

Healthy Joints Matter

A joint is the point where two bones meet. They are an important part of our body because they play a key role in movement and make our skeleton flexible. Without joints, movement would not be possible. There are three types of joints in our body that allow our bodies to move in many ways: Fibrous joints, cartilaginous joints, and synovial joints.

1) Fibrous joints can also be called immovable joints. These joints are located in points of our body that require no movement. The main role of these joints is to provide stability and protection. Fibrous joints connect bones of the skull, bones of the forearm, long bones of the lower leg, and they hold a tooth in place in its socket for both the upper and lower jaw.

2) Cartilaginous joints are slightly movable and provide less stability than fibrous joints. They are called cartilaginous joints because the bones are connected by cartilage at the joints. Cartilage is a tough, elastic type tissue in our body that helps reduce friction between bones. Cartilaginous joints can be found between certain bones of the rib cage and at the connection of the right and left hip bones in the pelvis.

3) Synovial joints are freely movable and allow for greater mobility. Synovial joints have a small space between the connecting bones that is filled with fluid to act as a cushion for the bones. Synovial joints are found in our wrist, elbow, knees, shoulders, and hips.

As we age, joint movement can become stiffer and less flexible. This is due to several reasons, such as, thinning of our cartilage and a decrease in the lubricant fluid found inside our joints. These changes may cause us to feel aches and pains in our joints as we get older. Many of these age-related changes can be prevented or managed through regular exercise. Regular exercise can keep the muscles around the affected joints strong. It also helps re-fill the lubrication to the cartilage of the joint and reduces stiffness and pain, while also helping to control joint swelling. In some cases, exercise can even reverse age-related changes! It is not too late to get into a regular exercise routine – start small and feel all the benefits in your joints.



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