



## *What do we know about osteoarthritis of the knees?*

Osteoarthritis of the knees is the most common form of arthritis affecting over 10 million Americans. It occurs primarily among aging adults when the cartilage cushioning the bones of the knee deteriorates. When the cartilage breaks down, the bones rub against each other causing pain, swelling and loss of movement. These symptoms often make it difficult for people to walk, climb stairs or even sit.

## *What treatments can work?*

Our program follows the guidelines written by osteoarthritis experts, who typically recommend specific therapies including medications for knee osteoarthritis. While drugs can help reduce pain and swelling, they may not be good long-term solutions due to side effects and cost. They also do not address problems that can be caused by knee osteoarthritis such as muscle weakness, instability, lack of flexibility and structural deformities that can lead to more serious conditions.

## *Who should try our program?*

You or a loved one should consider our program if you or they have:

- ▶ Knee pain or stiffness
- ▶ Swelling in a knee or limited movement
- ▶ Aching or grinding sensations
- ▶ Side effects from pain medications

## *What can you expect in our program?*

First, your personal healthcare team will assess your or your loved one's knee function and overall health. Typically this will include an evaluation of balance, strength, flexibility, vision, diet and medications. After this evaluation, the following treatments may be used to help your knee feel better.

*Light exercise and electrical stimulation to help improve strength and reduce pain.*

Gentle stretches and strengthening exercises are combined with mild, comfortable electrical pulses and electromagnetic energy to reduce pain and swelling, while improving knee function.

*A special knee brace to help reduce impact to the knee and improve joint stability.*

A special knee brace can reduce pain and improve knee function by aligning the joint and reducing impact to the knee when walking. The brace is easy-to-use and comfortable to wear.

*Home therapy techniques to help maintain muscle strength and reduce pain.*

An easy-to-use portable stimulator may be recommended for gentle electrical stimulation treatment at home to strengthen muscles and reduce pain. Our therapists provide all the instruction needed to operate this simple device.

# Painful Knees