



FOR
YOUR OWN
GOOD

THE MANUAL FOR
BETTER MEN'S HEALTH

BY
EL CAMINO HOSPITAL



GET OUT IN FRONT OF JOINT PAIN

How's your back?

Most men have heard that question at least once. Or maybe it was about your trick knee, your sore shoulder or the pain in your neck.

Problems with bones or joints — also known as orthopedic conditions — are among the most common reasons men go to the doctor. Pain and disability from these conditions can sideline you from sports, recreation and family fun. And when you try to tough it out, your other joints can suffer as they work harder to compensate.

You're not likely to escape every orthopedic injury or illness, especially as you get older. But with a few smart strategies, you can prevent many problems or minimize their effects.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

With more than 200 bones and at least that many joints in your body, there's no shortage of opportunities for trouble. Here's a look at some typical orthopedic problems:

- **Arthritis** is a group of conditions that cause pain and swelling in your joints. Arthritis is the No. 1 cause of pain in men.
- **Bursitis** is inflammation of a bursa, which is a small, fluid-filled sac that acts as a cushion in joints. Bursitis often occurs in shoulders, knees and elbows.
- **Fractures** can range from simple breaks that heal quickly to serious ones that require surgery. They happen most often in falls, in car accidents, or from sports injuries.
- **Herniated disc**, also called slipped disc, causes back pain that can extend to your legs. It happens when one of your spinal discs — the soft cushions between your vertebrae — presses on the nerves around your spine. Injuries such as sprains and strains cause pain, swelling and difficulty moving the joint. A torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is a serious sprain, and you can strain your back by lifting a heavy item incorrectly.
- **Osteoporosis** is a condition that makes your bones thin and weak, so they break easily. You're more likely to have osteoporosis if you are Asian or over age 65.
- **Repetitive motion injuries**, which can damage muscles, nerves ligaments or tendons, happen from doing the same motion over and over.
- **Spinal stenosis** happens when your spine becomes narrowed, putting pressure on your nerves, spinal cord and other nerves. It usually occurs in people over age 50 and can cause pain in your neck or back as well as numbness or pain in your arms or legs.
- **Tendinitis** often affects the shoulders and elbows. It happens when tendons, which connect muscles to bones, become painful and swollen from overuse.



PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Once you know all the painful conditions that can happen, it can seem like your best move is to just stay home. But in fact, being active is one of the prime ways to prevent these problems.

Here are some strategies for keeping your bones and joints healthy:

- **Get regular exercise.** This is especially important here in the Silicon Valley where many people can have weakened muscles from sitting at a desk all day. You can benefit from low-impact activities like swimming, biking, walking or Pilates, which can keep you in shape without stressing your joints.
- **Tone up.** Keeping muscles around the joints strong and toned gives them more support and also makes injury less likely.
- **Control your weight.** Extra pounds put pressure on your joints and can damage them.
- **Pay attention to pain.** If a joint or body part hurts, give that part a rest and exercise another muscle group. You can still be active if you don't stress your injury.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

Get help right away at an ER or urgent care center for a joint injury that:

- Causes intense pain.
- Swells quickly.
- Deforms the joint.
- Limits your use of the joint.

If you have pain, stiffness or swelling in a joint without an injury, you should make an appointment to see your doctor.

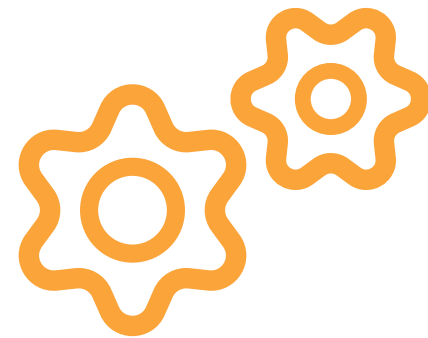
EXPERT REPAIRS

Most joint pain goes away on its own in a few weeks. If you have pain that has not cleared up in about six weeks with rest, ice, compression and elevation (the RICE treatment), it's time to talk to your doctor! He or she may refer you to an orthopedic specialist for further care. Depending on your insurance (for example, preferred provider organizations and Medicare), you may be able to contact one of our orthopedic specialists directly.

Today's treatments for bone and joint conditions can help keep you moving, working and having fun. The orthopedic and neurologic spine experts at El Camino Hospital provide that care, including specialized treatment for every major joint — they are recognized by national healthcare and orthopedic leaders for patient care.

Depending on your condition, your doctor may recommend:

- **Rehabilitation.** After an injury or surgery, a rehab plan that includes physical therapy, occupational therapy and other treatments can be vital to your recovery.
- **Medicines.** Oral medications and injections can relieve pain and inflammation. Some arthritis drugs can change the course of the disease.
- **Minimally invasive procedures.** Many orthopedic surgeries such as arthroscopy can be done with minimally invasive techniques, which are performed using special instruments through tiny incisions. These procedures can have shorter recovery times. Even some joint replacements can be done this way.
- **Open surgery.** Traditional open surgery can correct problems with your spine, knees, wrists and other joints after an injury. Joint replacement can relieve pain and restore function in hips, knees, shoulders and ankles.



Recovery is an essential part of the surgery process, and the El Camino Hospital [Orthopedic Pavilion](#) at the Los Gatos campus provides an ideal setting for healing. Our Mountain View campus and the Los Gatos Orthopedic Pavilion offer care and services that meet the needs of orthopedic patients.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT JOINT REPLACEMENT CENTER?

The best centers:

- Have a dedicated floor or unit for these patients.
- Perform many joint replacements.
- Use the latest implant materials and surgical techniques.
- Provide minimally invasive surgical options.
- Are associated with a rehab center that offers a full range of services.
- Are nationally recognized for excellent care.

This information should be easily available, such as on the center's website.



The road to recovery. It might be tempting to ignore aches and pains, but many orthopedic problems only get better with treatment. Make an appointment with your doctor today to talk about your bone and joint pain. If you don't have a personal doctor, you can find one by calling [408-866-3856](tel:408-866-3856).

ONLINE RESOURCES *FOR* MEN'S HEALTH

USE THESE RESOURCES
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
STAYING HEALTHY

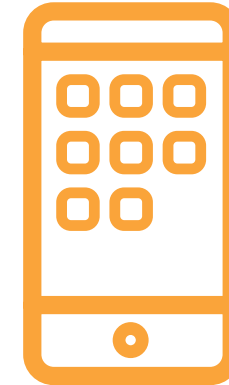
ORTHOPEDICS

[Injuries and Prevention.](#) Learn about common injuries and how to prevent them.

[Keep Your Knees and Hips Healthy.](#) Discover how to reduce wear and tear on your joints.

[Orthopedic Care at El Camino Hospital.](#) Find out how the specialists at El Camino Hospital treat bone and joint conditions.

[Understanding Back Pain.](#) Read about the causes of back pain and how it's treated.





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THE HOSPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

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