

Arthritis: The Creeping Crippler

Arthritis is probably mankind's oldest chronic disease. At least it's been around a long time. Evidence of arthritis in Egyptian mummies tells us that our ancient ancestors must have known the affliction many thousands of years ago.

Considered the nation's #1 crippler, arthritis is still with us, very much so. Today, an estimated 30 to 40 million Americans suffer from arthritis to some degree, ranging from mild, occasional pain to crippling pain and deformity.

NOT CONTAGIOUS

Though arthritis is not contagious and is sometimes self-limiting, without proper treatment it usually worsens over time. Put another way, the condition tends to creep up on its victims before getting serious.

WHAT IS ARTHRITIS?

The term arthritis means joint inflammation, something that can be caused from any of more than one hundred conditions. Osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis are its most common forms, but there are many other forms including gout — an acutely painful condition which usually attacks middle-aged men — and ankylosing spondylitis, an inflammatory condition of the spine which usually targets young, adult men. This can be an especially crippling form of arthritis.

OSTEOARTHRITIS

Men or women age fifty or more are the most likely victims of osteoarthritis because

often their cartilage tissues, which normally allow for smooth and easy joint movement, have begun to wear away. When that happens, the bones grate against each other within the joint, and inflammation, redness, and swelling may develop.

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Women, more often than men, are victimized by rheumatoid arthritis. Though it can develop at any age, it usually occurs after the age of twenty-five. Potentially, rheumatoid arthritis is the most crippling arthritis form. It can affect tissues within bodily systems and the sufferer may feel tired and weak even before any joints are affected.

SOME EARLY SYMPTOMS OF ARTHRITIS

- ✓ Pain, redness, swelling, and tenderness in one or more joints including the hand, wrist, elbow, shoulder, foot, ankle, knee, hip, and spine.
- ✓ Early morning joint stiffness, pain, or ache.
- ✓ Nagging lower back pain unrelated to effort.
- ✓ Undefined tiredness, weakness.

CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Chiropractic adjustments, programmed exercise, physical therapy, a well-balanced diet and supplementation — all that and more — may play a part in a total chiropractic treatment program for arthritis. A combination of care provid-

ing the most relief must be determined for each individual.

Naturally, a thorough chiropractic examination is the first step in determining the extent of the problem and what can be done about it. The earlier care begins the better.

Arthritis tends to creep up on its victims before getting serious.

