

# Alternative Treatments for Arthritis Sufferers



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**Osteoarthritis (OA)** is an inflammation in the joints and is often referred to as the "wear and tear" arthritis. Because our joints deteriorate naturally as we age, they're susceptible to the breakdown of the cartilage between the bones of the joint. Since cartilage is needed to cushion the joint bones, its loss often results in pain and inflammation.

It may seem odd that moving a mild to moderately painful joint will actually benefit it, but that's exactly the impact chiropractic care can have on an arthritic joint. The neck and back areas especially benefit from chiropractic manipulation because, by aligning the arthritic joint and keeping it in motion, the inflammation lessens. Once inflammation is reduced, greater range of motion returns in the affected area. Consequently, the pain is reduced. Acupuncture, the insertion of thin-needle hair needles in specific points on the body, may also speed the reduction of inflammation associated with all degrees of OA.

**Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)** affects the joints differently. Instead of the car-

tilage breaking down, initial RA sufferers experience inflammation in the synovial membrane, which is the source of the fluid that lubricates our joints. Progressive symptoms include joint swelling and misalignment due to bone and cartilage deterioration by destructive enzymes. There is no cure for RA, but many medications exist today to help retard its progression and manage pain. A drug-free alternative for RA sufferers is the use of acupuncture.

Acupuncture has been shown to reduce the autoimmune response to triggers that cause RA pain and inflammation. RA sufferers may also experi-

ence tendon problems and muscle weakness. Acupuncture can alleviate the pain and irritation associated with these ancillary effects. Patients who have utilized acupuncture as part of their treatment regimen have also experienced a greater sense of well-being, which aids in the reduction of stress.

Give our office a call today at (636)928-5588 to schedule a consultation with me to discuss your treatment options.

\* Source: Arthritis Foundation, [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)

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