

# Healthy Joints

# What is arthritis?

- Joint inflammation and damage that leads to pain and stiffness.
- The two major types of arthritis are:
  - Rheumatoid Arthritis
  - Osteoarthritis
- Less common types include:
  - SLE
  - Ankylosing Spondylitis
  - Psoriatic Arthritis

# Risk factors

## Nonmodifiable

- **Age:** Generally, arthritis increases with age.
- **Gender:** 60% of the people with arthritis are women.
- **Genetics:** Certain types of arthritis have genetic components, such as rheumatoid arthritis (RA), systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), and ankylosing spondylitis.

## Modifiable

- **Weight:** Excess weight can contribute to both the onset and progression of knee osteoarthritis.
- **Joint Injuries:** Damage to a joint can contribute to the development of osteoarthritis in that joint.
- **Occupation:** Certain occupations involving repetitive knee bending and squatting are associated with osteoarthritis of the knee.

# Preventing Arthritis

- Maintain a healthy weight
- The prevalence of arthritis increases with increasing weight.
- Research suggests that maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of developing arthritis and may decrease disease progression.
- A loss of just 11 pounds can decrease the occurrence of new knee osteoarthritis.

# Preventing Arthritis

- Protect your joints
- Joint injury can lead to osteoarthritis.
- Repetitive motions like repeated knee bending injures knee joints and predisposes to osteoarthritis.
- Avoid joint injury to reduce your risk of developing osteoarthritis.

# Dealing with existing arthritis

- **Be Active**—Research has shown that physical activity decreases pain, improves function, and delays disability.
- Make sure you get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 days a week. You can get activity in 10-minute intervals.

# Dealing with existing arthritis

- What types of physical activity are appropriate for arthritis?
- **Low-impact aerobic activities**
  - brisk walking, cycling, swimming, water aerobics, gardening, group exercise classes, and dancing.
- **Muscle-strengthening exercises**
  - calisthenics,
  - weight training
  - Using resistance bands.
- **Balance exercises**
  - walking backwards, standing on one foot, and tai chi.