Osteoarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management.

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National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Osteoarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management. London (UK): National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE); 2022 Oct 19. 42 p. (NICE guideline; no. 226)

View Original Guideline

Overview

Guideline Objective

To improve management of osteoarthritis and the quality of life for people with the condition

Patient Population

Adults aged 16 years and over with osteoarthritis or suspected osteoarthritis

Note: People with commonly existing comorbidities will be specifically considered where appropriate. People with conditions that make them susceptible to osteoarthritis or that often occur alongside osteoarthritis, including crystal arthritis (gout or pseudo-gout), inflammatory arthritis (including rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis), septic arthritis (an infection in the joint), diseases of childhood that pre-dispose a person to osteoarthritis, medical conditions presenting with joint inflammation, such as haemochromatosis (a build-up of iron levels in the body), and malignancy, will not be covered.

Recommendations

Recommendation Statements

Major interventions covered in this guideline include:

- Clinical diagnosis and guidance on imaging
- Patient education regarding information and support
- Use of non-pharmacological options (e.g., therapeutic exercise, weight management, and device selection) and pharmacological options (e.g., topical, oral and transdermal medicines)
- Guidance on imaging, manual therapy, acupunture, electrotherapy, paracetamol, glucosamine, opioids, and intra-articular injections
- Follow-up care, including referral for joint replacement

Note: Refer to the original guideline for full recommendation statements.

Evidence Rating Scheme

Refer to the original guideline documentation for more information.

Recommendation Rating Scheme

Refer to the original guideline documentation for more information.

Related Content

Supporting Documents

- Methods Report; 2022 Oct 19.
- Evidence Reviews; 2022 Oct 19.
    - A: Additional Benefit of Imaging in the Diagnosis of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.

- B: Post-Diagnostic Information on Osteoarthritis for People with Osteoarthritis, Their Family and Carers; 2022 Oct 19.
- C: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Exercise for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- D: Benefit of Weight Loss for the Management of Osteoarthritis for People Living with Overweight or Obesity; 2022 Oct 19.
- E: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Manual Therapy for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- F: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of acupuncture for people with osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- G: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Electrotherapy for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- H: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Devices for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- I: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Oral, Topical and Transdermal Medicines for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
    - I: Appendices A to D; 2022 Oct 19.
    - I: Appendices E to J; 2022 Oct 19.
- J: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Intra-Articular Injections for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- K: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Treatment Packages for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- L: Regular Follow-up and Review; 2022 Oct 19.
- M: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Imaging during the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- N: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of Arthroscopic Procedures for the Management of Osteoarthritis; 2022 Oct 19.
- O: Indicators for Referral for Possible Joint Replacement Surgery; 2022 Oct 19.

    - P: Outcomes of Joint Replacement Surgery Dependent on Body Mass Index; 2022 Oct 19.
- Electroacupuncture Economic Analysis; 2022 Oct 19.
- Pharmacological Treatments Economic Analysis; 2022 Oct 19.
- Developing NICE Guidelines: The Manual; 2014 Oct 31 (last updated 2025 Oct 23).

Implementation Tools

- Management of Osteoarthritis Visual Summary; 2022 Oct 19.
- Baseline Assessment Tool; 2022 Oct 19.
- Resource Impact Summary Report; 2022 Oct 19.
- Resource Impact Template; 2022 Oct 19.
- Research Recommendations.
- Practical Steps to Improving the Quality of Care and Services Using NICE Guidance.

Patient Education

- Information for the Public; 2022 Oct 19.

Note: This patient information is intended to help patients better understand their health and their diagnosed disorders. Patients and their representatives should still consult with a licensed health care professional for evaluation of treatment options as well as answers to their personal medical questions.

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TRUST Scorecard

Composition of Guideline Development Group (GDG)

Multidisciplinary GDG Members	**Yes**
Methodologist Involvement	**Yes**
Incorporation of Patient and Public Perspective	

Systematic Review of Evidence

Literature Search	
Study Selection	
Evidence Synthesis	

Foundations for Recommendations

Strength of Evidence Grade	
Description of Benefits and Harms of Recommendations	
Summary of Evidence Supporting Recommendations	
Strength of Recommendations Rating	
Clear Articulation of Recommendations	

Funding Source	**Yes**
Disclosure and Management of Financial Conflicts of Interests	
External Review	
Updating	

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