



5 MYTHS ABOUT ARTHRITIS

Arthritis in your feet is not only painful, but it can also be quite debilitating, making it difficult to stand, walk and perform basic daily tasks. There are countless myths surrounding this condition. For starters, many people think arthritis describes a single disease, but it is an umbrella term that describes over 100 disorders that cause joint damage and pain.

In honor of *Arthritis Awareness Month*, we thought we debunk five other myths about arthritis.

Arthritis is a condition that is inevitable for older adults.

Osteoarthritis - the "wear and tear" arthritis that results from a breakdown of cartilage in the joints over time - is the most prevalent form of arthritis. However, it is not a foregone conclusion that all older people will develop arthritis. In fact, there are several ways to reduce your risk and even prevent arthritis. These include maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, and not smoking. Talk to us about your risk factors and a strategy for keeping your joints healthy.

Arthritis makes it too painful to exercise.

Exercise is an important therapy in treating arthritis. Regular movement helps prevent joint stiffness and increases range of motion. There are exercises that can be done without putting strain on painful areas. Check out the National Arthritis Foundation for [exercise options](#).

Medication is the only way to treat arthritis.

A multi-pronged treatment plan is more effective than medication alone. Your physician can help you design a plan utilizing complementary therapies, physical therapy, diet, and exercise. Depending on the type of arthritis you have alternative therapies such as acupuncture, nutritional supplements and massage may all be beneficial.

Arthritis is purely a physical condition.

Arthritis symptoms can increase stress and stress can worsen your joint disease symptoms creating a vicious, no-win situation. Chronic pain can lead to poor sleep and fatigue which in turn can make you less willing or able to participate in the self-care that will help alleviate your symptoms such as exercise. Ongoing stress can cause your muscles to tense and inflame your body's inflammatory response, increasing joint pain and damage. Develop strategies to combat stress such as joining a support group for people with arthritis, being available to talk to family and friends regularly, and taking relaxation breaks throughout the day by sitting quietly and breathing deeply or taking a brief walk in a beautiful setting.

Diet is unrelated to joint pain.

Not true. Sugar and fried and processed foods can all trigger an inflammatory response and increase pain from arthritic conditions. Conversely, there are also many foods such as berries, fatty fish, and green vegetables that can reduce pain. Avoiding being overweight is also a way to reduce arthritis symptoms.

If you need to find a podiatrist near you, use our [online directory](#). To learn more ways to protect the health of your feet, [contact us](#) and consider subscribing to our free [e-newsletter](#).



If you are experiencing pain or have questions about your feet, use our [online directory](#) to find a podiatrist near you. To learn more ways to take care of your feet, [contact us](#) and consider subscribing to our [free e-newsletter](#).