

ARTHRITIS OR JOINT PAIN

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Joint problems such as arthritis are one of the major causes of disability around the world. The joints are one of the most delicate structures in the human body and, in many people, they take a lot of punishment. They must be rebuilt continuously to offset the constant wear and tear that occurs, especially on the weight-bearing joints of the body.

In most cases, medical doctors do not address the deeper causes of arthritis, but simply prescribe pain killers such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDS that have terrible side effects. This further worsens a person's health in many cases. In contrast, nutritional balancing science allows us to often identify the causes of joint problems and usually to correct the problem at very deep levels.

TYPES OF ARTHRITIS

Arthritis is classified in medicine as either *osteoarthritis*, which usually involves the deposition of calcium in the joints to some degree. Another common type is *rheumatoid arthritis*, which is a more deforming condition that may come and go with flare-ups and even migrate from joint to joint. Other less common types are *traumatic arthritis*, which is the result of an accident or injury, and *infectious arthritis*, which is caused by tuberculosis or some other type of infection.

Arthritis may also occur as part of other conditions such as fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, adrenal exhaustion and other syndromes.

BASIC CAUSES OF ARTHRITIS

These may be divided into mechanical, biochemical and other causes. Mechanical causes include the result of physical traumas or accidents, misalignments or subluxations of the joints, or perhaps problems with the ligaments and tendons that affect the joints.

Biochemical causes include factors such as nutrient deficiencies, toxins in the joints such as iron and manganese, deposits of other minerals such as calcium or copper, generalized inflammation in the body that affects the joints, or a tendency for tissue breakdown or catabolism that affects the joints.

Biological causes might be the presence of infections or parasites that infect the joint surfaces. Stress and psychological factors occasionally play an important role in joint problems as well, mainly by influencing body chemistry. If one suspects mechanical misalignment of the spine or other bones as a cause, which is common, this will require the services of those trained in correcting spinal and other misalignments. The remainder of this article concerns biochemical, nutritional and related causes for arthritis that are often easy to identify on a hair mineral analysis and are often correctable using nutritional balancing science.

IDENTIFYING CAUSES OF ARTHRITIS

A properly performed and correctly interpreted hair mineral analysis can assess more than half a dozen causes for arthritis. The following are the most important indicators on a hair mineral analysis for various causes for arthritis.

1. Elevated calcium level. A calcium level above about 70 mg% may indicate the deposition of calcium or other minerals in the joints. This is associated with a phenomenon called biounavailable calcium. See the [Calcium article](#) for more information about this cause for arthritis.

2. Copper toxicity. Copper is an anti-inflammatory nutrient that often is associated with arthritic changes when it is out of balance. This is a very common finding today. See the [Copper Toxicity Syndrome](#) for more information.

3. An elevated sodium/potassium ratio. A sodium/potassium ratio that is above 5 often indicates excessive inflammatory hormones or some other cause of inflammation. It may also indicate acute stress, which may cause arthritic changes as well.

4. Low adrenal and/or thyroid activity. Low levels of sodium and potassium in relation to the calcium and magnesium levels is a pattern called [slow oxidation](#). One can read more about this pattern, which is extremely important for arthritis. It is associated with copper toxicity, reduced adrenal hormone secretion at times, thyroid difficulties and much more that can cause joint pain and arthritis.

5. Excessive tissue breakdown. A ratio of sodium to potassium less than about 2:1 or a phosphorus level less than 13 mg% are associated with excessive protein catabolism or breakdown of body tissues. This can affect any tissue or organ, but often affects some joints, particularly weight-bearing ones.

6. Elevated iron, manganese, copper, lead or other toxic metals. These can contribute or directly cause arthritic problems by several mechanisms: 1) they may deposit directly in the joints, 2) they affect the levels of vital minerals, causing deficiencies of essential nutrients that, in turn, affect the joints, 3) they cause an inflammatory response, or 4) they may replace vital minerals in key enzymes needed for joint surface repair and activity.

