



## Osteoarthritis of the Knee

Osteoarthritis of the knee (knee OA) is a progressive disease causing inflammation and degeneration of the knee joint that worsens over time. It affects the entire joint, including bone, cartilage, ligament, and muscle. Its progression is influenced by age, body mass index (BMI), bone structure, genetics, strength, and activity level.

Knee OA also may develop as a secondary condition following a traumatic knee injury. More severe or advanced cases may require surgery. Individuals who develop knee OA experience a wide range of symptoms based on the progression of the disease, which may include:

- Worsening pain during or following activity, particularly with walking, climbing, or descending stairs, or moving from a sitting to standing position
- Pain or stiffness after sitting with the knee bent or straight 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

**16%**  
of adults aged  
45+ have knee OA

### HOW A PHYSICAL THERAPIST CAN HELP

Depending on the stage of the disease and whether there are associated injuries or conditions, knee OA can be managed with physical therapy. Your physical therapist will design an individualized treatment program specific to the exact nature of your condition and your goals.

- Range of Motion
- Muscle Strength
- Manual Therapy
- Modalities
- Bracing
- Activity Recommendations