

# Handout/Notes from the Learning Café Program “Understanding and Overcoming Arthritis”

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Health Motion Physical Therapy

**Arthritis** *Arthro* = joint and *Itis* = inflammation

Most common types:

1. Osteoarthritis: breakdown of the joint from overuse, trauma, wear and tear
2. Rheumatoid: breakdown of the joint from autoimmune factors (body is attacking itself)

Typical presentation:

joint pain and soreness that is worse after being still for a period of time (first thing in the morning or after prolonged rest), better after moving around but more painful with too much activity of the area. Joint noise can be present.

What are those noises?

It can be irregular surfaces rubbing together, tendons snapping, or inflammation moving around. No need to worry. There is no correlation between the amount of joint noise and the amount of degeneration in the joint. Don't worry at all about noise unless it is painful.

What can be done about it?

1. DO NOT ASSUME YOU HAVE TO BE IN PAIN!!!! - get it checked out by your doc and a PT. There are a lot of things that can be fixed to decrease stress on the area and that will decrease pain and increase function
2. Heat usually gets better result than ice due to increase in circulation.
3. Pain free movement often to keep the joint lubricated .
4. Avoid sharp pain or pinching
5. Anti-inflammatories – if NSAIDs are not tolerated try natural things (see links below) but check with your doc first. Anti-inflammatory diet can be helpful as well.
6. Topicals: (voltaren, arnica, willow bark, icy hot)

**If you have specific questions or you want to be sure you are doing all you can for your arthritis please call to schedule a **FREE** consultation with one of our expert PTs and they will help you out! 616-554-0918**

<https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/treatment/complementary-therapies/supplements-and-vitamins/supplement-and-herb-guide-for-arthritis-symptoms>

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