



Osteoarthritis Research

by AMY MANLEY

Non-Surgical Treatment Options for Osteoarthritis in the Knees

Osteoarthritis is a painful condition that's caused by degeneration of joint cartilage and bone and leads to constant stiffness. The condition is common within the hips, knees, and thumb joints. Managing osteoarthritis of the knee without surgery was once impossible, but recent osteoarthritis research offers those dealing with the condition new hope.

There are two factors considered when providing treatment for osteoarthritis. The first factor is any additional health conditions, and the second is the involvement of other joint sites. While surgery can be an effective treatment option for those with osteoarthritis, there are some complications. Surgery may not always work, and in some cases, it can make things worse. New guidelines state that non-surgical treatment for osteoarthritis of the knees, which offers a lot of hope to those looking for an effective treatment option as an alternative to surgery.

Patients involved in the osteoarthritis research study were divided into four groups. The groups were created to include the following: patients with knee-only OA and no comorbidities, patients with knee-only OA with comorbidities, patients with multi-joint OA and no comorbidities, and patients with multi-joint OA with comorbidities. The patient with additional comorbidities had conditions that included hypertension, renal failure, GI bleeding, and depression.

Prior to working with the group members, a comprehensive review of current scientific evidence was conducted. Afterwards, each member provided a review on treatment based upon its therapeutic benefit and overall risk to the patient involved in each population specific group. Treatment used during the study utilized the new guidelines, which recommended a set of non-pharmacological core treatments, all of which were appropriate for each patient involved in the March 2014 study.

Treatment methods that were effective for treating osteoarthritis without the use of surgery included: land-based exercises, weight management, strength training, water-based exercises, and self-management and education on the condition. Those who have osteoarthritis, along with being over-weight, are encouraged to achieve 5% weight loss within a period of 20-weeks for the methods listed above to be effective.

The effectiveness of these non-surgical treatment options creates excitement, and as research continues, new and advanced methods of treatment will be available to the public.