

Walk to help care for your knee pain

Are you someone living with knee pain because of knee osteoarthritis? How many steps do you take during the day? During the week? Read on to find out what one study says about increased walking and knee pain for people with knee osteoarthritis.

What is knee osteoarthritis?

Knee osteoarthritis (KOA) is the breakdown of the cartilage and bones of the knee joint causing swelling, pain, stiffness, bone spurs, and loss of normal movement in your knee. KOA can be caused by **joint injury**, **joint overuse**, **repetitive movement**, and **obesity**.

What we know

Getting more exercise will help you to:

- Look after your KOA symptoms
- Take care of other health needs such as obesity, diabetes or heart concerns.

What the study looked at

A group of experts in physical therapy, public health and sports medicine checked out the connection between the average number of steps people with KOA walked in a week and their **personal attitudes** on:

- Fear of exercising
- Ways of thinking about pain
- Ability to take care of KOA symptoms at home, and
- Feelings of sadness.

Who was in the study

The people that were in the study were from Australia, over 50 years old, had regular knee pain from KOA, and were not very active.

What they did

The person's average number of steps per day was counted for one week during everyday activities with a simple tool attached to their upper leg. People also answered four questionnaires, one for each of the four types of **personal attitudes**. The study checked to see if the number of steps went up or down with changes in personal attitudes.

What the experts found

- When people said they could take care of their knee pain and other osteoarthritis symptoms, they took more steps in a day;
- People took less steps in a day when:
 - they were concerned about knee pain
 - they were worried about exercising
- Feelings of sadness did not seem to have an effect on the amount of walking people did in a day
- Helping people with KOA care for their pain and helping them feel safe when walking may help people get more exercise every day.

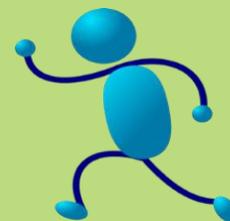
Walk every day and feel better!

What you can do

Talk to your doctor, pain care specialist and physical therapist about walking and other exercises you can do every day.

These health workers can help you to:

- be safe and comfortable with walking and other exercises
- learn more to understand and care for your pain
- take care of all your KOA symptoms.



This lay abstract sums up the following study:

Uritani, D., Kasza, J., Campbell, P. K., Metcalf, B., & Egerton, T. (2020). The association between psychological characteristics and physical activity levels in people with knee osteoarthritis: A cross-sectional analysis. *BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*, 21(1), 269. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12891-020-03305-2>

Completed by:

Basiliki Passaretti, M.A.,
Reg. CASLPO, SLP(C)
M.Sc. Rehabilitation Science
(Thesis) Candidate,
McMaster University