

The Osteoarthritis Guidebook



Pain & Performance Clinic

Introduction to the program



Tommy Brennan

Get clarity on the best evidence based approach to help manage your osteoarthritis.

Tommy Brennan here, founder of The Pain and Performance Clinic based in Lucan Dublin. We help people suffering with pain to get back doing what they love. We see several people who have been diagnosed with osteoarthritis and left in pain, inactive and unable to enjoy the simple things in life. Have you been told by a health professional that you have “wear and tear” and you just have to live with that?

Are you worried about losing your independence and freedom in the future? There is a lot of information and misinformation out there and the purpose of this ebook is to help you “drown out the noise” and know what’s important and most helpful for you and your osteoarthritis.



What exactly is Osteoarthritis ?



Osteoarthritis is the naturally occurring aging process that happens to the surface of the joint, the role of this cartilage is to provide a smooth surface for the joint to move freely, it also acts as a shock absorber during movements like walking, climbing stairs, jumping and running, Changes happen to this cartilage overtime and people experience symptoms such as restricted rang of motion and pain.



What Causes Osteoarthritis ?



The exact cause are unclear there is no one single factor but there are definite risk factors,

Some of the risk factors include

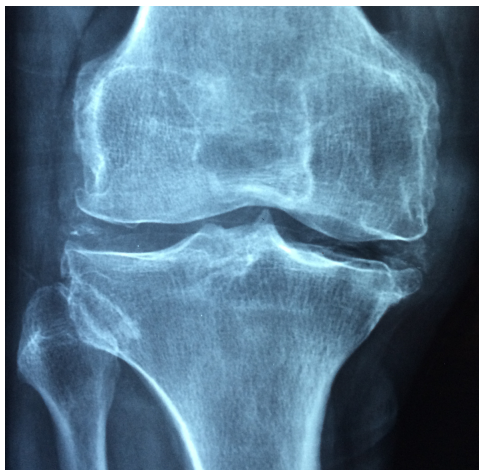
- . Age: usually people over 40 years old
- . Gender: more common in women
- . Obesity
- . Genetics

The reason why some people experience more pain than others is not as basic as looking at the cartilage health, Joint health is a factor but pain is more complex and has several factors that can influence its severity,

- . Stress
- . Tiredness
- . Emotions
- . Anxiety
- . Social Isolation
- . Work

And your beliefs all play a role in the impact Osteoarthritis has on your life, Xray results can show similar findings on different people, some experience nothing more the morning stiffness after physical activities while others have constant pain are unable to move freely, Because of the subjective nature of the pain experienced it is important for you to take ownership of the management of the Osteoarthritis and try different things, What works for you might not work for someone else and vice versa.

Diagnosing Osteoarthritis



Osteoarthritis should not be diagnosed solely on imaging findings it needs to be a clinical diagnosis not a radiological one, so to be clear an x-ray should not be used to diagnose Osteoarthritis for these reasons.

- The link between imaging and pain is very poor especially if that pain has been there for more than 3 months you can be suffering with a lot of pain but the x-ray images asymptomatic and vice versa.
- Most asymptomatic people over 40 have Osteoarthritis changes on x-rays.
- X-ray results most likely won't change the treatment outcome, Best approach is always conservative first.
- X-ray findings can be interpreted differently by health professionals and the results are often poorly explained to people, this can lead to unnecessary fear, worry, and negative behavioral change.



Diagnosing Osteoarthritis



O.A is a clinical diagnosis, not a radiological one. The following cluster of signs and symptoms is a strong predictor of O.A.

- . Age over 50 years
- . Morning stiffness for more than 30 minutes.
- . Joint line soreness
- . Crepitus during movement
- . Bony enlargement
- . No increase in joint temperature



Treatment and Management



Tommy Brennan

The gold standard evidence-based treatment approach involves 3 main areas:

- (1) Education and Advice.
- (2) Exercise both resistance & cardio.
- (3) Weight loss (if appropriate)

Other adjuncts to this foundational treatment include:

- (1) Heat
- (2) Painkillers
- (3) NSAIDs
- (4) Manual Therapy
- (5) Steroid Injections
- (6) Assistive Devices
- (7) Surgery



Treatment and Management



The core foundational treatment approach

- 1) Cardiovascular exercise:** Walking, Cycling, Swimming can improve pain and reduce stiffness while also improving mood and general health.
- 2) Strength Training:** This needs to be both bodyweight and with added external load, it needs to be done gradually and consistently but it also needs to be progressive over time, this is usually the area most people need most support and guidance.
- 3) Weight Loss:** This works in two ways, (a) to reduced mechanised pressure on the joint by losing weight is an obvious one, decreasing body mass by 10% can improve pain by up to 50% in some people, (b) The second way weight loss helps is because obesity is now recognised as a low level inflammatory state that predisposes people to other health conditions, increased inflammation increases the risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, stroke and cardiovascular disease, No one food is bad in moderation but more fresh fruit, veg and whole unprocessed food should be your staple diet.



Pain & Performance Clinic



Tommy Brennan

We hope you found this ebook helpful and can manage your osteoarthritis naturally without injections and surgery, If you want a more specific treatment plan to help you get back paying with your kids or grandkids , get back playing golf or going for long walks we do in person and online consultations. Feel free to reach out to us here at the Pain & Performance Clinic

info@painandperformanceclinic.ie

www.painandperformanceclinic.ie



Pain & Performance Clinic
Physio Fitness Movement