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News Release

## **Focus On Arthritis**

Arthritis is a group of conditions that impact the joints of the body. There are different forms of arthritis and each has a different cause, osteoarthritis (degenerative joint disease) is the most common form of arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation lists more than 100 forms of arthritis and related diseases. The following list of questions helps to identify many of the risk factors involved in arthritis development.

*-Are you 45 years of age or older?* Because arthritis impacts the joints of our body older individuals are at greater risk.

*-Have you ever had an injury to your knee severe enough to put you in bed; to force you to use a cane, crutch or brace; or to require surgery?* Over 50 percent of those with a history of knee damage could expect to develop arthritis later in life. Statistics from the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, and the Center for the Study of Retired Athletes has found retired pro-football players are two-thirds more likely than other men to have arthritis in their 50s.

*-Are you more than 10 pounds overweight?* Overweight and obese individuals are especially at greater risk. Studies have shown that being just ten pounds overweight increases the force on the knee by 30 to 60 pounds, but that losing ten pounds decreases the risk.

*-Have you in the past or do you currently, participate in greater than 3 hours per day of heavy physical activities, such as bending, lifting, or carrying items on a regular basis?* People who have jobs that require doing repetitive motions have a higher risk of developing osteoarthritis due increased stress on certain joints.

*Did you have hip problems that caused you to limp as a child?* Some childhood hip problems later cause hip arthritis (for example, a type of childhood hip fracture known as a Slipped Epiphysis; also Legg-Perthe's Disease).

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) lists five public health messages related to arthritis:

-Learn Arthritis Management Strategies

-Be Active

-Watch Your Weight

-See Your Doctor

-Protect Your Joints

For more information about this topic, talk to you doctor or visit any of the web sites mentioned or contact Regional Extension Agent Donna Shanklin at the St. Clair County Extension office at (205) 338-9416 or email [drs0009@aces.edu](mailto:drs0009@aces.edu).

*Resources used in development of article:*

<http://www.arthritis.org/>

<http://www.arthritistoday.org/conditions/osteoarthritis/news-and-research/new-knee-study-2.php>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/PainManagement/story?id=4102124&page=1> Football Season Hikes Up Pain for Players, Tackles Can Lead to Chronic Pain for Life

<http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/arthritis/key.htm>