

Winter Newsletter: Arthritis Pain Management



Winter has arrived! While many people may enjoy the season by participating in outdoor activities such as skiing, skating and tobogganing, others may dread the cold, as it aggravates pain like stiffness and inflammation. In my practice, this is one reason why people seek treatment.

Arthritis is a disorder that causes inflammation of one or more joints. There are many different types of arthritis but the most common are osteoarthritis, which is a degenerative joint disease and rheumatoid arthritis, which is an autoimmune disease. Over time, this disease can progress and if ignored it could lead to joint damage and deformity.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2014 an estimate of 16.5% (4.8 million people) Canadians aged 15 and older were diagnosed with arthritis by a medical health professional. Arthritis is more common in seniors but can affect anyone at any age including children.

Causes of Arthritis Pain:

- Degenerative issues
- Injuries that lead to degenerative arthritis
- Inheritance such as osteoarthritis
- Abnormal metabolism that leads to gout
- Infections like Lyme disease
- Immune system dysfunction such as in rheumatoid arthritis & lupus
- Lack of exercise
- Poor diet

Symptoms of Arthritis:

- Pain
- Decreased range of motion
- Stiffness
- Swelling
- Redness
- Deformity

YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS?

Medications:

A medical doctor can prescribe medications:

- Analgesic
- Anti-inflammatory
- Corticosteroids
- Creams & ointments

Surgery:

Surgery may be recommended if other measures are unsuccessful:

- Joint repair or replacement
- Joint fusion

Medications and surgery may be necessary but are only a temporary solution and do not address the underlying issue. They help to mask the pain, it's like applying a bandage on the wound until you remove it and the symptoms reoccur or worsen overtime. In order to heal the body and prevent symptoms from progressing, you need to also incorporate other meaningful modalities. These include exercise and treatments from alternative healthcare practitioners.



Alternative Healthcare Treatments:

Each Alternative Healthcare Practitioner treats different aspects of one's conditions:

- A Homeopathic practitioner focuses on healing the body naturally thus allowing the pain & inflammation to diminish. It strengthens your immune system to help balance & restore health without suppression of symptoms.
- A Physiotherapist helps individuals improve, restore independent function & physical abilities.
- A Massage therapist treats soft tissues
- An Osteopathic practitioner provides changes in the body's structure & function

Exercises:

Always consult your medical doctor and/or physiotherapist as to which types of exercises are appropriate for your condition. Engage in gentle daily exercises such as:

- Walking
- Sign up for water classes in therapy pools for pain relief
- Gentle yoga or aerobic classes

The benefits of exercising are endless it will:

- Strengthen your muscles & joints
- Provide you with more energy throughout the day
- Improve sleep
- Help with balance stability
- Enhance your quality of life
- May prevent your disease from progressing & limit the amount of medications taken

Stuffed Pasta Shells!



Tips include: vegan, dairy and/or gluten allergies & intolerance.

Substitutions may be purchased at a health food store or at a local grocery store.

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg of shell pasta or *substitute for gluten free shell pasta*
- 1 lb of ground chicken, turkey, beef or *substitute 1 large can of beans, chick peas, lentils*
- Optional: grated mozzarella cheese or *substitute with tofu or dairy free cheese*
- 1 large can of tomatoes or fresh tomatoes approximately 20
- 1 small onion
- Fresh parsley or ground parsley
- Fresh basil or ground parsley
- 1 ½ tbsp of salt
- 1 tbsp of sunflower, safflower or corn oil

2 Minute Video Exercises:

Below are seven gentle chair exercises.

1. Head & neck range of motion exercises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=116AkWpUudA>
2. Shoulders range of motion exercises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQWguLULOrU>
3. Arms & elbow range of motion exercises
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cm7_h05B88Q
4. Fingers range of motion exercises
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Kg6XsQFxA5A
5. Hip, knees & legs range of motion exercises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1GhYfbp2Y>
6. Hamstrings & thigh range of motion exercises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z21o5OC9sF4>
7. Heel, toe & ankle range of motion exercises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vx9oHWHIG3M>

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Chop tomatoes & place in blender. Your choice to liquify completely or blend slightly & leave chunky.
3. In a medium pot add 1 tbsp of oil, onions, some parsley & basil. Sauté until lightly brown. Pour in the tomatoes & add ½ tsp of salt. Cook for approximately 20 minutes on medium to low heat. Remove from heat just before sauce is thick but still liquidity.
4. In a large skillet pan cook & stir ground meat until brown or chose beans/chick peas/lentils, mash or place in the blender. Make certain to add water if using the blender, enough to cover the blades. Transfer protein to a bowl, mix in parsley & basil; set aside.
5. In a large pot add water & 1 tbsp of salt. Add the pasta shells & cook until al dente (cooked as to still be firm, not too soft). Remove from stove & drain into colander.
6. In a 12x9 baking dish, grease, add tomato sauce to cover bottom of dish. One by one individually fill the shells with the meat or desired protein. Place shells side by side carefully in the dish. Once dish is full pour additional tomato sauce to cover the pasta shells. Top with parsley & basil. (Optional: sprinkle grated cheese/tofu on top). Bake for 30 minutes.

Serve while still warm & enjoy with a salad!

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