



Impact of Arthritis on Public Health

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Abstract

Arthritis, a chronic and debilitating condition affecting the joints, poses a significant burden on public health systems worldwide. Arthritis affects people of all ages, with the prevalence rising steadily due to population aging and lifestyle factors. The condition encompasses various types, including osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and juvenile arthritis, each presenting unique challenges. Arthritis not only causes pain and physical limitations but also exerts a substantial economic burden on individuals and society as a whole. Arthritis poses a significant challenge to public health, affecting individuals of all ages and impacting various domains of life. By understanding the prevalence, economic implications, healthcare utilization, and associated comorbidities and disabilities, policymakers, healthcare providers, and researchers can work collaboratively to mitigate the burden of arthritis and improve the health outcomes and quality of life for those affected.

Introduction

Arthritis is a chronic condition that affects the joints, causing pain, stiffness, and reduced mobility. It encompasses a range of diseases, with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis being the most common forms. Arthritis is a broad term encompassing various conditions that cause joint inflammation and pain. It affects people of all ages and is a leading cause of disability globally. Common types include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and gout. Arthritis can significantly impact physical function, mobility, and quality of life. It poses substantial challenges to public health due to healthcare costs, loss of productivity, and the need for long-term management. Arthritis has a profound impact on healthcare utilization, with affected individuals requiring frequent medical consultations, specialized interventions, and surgeries. The management of arthritis necessitates a multidisciplinary approach involving rheumatologists, orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. The increasing



demand for arthritis-related healthcare services puts a strain on healthcare systems, emphasizing the need for adequate resources and specialized care.

Arthritis is often associated with comorbidities and disabilities that further compromise the overall health and quality of life of individuals. Common comorbid conditions include cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes, and mental health disorders. Additionally, the pain and physical limitations caused by arthritis often lead to functional impairments and disability, hindering individuals' ability to perform daily activities and participate in social roles. Early diagnosis, effective treatment, lifestyle modifications, and public education are essential in addressing the burden of arthritis and improving the well-being of individuals affected by the condition.

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis, a degenerative joint disease, has a significant impact on public health. It is a leading cause of disability and chronic pain among individuals worldwide, especially in aging populations. The condition affects the cartilage and underlying bone, leading to joint stiffness, reduced mobility, and impaired quality of life. Osteoarthritis poses substantial economic burdens due to healthcare costs, lost productivity, and the need for long-term management. It requires comprehensive strategies encompassing prevention, early diagnosis, effective treatment options, and rehabilitation to address the growing public health challenge it presents.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) significantly impacts public health, affecting millions of individuals globally. It is an autoimmune disease that primarily affects the joints, leading to inflammation, pain, stiffness, and joint deformities. RA can also affect other organs and systems, causing systemic symptoms. The condition is associated with substantial disability, reduced quality of life, and increased mortality rates. It poses significant economic burdens through healthcare costs, loss of productivity, and the need for long-term management. Public health efforts should focus on early diagnosis, effective treatment strategies, patient education, and promoting access to care to mitigate the impact of rheumatoid arthritis on individuals and society.

Impact on Public Health

Arthritis has a significant impact on public health, affecting individuals of all ages, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The impact of arthritis on public health is substantial and multifaceted. Firstly, arthritis is prevalent worldwide, with millions of people diagnosed with the condition. It is estimated that over 350 million people globally are affected by arthritis, making it one of the leading



causes of disability and chronic pain. Arthritis has several consequences for individuals and society as a whole. From an individual perspective, arthritis can severely impact a person's quality of life. Chronic pain, joint deformities, and functional limitations can result in decreased mobility, difficulty performing daily activities, and increased dependence on others for assistance. This can lead to psychological distress, reduced productivity, and a higher risk of developing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.

From a societal standpoint, arthritis places a substantial burden on healthcare systems, economies, and productivity. The direct costs associated with arthritis include medical expenses, medications, surgeries, and rehabilitation services. Indirect costs arise from lost productivity, absenteeism from work, and reduced ability to participate in the workforce. Arthritis-related disabilities can result in increased social welfare expenditures and long-term care needs. Arthritis also impacts public health through its association with other chronic conditions. It is often comorbid with other non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, obesity, and diabetes. This poses additional challenges for healthcare systems in terms of management and coordination of care for individuals with multiple health conditions. Furthermore, the aging population and the rising prevalence of obesity contribute to the growing burden of arthritis on public health. As the global population continues to age and lifestyles become more sedentary, the incidence and prevalence of arthritis are expected to increase significantly, further straining healthcare resources and public health infrastructure.

Conclusion

Addressing the impact of arthritis on public health requires a comprehensive approach. This includes promoting early diagnosis and timely intervention, implementing effective treatment strategies, providing access to appropriate healthcare services, and prioritizing research and development for new therapies. Public health initiatives aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles, physical activity, and weight management can also play a crucial role in preventing arthritis and reducing its impact on individuals and society. In conclusion, arthritis has a profound impact on public health, affecting individuals, healthcare systems, and economies worldwide. Its prevalence, chronic nature, and association with comorbidities make it a significant public health challenge. By understanding the implications of arthritis and implementing comprehensive strategies, we can work towards improving the lives of individuals with arthritis and reducing its burden on public health.



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