



Osteoarthritis and the spine

Osteoarthritis is when the protective layer of cartilage at the end of a bone wears down over time.

Osteoarthritis can affect all joints in the body including the spine. It is commonly associated with pain during basic movements such as sitting, standing and walking. The spine is not unlike the larger joints in the body, and osteoarthritis affects the joints in the cervical, thoracic and lumbar spine causing similar symptoms of pain and decreased mobility. This pain is due to inflammation and swelling or from the development of bone spurs or osteophytes. These bone spurs can then put pressure on the nerves of the spine, leading to pain such as sciatica in the legs or pain in the arms and fingers.

Treatment options for spinal osteoarthritis can range from pain killers, injections and surgery to remove the bone spurs and decompress the affected nerves.

If you have been diagnosed with osteoarthritis or have neck or back pain, see your GP about a referral to a specialist to discuss your treatment options.



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