

Ensuring the best outcomes for patients with **Lower-Limb Osteoarthritis**



Lower-limb Osteoarthritis is a degenerative disease that affects the joints in the lower extremities, such as the hips, knees, and feet. It occurs when the protective cartilage that cushions the ends of the bones wears down over time, leading to pain, stiffness, and reduced mobility. Osteoarthritis is one of the most common forms of arthritis and Lower-limb OA specifically, affects millions worldwide.

While Lower-limb osteoarthritis can occur at any age, it is more commonly diagnosed in individuals over 45. However, a trend has been identified in occurrence in younger patients between 35 and 44, particularly if they have prior joint injuries.

Like its parent condition, Lower-limb osteoarthritis has no cure, and the damage to joints can't be reversed. It is possible to slow the progression of the disease and improve quality of life with proper treatment and management, making early identification crucial. We've outlined how to recognise the indicators of Lower-limb Osteoarthritis below.

Patients with Lower-limb Osteoarthritis usually present with a combination of physical and psychological symptoms such as:

- Pain and joint stiffness, particularly in the morning or after resting.
- A limited range of motion.
- A clicking or popping sound when the joint bends.
- Swelling around the joint.
- Muscle weakness, instability or buckling of the joint.
- Depression and Anxiety.
- Fatigue due to sleep disturbance.

Lower-limb Osteoarthritis can significantly impact a person's quality of life, making it difficult to perform daily tasks such as walking, climbing stairs, or getting in and out of chairs.

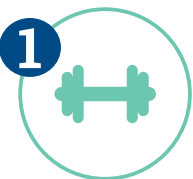




What Treatment Options are available?

According to recent research, physiotherapy interventions can significantly reduce pain and increase patients' functional capacity and quality of life in managing lower-limb osteoarthritis. When manual treatment is combined with education and self-management, patients have the best long-term outcomes, keeping them active and doing the things they love with their friends and families.

The best treatment options for lower-limb osteoarthritis depend on the severity of the condition and the individual's specific needs. Common treatments for all patients include:



Exercise-based treatment

Exercise and lifestyle changes are recommended for all Lower-limb Osteoarthritis patients. Maintaining a healthy weight, staying active, and avoiding activities that exacerbate joint pain can help manage symptoms.



Manual therapy

Exercises that improve joint flexibility, stability, and muscle strength can help reduce pain and improve mobility.



Education and Self-management

Providing patients with information on Lower-limb Osteoarthritis, self-management or self-care, pain coping skills, and self-management of diet supports the work of physiotherapists. It helps patients manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

Patient Outcomes

When managing Lower-limb Osteoarthritis (OA), referring patients to physiotherapy is recommended as the first action for GPs. Living with OA can feel like a never-ending battle as patients can slowly lose their ability to move around and do the things they love. Physiotherapy treatment combined with education and self-management skills can help patients take control of their condition. By addressing pain, improving joint function and providing educational tools, physiotherapy can help slow the progression of Lower-limb Osteoarthritis.

Referring OA patients to physiotherapy should be the first action for GPs. It can be a game changer for patients with Lower-limb Osteoarthritis - giving them back freedom of movement and the ability to do the things they love. Our skilled team can help patients navigate their condition and be able to keep hiking, gardening, playing with their grandchildren and travelling with their partner.



Contact us to find out more about how we can help your patients reach their potential.

call 1300 381 207

References

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