

FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



OSTEOARTHRITIS OF THE HAND

There are many joints in the human hand. Joints in the hand are formed where two or more bones meet. In between the joints, we have a cushion called cartilage. Arthritis occurs when the cartilage between bones becomes thin or worn out. This allows the bones to touch and not move smoothly against one another. Arthritis in the hand may lead to pain, stiffness and loss of function.

CAUSES

Osteoarthritis is caused by overuse, an injury to a joint or “wear and tear” on a joint. This may be present in all joints of the hand or only a few. Other factors that may contribute to osteoarthritis in the hand are age, gender and family history.

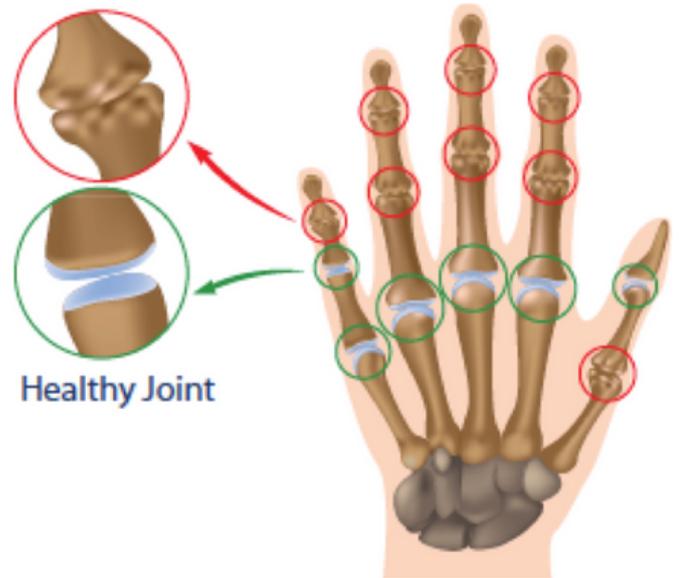
SYMPTOMS

Stiffness, pain and weakness are some of the symptoms of osteoarthritis in the hand. Joints in the hand may also have a deep ache, be tender or warm to the touch, develop swelling or have a change in appearance, such as a bump. Osteoarthritis in the hand may make it difficult to perform activities, such as gripping or pinching.

TREATMENT

Osteoarthritis in the hand can be diagnosed by an X-ray to determine if there are changes to the joint surfaces. A doctor may prescribe anti-inflammatory medicine to help ease the discomfort, and refer you to a hand therapist to develop a long term management strategy. Sometimes surgery may be required to was symptoms, and a hand therapist can facilitate return to usual activities following these procedures.

Osteoarthritis



Healthy Joint

HOW CAN WE HELP?

We have a great resource of knowledge in the treatment of hand osteoarthritis. The main goal in hand therapy is to decrease pain and improve hand function. We will often utilise different modalities such as heat and splinting decrease joint stiffness and pain. An orthosis (splint) may be used to provide rest and proper positioning to painful joints. We can provide instruction in the use of adaptive equipment and also provide a specialised home program to protect the joints, decrease joint stiffness and improve the ability to use the hand. We also prescribe specific strengthening exercises which will maintain hand function but avoid further damage to the joints.