



Bone Spurs

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Osteoarthritis and Bone Spurs

When you have OA, one complication that you could see is bone spurs. Not many people realize how serious these can be, and the pain they cause can be difficult to deal with when you don't get the treatment you need.

By learning more about how bone spurs occur, what treatment is offered, and pain management techniques, you can better manage this issue should it occur.

How Do Bone Spurs Occur?

When you have OA, the bones within your body become weak and brittle. As the bones begin to deteriorate, they can break off in small slivers, which results in what's called a bone spur. These spurs vary in size, as some can be very small and others on the larger scale. They are considered an outgrowth of bone, and they occur along the edges of the bone.

The areas they most often occur are the neck, lower back, shoulder, knee, foot, and heel. They not only occur when the bones become weak, but also when inflammation occurs within the body and causes damage to the bone.

What Are the Symptoms?

In some cases, there are no symptoms at all. Some people do not discover they have a bone spur from their OA until it's found on an x-ray or similar imaging device. However, others find out a spur is present when they rub up against each other or against another piece of bone, leading to a sharp and painful sensation.

In some cases the bone spur can affect the joints, leading to loss of motion in the joint that may not be reversible, depending on how long it's present.

As the spur begins to move around, it can also come in contact with ligaments in the body. This often leads to a painful sensation, but could also cause tears within the ligament, or even damage to the rotator cuff.

These spurs can also occur within the spinal cord, although this is less common. When they occur within this delicate region, it can cause severe damage to the spine, loss of motion, and in extreme cases loss of mobility.

Treatment

If you think you may have a bone spur, medical care is absolutely necessary. The reason care is required is because of the damage they can cause, and the amount of pain they can cause. By going to your doctor at the first sign of a problem, you'll be much more likely to find and correct the problem before it can cause severe damage.

To provide the correct form of treatment, your doctor must first diagnose the issue. Your doctor will most likely use an imaging device to find the exact location of the spur and determine the size. Your doctor will provide you with medication to treat the pain, and may prescribe anti-inflammatories to help reduce inflammation.

In some cases, steroids are used to help reduce severe inflammation if pain is not controlled with the two methods listed in the ladder.

Conclusion

While the spurs that can develop in OA patients can be painful and cause you to feel stressed, the treatment used to correct the issue is often effective.