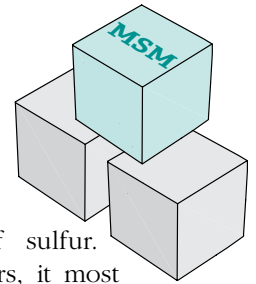


# MSM

## Joint Support Naturally



by Margy Squires

The National Institute of Health sponsored one of the most successful studies for joint health, Glucosamine/chondroitin Arthritis Intervention Trial (GAIT), establishing the benefits of these two ingredients for joint health. The study was impressive with 1,582 osteoarthritis subjects and the results showed the combination of the two “significantly decreased” knee pain in moderate-to-severe osteoarthritis. **With such compelling data, why would anyone need MSM?**

**MSM** (methyl-sulfonyl-methane) is an organic form of sulfur. Although MSM is not recognized as one of the stars, it most definitely is *required* for joint health. The secret weapon of MSM is its sulfur content, the fourth most abundant mineral in the body, essential for life and an important element for all cells and body tissues. Sulfur makes up 34% of MSM content, making MSM the most bioavailable agent for this necessary mineral. As such, MSM fortifies the other joint nutrients so they perform their job so much more efficiently.

Maintaining the structure of existing joints is important. MSM is just beginning to be used in sports products as a preventative agent. Between each joint is a combination of connective tissue, fluids and cartilage that assist in the cushioning or shock absorption of that joint and its free movement. Since cartilage covers the ends of bones, its main purpose is to allow bones to glide over one another and absorb the energy or “shock” of movement. So when cartilage breaks down, bones literally “rub” together and break down, too. The result is inflammation, swelling pain and ultimately loss of movement. Joints are susceptible to overuse, injury or arthritic changes with age or trauma. If the inflammation continues, further joint integrity is threatened which in turn continues the vicious cycle.

Reinforcing infrastructure is what glucosamine, chondroitin and hyaluronic acid (as part of your connective tissue and joint fluid) is all about. MSM is an integral piece of cartilage repair and recovery, plus it acts as an anti-inflammatory agent to reduce further tissue damage and joint degradation.

Here’s how MSM helps. Glycosaminoglycans (GAGs) are the fundamental building blocks of joint cartilage – but in order to make GAGs, you need glucosamine, the main precursor. The resulting GAG molecules are linked together by disulfide bonds or two atoms of sulfur. The strength, flexibility and integrity of cartilage – and your joint infrastructure – therefore is dependent on sulfur. MSM delivers that sulfur.

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Although MSM can be found in raw fruits, veggies, seafood and some grains, it is difficult to obtain enough from diet as most is destroyed by food processing. Supplementing is a safe way to make sure your body gets adequate amounts. (Don’t confuse the sulfur mineral with the sulfa drug that contains sulfite additives some people are allergic or sensitive to.) Since MSM stays in the body about 12 hours, you’ll want to divide up your doses, for instance morning and evening, preferably with a little food.

Can you take MSM solo for joints? Yes, but rather large gram amounts (3 grams twice a day) are needed for it to do the job by itself. If you’re looking to maintain joint integrity, do a little cartilage repair and increase your joint mobility, take MSM with the rest of the joint care team for the most efficient results.

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