



Osteoarthritis of the Knee

Osteoarthritis of the knee (knee OA) is a chronic pain condition and a progressive disease that is caused by inflammation and degeneration of the knee joint that worsens over time.

Knee OA affects the entire joint, including bone, cartilage, ligaments, and muscles. Its progression is influenced by age, body mass index, bone structure, genetics, muscular strength, and activity level. Knee OA also may develop as a secondary condition following a traumatic knee injury.

Managing chronic pain conditions like knee OA is complex. While in some situations, when dosed appropriately, prescription opioids *are* an appropriate part of medical treatment; there are risks, including depression, addiction, overdose, and withdrawal symptoms when stopping use.

With opioid abuse an unprecedented national public health epidemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended safe alternatives, including physical therapy, to opioids for treating knee OA. Learn more about how a physical therapist can help you safely manage your knee OA at [MoveForwardPT.com/ChoosePT](https://www.moveforwardpt.com/choosept).

Approximately
14 million
people in
the United
States have
symptomatic
knee OA.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of knee OA may include:

- Worsening pain during or following activity
- Pain or stiffness for a prolonged period of time
- A feeling of popping, cracking, or grinding when moving the knee
- Swelling following activity
- Tenderness to touch along the knee joint

HOW A PHYSICAL THERAPIST CAN HELP

Once you have received a diagnosis of knee OA, your physical therapist will design an individualized treatment program specific to the exact nature of your condition and goals.

Your treatment program may include:

- Range-of-motion exercises
- Muscle strengthening
- Manual therapy
- Bracing
- Activity recommendations
- Modalities