

## Arthritis Facts and Tips

Men, women and children from all parts of the world have been living with arthritis for centuries, yet there is still much to learn about this mysterious and debilitating disease.

If you or someone you care about is living with arthritis, the following facts will help you to understand this painful condition:

- \* There are more than two hundred types of arthritis that have been officially documented.
- \* An estimated 8 million people suffer some physical limitations due to arthritis.
- \* The Center of Disease Control in the United States has reported that arthritic conditions are the leading causes of disability. On average, 750,000 people are hospitalized every year, and 9,500 people will die on a yearly basis due to arthritis.
- \* 49 million people in America alone have been clinically diagnosed with some form of arthritis, and a whopping 86 billion dollars has been spent to curb issues directly related to arthritis.
- \* Rheumatoid arthritis, one of the most harmful forms of the disease, affects about 3 million Americans. Coincidentally, rheumatoid arthritis is two to three times more likely to be found in women, as compared to diagnoses made in men. The average onset age for this disease usually falls between the ages of 30 and 50.
- \* Lupus, another form of arthritis, also occurs most often in women, with a full ninety percent of all lupus victims being female. In addition, lupus is as much as three times as likely to strike a woman of African American decent, as opposed to Caucasian women.
- \* Women face a higher risk of developing fibromyalgia than their male counterparts. The chance of a woman getting the disease is seven times higher than that of her partner. In fact, women face an increased risk of getting ANY type of arthritis. A study conducted in Wisconsin suggests that approximately 30 percent of all women have arthritis, as opposed to 23 percent of all men.
- \* Obesity significantly raises the risk of developing arthritis. About forty percent of all arthritic patients are obese.
- \* One study placed the risk of having arthritis for the average person in the United States to be about 13.60%. In other words, approximately 1 in 7 people in the United States will be diagnosed with arthritis at some point in their lives.

While using these statistics to provide some insight into the prevalence of arthritis in our society, we must consider the sources of the studies. The data used in this article was taken from studies conducted by the Center of Disease Control, the state of Wisconsin, and the National Center for Health Statistics. When viewing and analyzing the statistics, it's important to also consider how the testing processes may have affected the results. Always be sure to take any statistics with a grain of salt, as they may have a fairly large margin of error that can skew the results.

As a final note, while it is important to educate yourself about current or potential health issues, never assume that you are able to self-diagnose any condition. If you think that you may have arthritis, see a qualified medical professional to verify the diagnosis and begin supervised arthritis treatment.