

[IMAGE]

## Chondroitin Sulfate May Help Arthritis

Thin, brittle bones can break without warning - one of the most distressing complications associated with arthritis. There are more than 100 different types of arthritis. The common misconception holds that the disease only affects the elderly, but millions of young people, including children, are also affected.

Previous research suggests that exercise and nutritional factors can help fight arthritis by improving bone strength. Further evidence of this potential nutritional role comes from the *Journal of Rheumatology*, which published a study evaluating the utility of chondroitin sulfate (CS) in the management of osteoarthritis.

Chondroitin sulfate is the substance that gives cartilage (the spongy portion of bone) its elasticity and fluidity, suggesting its potential usefulness in influencing bone strength. This study reviewed previous controlled trials of CS in the treatment of hip and knee osteoarthritis (OA), finding that:

- In seven reviewed trials, reported pain was only 57% of original baseline scores in groups taking CS; and
- Patients taking CS reported reductions in consumption of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) and/or analgesics compared to baseline.

The authors emphasize that their results require additional support, but note that "There is evidence that chondroitin sulfate can reduce pain and improve function in patients suffering from osteoarthritis." If you or someone you know suffers from arthritis, talk to your doctor about the potential benefits of chondroitin sulfate.

### *Reference:*

Leeb FG, Schewitzer H, Montag K, et al. A metaanalysis of chondroitin sulfate in the treatment of osteoarthritis. *Journal of Rheumatology*, Jan. 2000: Vol. 27, pp205-211.

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