

RISK FACTORS FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS

All the factors below may contribute to developing osteoarthritis (OA). Some of these factors may lead to joint changes, but that does not mean you will have OA symptoms¹.



SEX

- Hip and knee OA are more prevalent in females than males².
- Hormonal factors in women may make them more likely to develop OA^{2,3}.



AGE

- Increasing age is one of the strongest risk factors for developing OA¹.
- Most people >65 years will have OA related changes in one or more joints⁴.



PAST INJURY OR SURGERY

- Having a significant joint injury or surgery increases the chance of developing OA^{5,6}.
- A previous knee injury (ligament or meniscus) increases the risk of developing OA by nearly 4 times^{7,8}.



SUBSTANTIAL WEIGHT GAIN OR OBESITY

- Being overweight is a significant risk factor for developing OA, especially of the knee.
- Carrying extra weight increases load through the hip or knee joint.
- Being overweight can lead to inflammation throughout the body, which can make an arthritic joint more sensitive and irritable⁹.



JOINT ALIGNMENT

- An individual's alignment affects how load is distributed, especially in the knee¹⁰.
- If you have knee OA and have bowlegs or knock knees, this may contribute to further OA progression^{11,12}.



GENETICS

- Having a family member with OA may make you more likely to develop OA¹³⁻¹⁵.
- Hip OA has a larger genetic influence than knee OA^{16,17}.



OCCUPATION

- Occupations that involve repetitive heavy lifting, squatting, knee bending, kneeling, and climbing may increase the risk of developing OA¹⁸.



DIET

- Nutrition and diet play a role in weight management¹⁹.
- An individual's diet may lead to greater inflammation in the body, which may lead to sensitivity and pain of the hip or knee joint²⁰.



MOVEMENT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Physical activity is extremely important to maintain healthy joints^{21,22}.
- Regular exercise prevents weakening of all the tissues that support your hip and knee joint^{21,22}.