Americans. OA is characterized by the breakdown of cartilage—the part of the joint that cushions the ends of the bones and allows movement. As cartilage deteriorates, bones begin to rub against one another. This can cause stiffness and **PAIN** that make it difficult for you to use

that joint. OA can also damage ligaments, menisci and muscles. Over time OA may create a need for joint replacement.

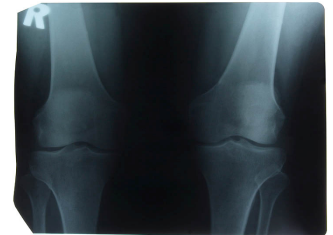
There are two types of OA—primary and secondary. Primary OA is generally associated with aging (wear and tear) of life. However, not everyone gets OA. It is a disease and not part of the aging process. Secondary OA tends to develop much

earlier in life due to injury or obesity.

Usually joints affected by OA become stiff or painful first thing in the morning, or during and after use. They may also be stiff after inactivity. It's so important to stay physically active, despite any initial discomfort you might feel. Exercise keeps joints moving, which helps them stay lubricated and builds strength.



SHOULDER



KNEES



HAND

### CAUSES

- Age
- Obesity
- Injury or overuse
- Genetics or heredity
- Muscle Weakness

## OSTEOARTHRITIS TREATMENT

There is no cure for OA. Current management centers on controlling joint pain and stiffness while preserving your quality of life and your ability to go about everyday activities. Analgesics and topical pain relievers

combat discomfort but don't fight inflammation. Oral or injectable corticosteroids control inflammation.

Surgery including joint replacement, may be an

option for extremely damaged joints. But physical activity and weight loss are the two most effective non-drug treatments for OA. The word of the day is:

**MOVE !!!!!**