

Moving On!

Natural Help for Aging Joints

by Margy Squires

The secret to moving through life is keeping your joints young! The body has built in “shock absorbers”. The articular cartilage that covers and buffers the ends of bones and the synovium, another connective tissue that cushions joints where bones meet. The synovium fluid nourishes joints with nutrients and oxygen. Age and trauma cause cartilage and synovium to become thinner, leaving “rough spots” that spur inflammation and pain. Inflammation can further damage tissues beyond their ability to repair. Certain supplements can help the repair and maintenance process. Here’s a primer for what your joints need and why.



Why is glucosamine a first choice?

Glucosamine (Glu) is a foundational substance to your joint structure. It is a precursor to glycosaminoglycans found in normal cartilage matrix and synovium fluid. Your body naturally makes glucosamine, and from Glu two other connective tissue components, chondroitin and hyaluronic acid.

Clinical trials on Glu as early as 1980 show it comparable to ibuprofen or aspirin for pain relief. Glu was tested against celecoxib (Celebrex®) in the six month original 2006 GAIT study of 1583 patients with similar results but only Glu takers gained increased mobility and function benefits. A 1999 Belgian study involved 212 patients with knee osteoarthritis (OA) who took 1500 mg Glu or a placebo daily for three years. Knee x-rays were taken at the start, year one and year three. While the 106 on placebo showed progressive cartilage loss, the Glu subjects had no significant loss. Symptoms in the placebo group also worsened but improved among Glu takers. Even the Arthritis Foundation published approval for its use for knee OA.

Present studies still confirm Glu’s efficacy. A 2015 meta-analysis of more than 3500 studies found Glu to have “significant structural effects”, while chondroitin sulfate (CS) showed a “significant reduction in cartilage loss”. Yet another 2015 study of 600 patients with knee OA published in the *Annals of Rheumatic Disease*, concluded that “participants who took Glu/CS had reduced loss of cartilage volume over 24 months” which argued for “disease-modifying effect of Glu/CS” found on MRIs that could not be identified by regular x-rays.



As a supplement, glucosamine is highly absorbable (90%) and its safety well documented in scientific studies. Study doses were 1500 mg daily for 3 consecutive months, so be patient and give your body time to rebuild when looking for results.

Why take chondroitin and hyaluronic acid?

Several good reasons. 1) Water makes up 80% of cartilage and synovium, allowing flexibility “bounce” under pressure. Both chondroitin and hyaluronic acid are very good at attracting water! 2) Hyaluronic acid is found in all body tissues but mostly in synovium. 3) Chondroitin also blocks the enzyme that degrades cartilage as mentioned in the study above. 4) Joints have no blood supply for necessary nutrients and oxygen other than via synovium fluid. Take chondroitin at 800-1200 mg daily and hyaluronic acid 50 mg, 1-3 times daily. Because chondroitin works so well with Glu in protecting joints, you’ll often find them paired in supplement form.

Arthritis Statistics*

- 50** million affected today (1 in 5 adults)
- 1 in 250** babies & children
- #1** cause of disability
- 66%** of Americans age 18-64 work with OA
- 50%** of adults over age 65 have OA
- 78** million will have OA by **2040**
- Occurs **with other inflammatory conditions** in adults
- 49%** with heart disease
- 44%** with hypertension
- 47%** with diabetes
- 31%** with obesity

*Based on U.S. Populations.
Source: Arthritis Foundation www.arthritis.org

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Are there other connective tissue helpers?

Yes. Methyl-sulfonyl-methane (MSM) is found in every cell and assists repair and rebuilding, plus eases inflammatory pain. Sulfur is often deficient in arthritis patients and restoring levels with MSM offers significant benefit at therapeutic (divided) doses of 2500-5000 mg daily. Vitamin C is a required component of all connective tissue and protects cells and tissues from further damage. Or try topical Celadrin® in Tender Point Lotion™. Muscles that are relaxed also ease the “pull” on joints so make Fibro-Care™ with organic magnesium part of your joint equation.

How is inflammation involved?

Inflammation is the body’s natural response to injury but chronic inflammation impedes the healing and/or pain relief. Systemic or whole body enzymes interfere with the COX enzymes that cause inflammation, remove cellular debris and scar tissue to speed healing, increase circulation for delivery of needed nutrients, and subsequently reduce pain. If you are on a blood thinner, check with your doctor before using these enzymes. Other helpful nutrients include rosemary (ursolic acid), Boswellin®, bromelain (pineapple), grape seed extract and ginger. Fibro-Enzymes™, InFlame Reponse and Curcumin ES™ (Meriva® high absorption phytosome) also support a healthy inflammatory response.

Essential fatty acids (EFAs) also are inflammation quenchers. The body uses omega-3 EFAs to control prostaglandins, chemicals that provoke the inflammatory process. Omega-3 can be found in fish, especially salmon, and converted from EFAs found rich in flaxseeds. Plus, krill has proven to be a good source of omega-3 as well. Be aware that saturated fats found in red meat and some dairy may incite inflammatory chemicals so dietary control is important, too.

Weight & Arthritis

Being overweight increases the risk of knee OA due to the increase in weight bearing on the knees with movement. A 2016 post-study analysis from the PRevention of knee Osteoarthritis in Overweight Females (PROOF) study found those given a combination of glucosamine and chondroitin had a decreased risk of developing knee OA. The findings were confirmed with radiographic evidence over a 2.5 year period. This was a large study of 407 women who had no evidence of knee OA at the start of the study, making the findings even more impressive.

TMJ Pain & Movement

Many with fibromyalgia have pain in the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), the “hinge” that connects the jaw to the temporal bones of the skull (found in front of each ear). Interestingly, Glu/CS was tested against tramadol in 31 patients with jaw tenderness who had evidence of disc displacement on MRI.

Get with the Program™ for Joints

BASIC

Multi-Gold™

Glucosamine/Chondroitin



ANTI-INFLAMMATORY

Curcumin ES™, Fibro-Enzymes™
or InFlame Response

Omega-3 (Fish, Flax or Krill)

CONSIDER

Fibro-Care™ (Organic Magnesium)

Hyaluronic Acid

MSM

Tender Point Lotion™

Vitamin C

The study group were given either 1500 mg Glu and 1200 mg CS while the controls were prescribed 50 mg tramadol twice daily for pain. After 8 weeks, pain was reduced equally in both groups but the Glu/CS group had “significantly higher” jaw movement with an improvement in TMJ internal mechanisms. So although the narcotic analgesic could reduce pain, this study shows Glu/CS actually helps restore TMJ function and movement.

Summary

Since no one has discovered the fountain of youth yet, getting older remains a part of life. Osteoarthritis, which is the most prevalent form of arthritis, affects more than 20 million Americans over the age of 45, and the numbers of those with knee, hip and hand OA are rising. According to the Arthritis Foundation, OA is “not an inevitable part of aging”. How you and your joints age can be influenced by what you do for them. So walk the healthy road and keep *moving on!*



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