7. Fatigue. Many indicators on a hair tissue mineral analysis are associated with reduced levels of adaptive or healing energy. They include a [very slow or very fast oxidation rate](#), [reduced sodium/potassium ratio](#), excessive [toxic metals](#) and others.

8. Sympathetic dominance pattern. This is another common pattern seen with arthritis and other joint complaints. It is indicated on a hair mineral analysis by a potassium level less than 5 mg% and the pattern is reinforced when the sodium/potassium ratio is elevated above 5:1.

Sympathetic dominance is a personality or lifestyle pattern in which a person tends to overuse the sympathetic nervous system. This system is not designed to be used except in emergencies for short periods of time. When one uses it most of the time, it weakens the body substantially by interfering with digestion, rest, elimination and other vital functions. This can easily lead to joint and many other physical problems. For more information about this, see the article entitled [Sympathetic Dominance Pattern](#).

9. A calcium/magnesium ratio greater than about 10. This imbalance is associated with carbohydrate overload in the diet, which can cause joint problems as well. It is also associated with a calcium and magnesium imbalance that can cause calcium to come out of solution from the blood and be deposited in the joints and other tissues.

10. Emotional causes. These may be indicated on a hair mineral analysis by low levels of vital minerals, such as the [four low electrolytes pattern](#) and a ratio of sodium to potassium less than 2:1. Emotional imbalances such as anger, rage, resentment and others stress all body systems and frequently result in joint pain in a large number of cases. It is most helpful to identify the emotional tendency to warn the patients and suggest remedies for emotional distress.

CORRECTING JOINT PROBLEMS WITH NUTRITIONAL BALANCING

DIET

General. Eliminating refined starches, white sugar and other 'junk' food helps reduce chemicals in the diet and increases nutrient levels. Better quality foods must be substituted for poorer quality refined foods. Eating many more steamed is particularly helpful.

Sugars and Yeast. Sugars in the diet can lead to intractable yeast infections. This may occur be without specific symptoms except for aches and pains, in some people. It is well worth eliminating most sugars, including fruit, juices, maple syrup, honey, and even artificial sweeteners where possible. Eliminating refined sugars is impossible without cutting out refined and processed foods. Sugars also unbalance calcium metabolism, stimulate insulin release and increase inflammation, and have other detrimental effects on the body that directly cause joint pain in some people.

Food Sensitivities. Some cases of arthritis are helped by eliminating allergic foods. The most common culprits are wheat, corn, cow's milk dairy products and soy. I suggest everyone reduce wheat and cow's milk dairy. Some people need to eliminate other foods, at least temporarily. The change of diet alone can make a huge difference, as the stress of eating nutritionally deficient or allergic food is removed.

The goal with nutritional balancing is to reduce food sensitivities so that one can eat most any food without a problem. However, this may take a year or more to enhance the activity of the digestive tract and to heal it of syndromes such as chronic infections with yeast, leaky gut syndrome and other problems. Relaxation and other lifestyle factors also are needed to heal many intestinal imbalances.

Gluten Intolerance. Many people with arthritis are temporarily gluten intolerant. They feel better without wheat, spelt, oats, barley, and rye. Unfortunately, these foods are found in most processed and prepared items served in restaurants, bars and elsewhere. So it takes vigilance to learn how to avoid them.

As with all food sensitivities, the goal is to enable one to tolerate some of these so the lifestyle need not be so restrictive. However, for a while gluten avoidance is an

excellent and simple way to assist digestion, heal the intestines and often reduce some joint pain.

The nightshade family of vegetables. These vegetables and fruits are harmful for everyone, and often cause joint pain in sensitive people. They include all regular potatoes, (though usually some sweet potato is okay), tomatoes (all types), eggplant, and peppers, including red pepper, green peppers and all hot chiles as well.

