

Medical Minute



From the healthcare professionals at

Community
HOSPITAL

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There's More Than One Way to Fight Joint Pain

Millions of Americans visit their doctors each year because of joint pain. Their symptoms may range from morning stiffness to swelling, aching or chronic pain that begins to curtail their activities.

“Joint pain may stem from a myriad of causes, and simply taking a pain reliever and pushing through your day isn’t the best remedy,” says Dr. Robert Schaefer, an orthopedic surgeon and medical director of Community Hospital’s Center for Joint Replacement.



Robert Schaefer, MD
Orthopedic Surgery

“Pain in the joints that persists over time or worsens, always deserves the attention of a physician,” says Dr. Schaefer. “Finding the cause is critical in building an intervention program that helps relieve or eliminate pain and disability.”

Joint pain can be caused by chronic conditions such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, bursitis or osteoporosis. Depending on the cause, it can affect many areas of the body, including the knees, hips, shoulders, hands or spine.

“For many patients pain is just pain, until they begin to describe their symptoms to a doctor,” says Dr. Schaefer. “In collaboration with their physician, they can talk about what causes or eases symptoms and the severity of their pain. This helps their doctor diagnose the problem.”

Pain relievers, whether over-the-counter or prescription, are only one remedy for chronic joint pain. A daily exercise regimen, the use of heat and cold, and proper rest can also provide relief for painful joints. Often, a physical or occupational therapist can help a patient learn ways of going about their daily routines with less stress to the joints, bringing significant pain relief.

“In advanced cases, joint replacement may be an option, but talking with your doctor is the first step in building a multi-faceted program of pain prevention,” says Dr. Schaefer.

If you’re experiencing painful joints, don’t suffer in silence. Talk with your doctor or contact Dr. Schaefer at (269) 463-3373 Together, you can find solutions that will provide pain relief and enhance your sense of health and well-being.