

## The Facts About Arthritis

Number of Americans with arthritis or chronic joint symptoms:

- 1985 - 35 million
- 1990 - 37.9 million
- 1998 - nearly 43 million (1 in 6 people)
- 2006 – 46 million (nearly 1 in 5 adults) -- 42.7 million have doctor-diagnosed arthritis and 23.2 million people live with chronic joint symptoms, but have not been diagnosed by a doctor
- Arthritis is one of the most prevalent chronic health problems and the nation's leading cause of disability among Americans over age 15.
- Arthritis is second only to heart disease as a cause of work disability.
- Arthritis limits everyday activities such as walking, dressing and bathing for more than 7 million Americans.
- Arthritis results in 39 million physician visits and more than a half million hospitalizations.
- Costs to the U.S. economy totals more than \$86.2 billion annually.
- Arthritis affects people in all age groups including nearly 300,000 children.
- Baby boomers are now at prime risk. More than half those affected are under age 65.
- Half of those Americans with arthritis don't think anything can be done to help them.
- Arthritis refers to more than 100 different diseases that affect areas in or around joints.
- Arthritis strikes women more often than men.

Overall arthritis:

- Women - 25.9 million of the people with doctor-diagnosed arthritis
- Men - 16.8 million of the people with doctor-diagnosed arthritis

The disease also can affect other parts of the body. Arthritis causes pain, loss of movement and sometimes swelling. Some types of arthritis are:

- Osteoarthritis, a degenerative joint disease in which the cartilage that covers the ends of bones in the joint deteriorates, causing pain and loss of movement as bone begins to rub against bone. It is the most prevalent form of arthritis.
- Rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune disease in which the joint lining becomes inflamed as part of the body's immune system activity. Rheumatoid arthritis is one of the most serious and disabling types, affecting mostly women.
- Gout, which affects mostly men. It is usually the result of a defect in body chemistry. This painful condition most often attacks small joints, especially the big toe. Fortunately, gout almost always can be completely controlled with medication and changes in diet.
- Ankylosing spondylitis, a type of arthritis that affects the spine. As a result of inflammation, the bones of the spine grow together.
- Juvenile arthritis, a general term for all types of arthritis that occur in children. Children may develop juvenile rheumatoid arthritis or childhood forms of lupus, ankylosing spondylitis or other types of arthritis.
- Systemic lupus erythematosus (lupus), a serious disorder that can inflame and damage joints and other connective tissues throughout the body.
- Scleroderma, a disease of the body's connective tissue that causes a thickening and hardening of the skin.
- Fibromyalgia, in which widespread pain affects the muscles and attachments to the bone. It affects mostly women.