Omega-3 fatty acids. Most people need to consume more omega-3 fatty acids due to the widespread use of vegetable oils and the feeding of livestock on corn instead of allowing them to graze on their natural diet of grasses. One can obtain these easily from free-range meats and certified raw organic, full-fat dairy products along with fish oil, or perhaps flax or hempseed oils. Salmon or sardines up to twice weekly are okay, but other fish or more fish are not as good as they either contain less of the omega-3 fatty acids and/or contain more mercury and other toxic metals.

Eating Habits. Relaxing at mealtime, eating slowly and chewing thoroughly also help one receive more nourishment from food and this promotes better digestion as well. Always sit at least 10 minutes after eating before resuming daily activities. Resting for longer is even better, as in the Mexican and European siesta ideas.

LIFESTYLE

Rest. Joint pain will usually be worse if one is tired. It is often worse in the morning because the adrenal glands are exhausted and need more rest to function correctly. Most people need 10 hours of sleep. It is also best to go to bed by 9 PM, because the hours before midnight offer better rest than those after midnight.

Exercise And Deep Breathing. Moderate exercise is excellent. Too much exercise, especially jogging, or anything that is hard on the joints, is not helpful and can cause traumatic arthritis. However, some mild daily exercise such as walking, is generally best and does not stress the joints as does any vigorous exercise.

Even better, special deep breathing exercises, such as abdominal breathing taught in some yoga classes, helps even more while exercising and all day long, if possible. This helps oxygenate the body, improves circulation, massages the organs and much more.

Emotional Clearing. Emotional control, mental training, meditation, emotional clearing methods such as biofeedback, counseling and others can help reduce inflammation in the body. This is important in some cases of arthritis, especially those with a strong emotional component.

Other Therapies. At times, other therapies are needed, especially in acute cases, to reduce inflammation, improve mobility and flexibility, reduce pain and realign the body to prevent further joint damage. All these can be incorporated along with nutritional balancing without upsetting the delicate balancing of body chemistry.

A Nutritional Balancing Program Using Hair Tissue Mineral Analysis. In addition to a healthful diet and lifestyle, most people require specific, integrated nutritional therapy. A complete nutritional balancing program includes a diet for one's metabolic type, several carefully chosen nutritional supplements, lifestyle modifications, a detoxification

protocol using sauna therapy and coffee enemas in most cases, and mental/emotional training using the Roy Masters meditation exercise.

Sauna therapy often helpful. The near infrared sauna dramatically enhances circulation to the joints. Joints have a relatively poor blood supply which contributes to the deposition of toxic substances in the joints. Also, infections are more difficult to heal in tissues with poor circulation.

The heat of the sauna also helps the body fight chronic infections and relaxes tendons and ligaments. Infrared light itself also appears to be very beneficial for healing of the joints. Saunas also powerfully activate the organs of elimination. This is necessary to help carry away toxins that have accumulated over years, in many cases. An electric light sauna can be built inexpensively at home. [Click here for more information about saunas.](#)

When Will I Become Well? Many cases of arthritis respond within weeks to lifestyle and dietary changes, along with a nutritional supplement program based on a properly performed hair mineral analysis. If the situation is chronic, months or even several years may be needed to fully restore joint cartilages.

SYMPTOMATIC THERAPY FOR ARTHRITIS

Symptomatic treatments for arthritis can relieve pain and increase mobility. They are rarely needed if one follows a nutritional balancing program. Most symptomatic approaches actually delay deeper healing, and many unbalance the body and add more toxins to the body. However, at times they are needed for a short while until deeper correction occurs.

Drug Therapy For Arthritis. Drug therapy for arthritic pain is a multi-billion dollar business that not only does not cure the problem in most cases, but makes it worse in many cases by allowing the degenerative process to progress, and by causing untold disability and death due to the adverse effects of the drugs themselves. The side effects of anti-inflammatory drugs causes at least 100,000 hospitalizations each year and some 10,000 deaths, according to official AMA figures. The actual figures are probably even higher as many adverse effects are often not reported.

