



Natural Arthritis Help

Millions of people suffer from joint aches and pains associated with aging and with autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. Many of you use some sort of pain relieving medication to get through the day and live fairly normal lives. The most frequently used medications are the Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) like *Motrin* (ibuprofen), *Naprosyn* (naproxen sodium), *Vioxx*, *Celebrex*, and many others. Many millions of patients take these medications daily without side effects, and I have prescribed these medications thousands of times and relieved a lot of chronic arthritis suffering. BUT, many hundreds of thousands suffer **serious side effects** from these medications - they may cause serious side effects or land them in the hospital! NSAID related gastritis and bleeding ulcers cost billions of dollars to treat - and this can still happen with the newer, "safer" COX-2 medications!

Worse, many of these newer COX-2 medications have had serious doubt cast on them recently – **Vioxx was pulled off the market** due to the link with heart attacks, and Celebrex is no longer being advertised! Still want to risk your health??

Other studies have shown that while these medications may provide short-term pain relief, they actually poison the cartilage that lines the joints, and thereby cause worse joint problems in the long run! They also cause **fluid retention**, which leads to **elevated blood pressure**, often requiring medication to control, and can also make it more difficult for diabetics to control their blood sugars. Over time they may affect the liver, and have been positively associated with **kidney damage**, causing many to need weekly dialysis, or a kidney transplant!

Why not consider using **natural methods** to control arthritis aches and pains?

- ?? Many **plants possess anti-inflammatory properties** and have been shown to be effective in relieving arthritis pain!
- ?? **Fish Oils** are useful anti-inflammatories and lower cholesterol as well!
- ?? **Glucosamine and Chondroitin** can help restore joint health and relieve joint pain!

?? These products lack the dangerous side effects of arthritis medications!

Joint Inflammation

Gammalinolenic acid (GLA) is an **essential fatty acid** found in certain plant oils. **Borage seed** and **Flax seed oils** as well as **Evening Primrose oil** are wonderful sources of essential fatty acids! GLA is metabolized to dihomo linolenic acid, the immediate precursor of prostaglandin E 1 (PGE1), an eicosanoid with known anti-inflammatory properties. This is the same mechanism of action of prescription arthritis medications!

GLA also **modulates immune system responses** in a prostaglandin-independent manner by acting directly on T lymphocytes. In randomized placebo controlled trials of six months and one year, GLA treatment resulted in statistically significant and clinically relevant reduction in the signs and symptoms of disease activity in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. These patients continued to show progressive improvement during the entire study. GLA is well tolerated with few side effects. Clinical trials have shown that GLA can be an NSAID substitute, and some observations suggest that it might function as a disease-modifying agent as well. Borage oil is taken 3 times daily in varying doseages.

Early clinical trials of **Fish Oil** (eicosapentaenoic acid) in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis demonstrated modest but statistically significant improvements in disease activity. Trials have shown an NSAID-sparing effect and significantly better patient-assessed disease activity. The best source for these oils is from eating Salmon, Mackerel, and sardines from fresh water sources at least twice weekly, however fish oil capsules may be used for those not fond of fish. As an added benefit you may also notice improvement in your cholesterol levels while taking fish oils! What a great supplement! Although not serious, gastrointestinal complaints like upset stomach, loose stools, and occasional belching may limit more aggressive dosing of capsules in some patients, so start at lower doses and increase slowly! These are taken three times daily in doses of 500 - 1,000 mg..

Soy Protein has also shown benefit in the fight against arthritis pain by entering the pain blocking cycle in the same pathway as do the prescription arthritis medications without the side effects these produce. Offsetting some meat protein intake with soy protein also helps lower cholesterol and may help you lose weight - another multi benefit nutrient!

Joint Rejuvenation

Glucosamine Sulfate and **Chondroitin Sulfate** have been shown to help relieve arthritis pain in joints by helping restore joint lubrication and health. These supplements have a side effect profile like placebo (dummy pills) and are definitely worth a try before taking medications with serious side effects.

Glucosamine is a great addition to your present medication regimen to reduce the doses of arthritis or pain medication you take or even to help you stop them altogether! Glucosamine is taken 3 times daily in doses of 500 - 1,000 mg., and Chondroitin is taken 3 times daily in doses of 400mg.. Oftgen they may be combined with other supplements to help with joint discomfort, like MSM.