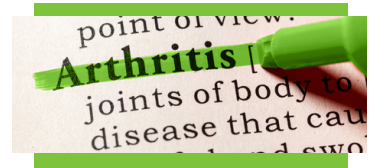




INFLAMMATORY WORDS

BY ERIN GUIDARELLI, ATC

Have you ever been hindered by a painful, achy, and stiff joint pain in your day-to-day activities? Maybe you've assumed this is arthritis because of your age, your occupation, or because you popped your knuckles too much when you were younger. Don't lose hope just yet! There are several types of arthritic inflammation and several other conditions that can be confused with this painful, swelling condition. Let's take a look at some common types and differential diagnoses.



Types of Arthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA): This is the “wear and tear” arthritis we often think about with the term and is brought on by the wearing down of hyaline cartilage in the joint space. This type most often affects load bearing joints (low back, hips, and knees). Pain may be experienced with a grating sound or sensation produced by friction between bone and cartilage, but is relieved by rest.



Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA): This systemic autoimmune inflammatory disease typically causes symmetrical joint pain, swelling and stiffness, and is more chronic in nature. It is commonly present in the wrists and small joints of the hands, but systemic issues may be present as well (fatigue, malaise, and fever).



Psoriatic Arthritis: A type of inflammatory arthritis that affects some people who have the skin condition psoriasis.

Pseudogout: This type presents very similar to gout, though the crystals in the joint space and blood are composed of calcium pyrophosphate dihydrate (CPPD). This can only be confirmed with joint aspirations.



About Erin Guidarelli, MS, ATC || Erin is an athletic trainer in the Portland, OR area. She has a Master's degree in Athletic Training with a concentration in Interprofessional Education. During the Summer she is the Head Athletic Trainer for the Portland Pickles Baseball Team and when she is not working she

is usually reading, listening to history podcasts, running, hiking and spending time with her husband and two crazy English bulldogs, Mia and Izzy.

Other Things That Feel Like Arthritis

Here are a few common ailments that may seem like arthritis, but are not!

Gout: Gout is caused by hyperuricemia (too much uric acid in the blood), and is seen with the sudden onset of severe pain - most commonly the big toe. The pain typically worsens with motion or direct pressure. Risk factors include diets rich in red meat or seafood and medicines - diuretics and regular use of aspirin or niacin.

Trigger Finger: Trigger finger occurs when one of your fingers gets stuck in a bent position. Your finger may bend or straighten with a snap, just like a trigger being pulled and released. This condition occurs over time with repetitive use and/or overuse of finger and hand flexion (gripping).

Strain/Sprain: Strains and sprains are typically caused by a specific traumatic event or can be caused by overuse, rather than arthritic pain that develops over decades. A SPRAIN is stretching or tearing of ligaments and a STRAIN is stretching or tearing of a muscle or tendon (the tissue connecting muscle to bone).

Fracture: Like the strain and sprain, a fracture occurs with a traumatic event and is a complete or partial break in a bone.

Still have questions? Consult your onsite injury prevention specialist or call the On Demand team for an evaluation of your symptoms to determine what route of care is most appropriate!

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialist's in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