Steroid Drugs. Two classes of drugs are usually prescribed. Steroid drugs include cortisone, prednisone and similar ones. These are probably the worst, if used over a long period of time. They tend to cause adrenal gland depletion, fatigue, bone loss and osteoporosis, and more problems. They are powerful, however, and can stop pain in a few minutes in some cases. Do not be misled into thinking this means they are the best option for you.

Steroids can be injected into a joint and provide temporary relief. At times, it will last a few months or more. This is safer than taking the drug orally for a prolonged period of time. Steroid creams are also safer than oral use, but can cause skin problems and more.

Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS). These drugs, which include Motrin, Ibuprophen, Aleve, Aspirin, Excedrin and a hundred other similar compounds, all tend to cause gastric or stomach bleeding, kidney and liver disease and more problems. They are inexpensive and available everywhere. However, use them only as a last resort and sparingly, if you must use them at all.

Try nutritional products first, and use all possible natural remedies before becoming dependent on any of these drugs. These drugs should be unnecessary if you do this. A natural anti-inflammatory remedy is Wobenzym-N, a powerful enzyme preparation with minimal side effects. One must take a number of tablets between meals, but it is quite effective. At times, just taking more omega-3 fatty acids or bioflavonoids can control arthritic pain, though these remedies alone do not correct the deeper causes of the problem.

Surgery (joint replacement). In many respects, surgery is better than chronic self-medication with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs in many cases. However, surgery brings its own set of complications, such as joint dysfunction, infections, high cost, perhaps a need for more surgery, adhesions and for some individuals, worse problems including death on an operating table. Always consult at least two physicians, or better yet, several doctors, regarding the side effects of surgery or other medical interventions.

Prolotherapy. This is an interesting way to handle specific joint problems by injecting a sclerosing solution, often sugar, into the joint. This can shorten certain ligaments, tightening the joint and preventing further problems. It is quite specific for certain problems of cartilage thinning, however. One must find a qualified orthopedic doctor for this procedure, which is safer than surgery if it is effective.

Symptomatic nutritional remedies. Symptomatic remedies can help some joint pain, although results are not as permanent as with a complete nutritional program. Anti-inflammatory nutrients include omega-3 oils such as fish oil, cod liver oil, calcium, magnesium and zinc.

Dietary remedies include eliminating all citrus fruits and, as mentioned above, the nightshade family of vegetables - potato, tomato, eggplant and peppers. Any food can cause a reaction in some individuals. Adaptogenic and other herbs such as devil's claw, glucosamine, chondroitin, arginine, niacinamide, B-complex, MSM (methylsulfonylmethane), cetyl myristiolate, hyaluronic acid and homeopathic remedies may also reduce inflammation and pain.

Vitamins A, C and E, silica, selenium and germanium, and oxygen therapies such as ozone, hyperbaric oxygen and hydrogen peroxide are being used to improve oxygenation of cells and remove free oxygen radicals that damage joint tissues. Poultices and clay packs can be helpful in a few cases as well. Colloidal silver and anti-infective herbs may also be useful if an infection is the cause of the problem. Shining a single reddish heat lamp on the affected area for 10-15 minutes at a time several times daily may also some reduce joint pain.

Physical therapies that may be helpful include bodywork, Rolfing, structural integration, yoga if done very carefully, hands-on-healing, energy therapies and many others.

While symptomatic remedies certainly have a place, I find the best results will be obtained with a more integrated and holistic approach such as nutritional balancing science. This can get to the root of many causes and eliminate them completely, though it may take longer to work than the simple remedies above.

SUMMARY

Nutritional research has revealed at least 10 causes for arthritis. Natural therapies can improve many cases of arthritis, including even stubborn ones. Sometimes a simple natural remedy is effective. Often, however, a precise, individualized nutritional balancing program with changes in the diet, lifestyle and other aspects of one's life is required to identify and correct the underlying causes of arthritis.