

## Overview

Arthritis is literally inflammation affecting one or more joints. It is mostly caused by natural wear and tear and this is called osteoarthritis.. Much less commonly, it can be caused by the body attacking its own joints. These conditions are called inflammatory arthritis. The most common type of this is Rheumatoid Arthritis.

## What is Rheumatoid Arthritis?

This is a condition where the joints are affected by the body's own natural defence mechanisms. The condition is related to other types of inflammatory joint disease.

The symptoms are characterised by usually several joints becoming swollen and painful. It is associated with general stiffness in the mornings, which may wear off during the day. These conditions are dealt with by your GP or by referral to a rheumatologist.

I only need to get involved if there is a progression to say, osteoarthritis in the knee, or if you experience complications of the disease and are referred from your rheumatologist.

## What is osteoarthritis?

This is the most common type of arthritis in the population, and is best thought of as natural wear and tear, culminating in the loss of the normal surface of the knee. Your normal joint has a layer of cartilage on the surface of the bone, like icing on a cake.

For whatever reason, usually age related wear and tear, the cartilage wears off to leave bone underneath, which may well be painful.

## What can I do about it?

You should see your GP in the first instance if you are having arthritis symptoms. Many cases remain mild and pain can be controlled with various painkillers and anti inflammatory medication.

If things are getting really bad, then we might have to have a chat about other options including surgery. You really need to have carefully thought about the possible adverse outcomes before embarking on surgery for knee arthritis.



**If you would like to arrange a consultation or just need an informal chat, please contact me at:**

Registered in England.  
Company No: 11148231  
Reg Address: The Cottage,  
Vicarage Lane, Hawkshead,  
Cumbria LA22 0PB.

For general enquiries and advice,  
or to arrange a consultation, please  
call my Practice Manager,  
Jo Comerford.  
Tel: 07410 905 772

The Beaumont Hospital,  
Old Hall Clough,  
Chorley New Road, Lostock,  
Bolton BL6 4LA.  
Tel: 01204 404 404