

## - Bones—diseases

### Weak in the knees

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AS we age, our bodies begin to feel the effects of wear and tear. One of the most prominent implications of this is knee osteoarthritis. In *Knee Pain and Functional Disability of Knee Osteoarthritis Patients Seen at Malaysian Government Hospitals* by the Malaysian Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences, it is stated that roughly 10% to 20% of the elderly population in Malaysia suffer from the condition. Furthermore, the journal mentions that adults aged 40 and above are at greater risk of experiencing knee pain issues.

The journal defines it as a musculoskeletal disease arising from the degradation of joint cartilage – characterised by symptoms such as joint stiffness, discomfort and pain in knee joints. This is because the loss of cartilage causes joint bones to rub off each other. In severe cases, there is also the possibility of functional disability.

How to tackle osteoarthritis?

There are several ways to manage symptoms of knee osteoarthritis. For example, losing weight through a healthy diet can help with reducing the physical strain on your knees. Physical therapy and exercise are also recommended to help in the weight loss process, with the added benefit of improving functional performance of the joint, according to *Exercise and osteoarthritis* published by the Journal of Anatomy.

If symptoms heighten to a debilitating state, supportive devices such as braces and canes might be needed to reduce the strain on the knees when walking.

Surgery is another option that can be considered to improve the condition of affected knees.

Curcumin, an active compound found in the ginger turmeric, has historically been used for its medicinal benefits in both ancient Indian and Chinese cultures dating back to thousands of years ago. Based on *Turmeric* by American Journal of Health-system Pharmacy, it was commonly used to treat pain in the joints and muscular disorders in India.

In modern times, according to *Curcumin: A Review of Its Effects on Human Health* published by MDPI, curcumin has been found to have potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties when combined with bioavailability-enhancing agents such as piperine – which helps the body absorb curcumin more efficiently.

The study concludes that curcumin can help in the management of osteoarthritis, such as pain relief and reduction in inflammation symptoms.

There are also a host of associated health benefits that include helping with anxiety, improved recovery from exercise-induced inflammation and muscle soreness, management of other oxidative and inflammatory conditions, and more.

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