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Sheet handed out in consultation

JOINTS

# Osteoarthritis

*Caring for your joints daily, without immobilising them*

An osteoarthritic joint is not a lost joint: it is a joint that asks for gentle movement, warmth and a plate that does not throw oil on the fire. This sheet gathers what soothes and what inflames.

## IN A NUTSHELL

Osteoarthritis is the wear of articular cartilage: mechanical pain that increases with exertion and eases with rest, morning stiffness that loosens in a few minutes. It is not a sentence of age: weight, adapted physical activity and diet genuinely modulate its course and the intensity of pain. The plate does not rebuild cartilage, but it soothes the inflammatory terrain that hurts.

## THE ESSENTIALS

- Every kilo lost relieves the knee fourfold at each step: it is the most powerful lever when weight-bearing joints are affected.
- Gentle movement every day beats the heroic sport of Sunday: the joint feeds on moving, not on resting.
- The anti-inflammatory plate looks Mediterranean: oily fish, olive oil, vegetables, little sugar and ultra-processed foods.

## WHAT HELPS YOU

**Oily fish** : sardine, mackerel, salmon, herring two to three times a week: their omega-3 are the plate's anti-inflammatories.

**Spices that warm gently** : turmeric (with a hint of pepper), ginger, cinnamon: in dishes, every day, in small doses.

**Coloured vegetables and fruit** : the diversity of colours = the diversity of antioxidants that protect cartilage: aim for the rainbow.

**Olive oil and nuts** : good fats lubricate the terrain: olive oil instead of industrial fats, a handful of walnuts a day.

**Broths and slow-cooked dishes** : hot, melting, rich in collagen: joint comfort also comes through the pot.

**Quality protein** : eggs, poultry, fish, pulses: maintaining muscle is relieving the joint it protects.

## WHAT MAKES IT WORSE

**Sugars and ultra-processed products** : they maintain the background inflammation: the terrain that hurts feeds on biscuits, soft drinks and industrial dishes.

**Excess red meat and cured meats** : once or twice a week is enough: beyond that, they feed inflammation and acidity of the terrain.

**Prolonged sedentary living** : immobility stiffens more than effort wears: do not stay seated for more than an hour without moving.

**Repeated heavy load carrying** : share loads, make two trips, use the trolley: the joint forgives gentle effort, not brutality.

**Nightshades if they hurt you** : tomato, potato, aubergine, pepper: science has not settled it, but if your pain follows your evening meals, test a three-week break.

**Long periods of cold and damp** : cover the sensitive joint, dry yourself well, seek dry warmth: many pains triggered by damp weather ease in warmth.

DAY TO DAY

## The habits that make all the difference

1. **Move gently every day**

   thirty minutes of walking, gentle cycling or water: spread through the day, it is the best joint lubricant there is.

2. **Loosen up in the morning**

   five minutes of gentle movements on waking before loading: the joint needs a warm-up, not a cold start.

3. **Alternate activity and pause**

   effort in small bursts with micro-pauses protects better than one big session followed by two days on the sofa.

4. **Track the kilos that weigh**

   if weight is an issue, every kilo lost relieves the knees fourfold at each step: your practitioner can help you aim right.

5. **Put warmth where it pulls**

   hot water bottle, warm bath, covering garment over the sensitive joint: warmth relaxes the muscles that tense around the pain.

This sheet supports your practitioner's advice, it does not replace it. See a doctor if pain wakes you at night, if a joint swells suddenly and hot, if you have a fever, or if pain does not ease with rest: these are not signs of simple osteoarthritis.

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