

# What is Arthritis?

Reprinted from everydayhealth.com

Arthritis can be simply defined as joint inflammation. For people who have arthritis, the word variously signifies pain, swelling, redness, and heat that may be caused by tissue injury or disease in the joint. Osteoarthritis is the most common type of arthritis. It is called a degenerative joint disease because it results from the deterioration of the bones and cartilage that make up the joints. The second most common type of arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, is an inflammatory disease that affects the lining of multiple joints, especially in the hands and feet.

## Get Square With Your Feet

by Dorothy Foltz-Gray - Reprinted from Arthritis Today

Feet are the whipping boys of the body. With every mile we walk, 200,000 to 300,000 pounds of stress bears down on our tootsies, and by the time we're 50, most of us have walked 75,000 miles. That's a lot of action for two narrow islands of 26 bones and more than 30 joints. And yet despite the central role feet play in our lives, most of us ignore them.

Experts say orthopaedic disorders, including foot problems, are a leading cause of inactivity and disability in the United States. "Feet degenerate like tires on cars," says Washington, D.C.-based podiatrist Arnold Ravick, a spokesperson for the American Podiatric Association. "Just like the rest of our body, our feet spread out, muscles weaken and skin thins."

We begin to lose flexibility and elasticity, and our shock absorbers simply don't work as well as they used to. Add arthritis, and you have a double whammy. Joints inflamed and distorted by arthritis find no comfort from a day's pounding in ill-fitting shoes or from feet whose padding has grown thin. If we pay attention to our feet, we can head off potential problems. If we already have arthritis, more surveillance and care taking of our feet and joints not only makes sense, it's crucial.

## How can FootHuggers Comfort Socks help with Arthritis?

1. FootHuggers have no elastic. No tightness. Helps promote good circulation
2. FootHuggers help wick moisture. Sweaty feet can become cold feet. Heat leaves your body much faster when you are wet. Wearing socks that help evaporation also helps your feet stay warmer.
3. FootHuggers socks insulate your foot, help you stay warm.
4. FootHuggers socks cushion your feet, help with your comfort.

## Structure of the foot

The foot is a complex structure. It contains 26 bones, more than 30 small joints, and more than 100 muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves and blood vessels. These must all work together so that your foot can do all that you need it to. Most people take a million or so steps per year, so the foot has a lot to do.

## Specific arthritis foot problems

### Can osteoarthritis affect my feet?

The big toe joint is the site most commonly affected by osteoarthritis, but any of the joints in your feet can be affected. Many people notice changes in the arch structure of their feet as they get older, and mild arthritis in the arch area is common. Osteoarthritis is less common in the ankle, but can occur if there has been an earlier injury or as a result of long-standing inflammatory arthritis.

### Can inflammatory arthritis affect my feet?

The term 'inflammatory arthritis' encompasses rheumatoid arthritis, reactive arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis. The effect on the feet depends on exactly which type of arthritis you have. Rheumatoid arthritis, for instance, tends to affect many of the foot joints, while reactive arthritis usually affects only the ankle.

### What is gout?

Gout is a particular type of arthritis caused by the formation of crystals in a joint. Gout often occurs in the foot, and the big toe joint is the most common site in the body. Gout causes a lot of inflammation, and the joint can be painful, red and hot while an attack lasts (typically 1–2 weeks). Without treatment, the attacks may return and damage to the joint will accumulate, eventually leading to permanent damage and osteoarthritis. Gout is usually controlled well with modern medications.

Why do my arches ache or feel tired?

The arches of the feet form a mechanism similar to the arch of a bridge, allowing the weight of the body to be spread over many bones and joints. The arch structure can change with arthritis, and the structures nearby can be strained. In mild cases this feels like tiredness in the arch area, but pain and discomfort may develop if the muscles or tendons are very overworked.

## Treatment Recommendations

### 1. Exercising

Walking and ArthritisxTaken from Walking and Arthritis brochure

Walking is good for anyone, especially people with arthritis. It's an endurance exercise, which means it strengthens your heart, helps your lungs work more efficiently and gives you more stamina so you don't tire as easily. As a weight-bearing exercise (one that puts full weight on your bones), walking helps strengthen bones, reducing the risk of osteoporosis (thinning of the bones).

Even the healthiest people find it difficult to maintain steady workout schedule. But those with arthritis commonly discover that if they don't exercise regularly, they'll pay the price in pain, stiffness, and fatigue. Regular exercise not only helps maintain joint function, but also relieves stiffness and decreases pain and fatigue. Feeling tired may be partly the result of inflammation and medications, but it's also caused by muscle weakness and poor stamina. If a muscle isn't used, it can lose 3 percent of its function every day and 30 percent of its bulk in just a week. Work with your physician or physical therapist to develop your own exercise program.

### 2. Apply Heat

Heat will ease your pain, relax tense, painful muscles and increase the regional flow of blood.

**Just ask our customers how FootHuggers have helped:**

I am a Curves fitness trainer. I have diabetes, hammer toes, bunions, and other conditions involving nerves and the balls of my feet not having natural padding. Needless to say my feet suffer on a daily basis. So I wore my ankle socks to work thinking they would work down into my shoe and crumple up in the foot area, again my suspicious mind was wrong. Perfectly comfortable. No slipping down, crawling into the foot area, they don't sweat and pull on my toes and bind them up. I can move my toes to gain relief at anytime. My feet remained dry and comfortable. Do you know how much that means to me? Pain relief ! Comfort ! Oh yea, and remember how cold I said it was....well my feet were warm and cozy. I am sold on these socks for life. I can't tell you how pleased I am with the relief from discomfort I have experienced. They are number one on my list. We will be customers for life. Thanks for such a wonderful product. God Bless You All.  
Jackie McElhaney, Edgemont, SD.

**Another customer writes:**

YOUR FOOTHUGGERS ARE BY FAR THE BEST I'VE EVER TRIED. MY FEET HAVE BEEN PRETTY BEAT-UP BY TOO MANY HI-LO JUMPS. THESE PROVIDE EXCELLENT PROTECTION AND RELIEF FROM ARTHRITIC PAIN. PLEASE CONTACT THE ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION TO LET THEM KNOW ABOUT YOUR INCREDIBLE PRODUCT. ESPECIALLY FOR MILITARY UNDER BOOTS.  
THANKS AGAIN ron