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Degenerative Joint Disease

Condition: Degenerative joint disease, which is also referred to as osteoarthritis (OA), is a common “wear and tear” disease that occurs when the cartilage that serves as a cushion in the joints deteriorates. This condition can affect any joint but is most common in knees, hands, hips, and spine.

Background: More than 50% of adults over the age of 65 are affected by degenerative joint disease. This condition is associated with pain, loss of function, and reduced endurance, ultimately leading to weight gain and associated complications. The underlying cause of this condition is typically chronic repetitive motion that results in inflammation and structural joint damage.

Risk Factors: Predisposing factors include repetitive motion, infection, rheumatoid arthritis, muscular dystrophy, osteoporosis, hormone disorders, obesity, sickle cell disease, and bone disorders. OA is equally common in men and women before age 55 but increases in women thereafter. Knee OA is more common in African-American women. Higher rates are observed in the knees in women and in the hips in men.

History and Symptoms: Patients may have pain, stiffness, limited range of motion, loss of flexibility, swelling,

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