



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

A Quick Look at Arthritis

Projected 2030 Prevalence of Self-Reported Doctor-Diagnosed Arthritis and Arthritis-Attributable Activity Limitations — United States
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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Matthew Reynolds] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly broadcast of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Matthew Reynolds.

Joint stiffness, pain, and swelling are all symptoms of arthritis. If you have this painful condition you may have difficulty with certain activities and even be disabled. There are a number of medical conditions that cause arthritis, but most commonly it develops when joint cartilage breaks down due to wear and tear.

Today we are going to be talking to Dr. Mark Freedman about the impact of arthritis. Dr. Freedman and his colleagues in CDC's Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion are doing research that helps determine how many Americans will be affected by arthritis in the future.

Welcome to the show, Dr. Freedman.

[Dr. Freedman] Thank you Matthew. It's great to be here.

[Matthew Reynolds] Dr. Freedman, I'm sure that many of our listeners suffer from joint pain and possibly arthritis. Are there different kinds of arthritis?

[Dr. Freedman] Yes, arthritis refers to over 100 different rheumatic conditions that primarily affect the joints and the tissues surrounding the joints. There are two major types, non-inflammatory and inflammatory arthritis. Non-inflammatory arthritis is more common, and it is limited to the joints and surrounding tissues. The most common type of non-inflammatory arthritis is osteoarthritis (or degenerative joint disease), and this occurs when the thin line of cartilage at the end of the bones breaks down and disintegrates. The most commonly affected joints include the knees, hips, hands, ankles, and spine. The second type of arthritis is inflammatory which is less common. This also effects joints and the surrounding tissues, but other organs, such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, and eyes can also be involved. Some examples include rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus, ankylosing spondylitis, and psoriatic arthritis.

[Matthew Reynolds] You mentioned two major categories of arthritis. If you were to put those together and talk about arthritis as a whole in the United States, how common is it?

[Dr. Freedman] Well, Matthew, arthritis is very common and our study suggests it will become even more common in the coming decades. Arthritis currently affects 46 million U.S. adults and is the leading cause of physical disability in U.S. adults. It is responsible for \$128 billion annually in healthcare costs and we're projecting to see increases of up to 67 million U.S. adults with arthritis by the year 2030.

[Matthew Reynolds] Those are staggering numbers. You've just finished a study that found that the number of people with arthritis is increasing in the United States. Why is this happening?

[Dr. Freedman] Well, we project the increases in the number of people with arthritis in coming decades mostly because the U.S. population is projected to increase, especially in the older, higher risk age groups. Also, obesity continues to be a major public health problem, and obesity is a known risk factor for knee osteoarthritis. This could lead to even more arthritis than we are projecting at this point.

[Matthew Reynolds] In your study, you were able to estimate how many people are expected to be diagnosed with arthritis in the United States. What did you learn about the number of people affected with arthritis in the future?

[Dr. Freedman] We used Census population projections to estimate how much arthritis there would be in the year 2030 in each state, and we found that arthritis is expected to increase in all 50 states by an average of 34%, with 10 states projected to have increases of 50% or more of current levels. In Arizona, Florida and Nevada we are expecting to see double the number of people with arthritis by 2030. Most of the larger increases are seen in the "sunbelt" and western states. California, Florida, North Carolina, and Texas are projected to each have over a million new cases by the year 2030. These states are also predicted to have the largest increases in overall state populations and an increased number of adults over 65. These increases are expected to add a significant burden to states' healthcare and public health systems. We also looked at activity limitations caused by arthritis and these numbers are expected to increase similarly.

[Matthew Reynolds] Your study predicts these increases in the number of people with arthritis by 2030. How can people prevent arthritis or manage it if they already have it?

[Dr. Freedman] Well Matthew, arthritis is already a large problem, and our study says we can expect the problem to keep growing in nearly every state. Although most arthritis is not curable, there are some basic steps we can take to learn to prevent and manage arthritis. What bothers us is that so many people are not taking these basic steps. These include staying physically active, which leads to decreased pain and improved quality of life for people with arthritis; losing excess weight, which can decrease the burden on your joints; and getting educated about arthritis. Some important self-management steps include knowing the type of arthritis that you have, and developing skills to learn how to manage your arthritis when the doctor is not available.

[Matthew Reynolds] What is CDC doing to help?

[Dr. Freedman] Well, currently CDC funds 36 state health department arthritis programs that partner with the state chapters of the Arthritis Foundation to increase the availability of these proven exercise and self-management strategies. You can learn more about these programs on our website at cdc.gov/arthritis, or by contacting your local chapter of the Arthritis Foundation.

[Matthew Reynolds] Dr. Freedman thanks for taking the time to talk with us today.

[Dr. Freedman] It's been my pleasure.

[Matthew Reynolds] That's it for this week's show. Don't forget to join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Matthew Reynolds for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit www.cdc.gov.