



ACPA®

American Chronic Pain Association

Arthritis

Arthritis is a general term for a group of more than 100 diseases. The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis. Other common types include rheumatoid arthritis, gout, and fibromyalgia. Nearly 1 in 5 adults has been diagnosed with some form of arthritis—around 46 million Americans. An additional 23 million live with chronic joint symptoms that have not been diagnosed by a doctor. By 2030, an estimated 67 million adults in the U.S. are projected to have doctor-diagnosed arthritis.

Arthritis is one of the most prevalent chronic health problems in the U.S. and is the leading cause of disability of Americans over the age of 15. It is second only to heart disease as a cause of work disability. It also causes activity limitations for 16 million Americans and every year results in 36.5 million ambulatory care visits, and 744,000 hospitalizations.

Arthritis and related conditions cost the U.S. \$128 billion every year in both direct medical costs and indirect costs from lost productivity.

Recent research findings supported by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) at NIH include discovery of a new imaging technique that may help scientists better understand and treat osteoarthritis, identification of a potential biomarker for osteoarthritis, discovery of three genes involved in rheumatoid arthritis, and advances in potential new treatments.

The rising human and economic costs of arthritis underscore the need for urgent measures that will reduce the disability and expense of this chronic condition. Research on the horizon offers much hope and includes exploration of new insights in genomics and proteomics; identification of triggers and risk factors that help predict disease susceptibility; and continuation of the Osteoarthritis Initiative, an observational study of knee osteoarthritis that is providing data for the discovery and validation of disease risk factors, genetic and imaging biomarkers, and improved outcome measures.