

## *Orthopaedic Connection*

### **This May Surprise You**

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#### *Transforming patient information into patient understanding.*

It is a common belief among doctors and patients too that running or jogging causes osteoarthritis in hips and knees. Or if you have osteoarthritis already it worsens your symptoms. Everyone knows that, right? Did you ever even hear that it might not be true? Read on.

A massive study of tens of thousands of runners and walkers revealed the opposite of what you have long held to be gospel truth.

The study was conducted over 7 years. It concluded that runners have roughly half the risk of osteoarthritis as walkers. Gasp!

Key point. The research highlights that runners tend to be leaner than walkers.

#### **Arthritis Pain**

Incorporating any type of exercise is important to help relieve the pain from osteoarthritis. To reduce the pain of arthritis lifestyle changes need to take place. These include

- 30 minutes of moderate exercise five days a week
- Eating a more healthy diet
- Weight loss i.e. reduction in BMI (Body Mass Index)

#### **Running History**

Among patients with knee arthritis most do not have a previous history of running or jogging. I have certainly seen this in patients with knee arthritis in my own practice.

Furthermore looking at runners over a period of time, their risk of developing osteoarthritis isn't increased any more than expected according to the study.

Some research has even suggested that power walking causes more damage to the feet than running due to the increased impact placed on the heels during heel strike.

#### **Knee Pain? O.K. "Stop Running"**

I would like to share some information from my own practice.

"Knee trouble" is probably at the top of the list of problems any Orthopaedic Surgeon sees in the office. Many of my knee patients have been seen elsewhere and usually have been told their knee pain is from "arthritis".

In my office knee arthritis is only diagnosed by

- A careful history of the problem
- Good physical exam of the knee, entire lower extremity and sometimes the back
- Weight bearing x-rays taken in the different views
- Possibly even lab tests
- Sometimes, but not always an MRI of the knee

#### **Torn Cartilage (Meniscus) and Arthritis**

Many patients I see have mild arthritis findings and also have a torn cartilage (meniscus). There isn't a law that says you can't have two things wrong with you.

If I remove the torn cartilage I often find that the mild arthritis really doesn't bother the patient enough to stop exercising including running.

### **Conclusion**

Apparently things are not always what they seem to be. Just because something hurts and you have been told you have "arthritis" it might be worthwhile to have a closer look into the problem. A banner in our office states "*Our goal is simple, to help people return to more pain free, functional lives.*"

When considering running and arthritis I believe the goal was never more appropriate.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

### **Gratiot County Herald Archive and Office Website.**

I sincerely appreciate all of you loyal readers and patients present and future and welcome all newcomers!

Besides what you read today there is a huge treasure trove of Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal information at [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). It contains the Website Library, Your Orthopaedic Connection and complete archive of every GCH article I have written.

I specialize in you. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush