

# One in Three Gulf Residents Suffers from Arthritis

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*Medicine Now Indicated in US and Europe for Safe and Effective Treatment of Severest Form of Condition Known as Ankylosing Spondylitis*

Dubai, United Arab Emirates: More than one in three Gulf residents suffers from chronic arthritic joint pain, with the prevalence of the condition increasing from 30 percent in 45 year olds to 60 percent in 65 year olds, according to medical experts in the region.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis and begins with the breakdown of joint cartilage resulting in pain and stiffness, usually in the fingers, knees, hips, and spine.

But unlike other forms of arthritis which typically affect older people, a rare but severely punishing arthritic condition known as Ankylosing Spondylitis usually strikes between the ages of 17 and 35.

"One of the main challenges with treating this severe, chronic, and debilitating form of arthritis is the limited treatment choices," said Dr. Walaa Al Asuity, Consultant Orthopedic Spine Surgeon at Gulf Diagnostic Center, Abu Dhabi UAE.

Relieving pain, improving mobility, and minimizing disability typically begins with the most appropriate pain management medication recommended from a doctor.

Ankylosing Spondylitis is a form of arthritis that primarily affects the spine, causing inflammation that can lead to intense pain and stiffness in the shoulders, knees, hips, ribs and feet. In severe cases, it can cause the spine to fuse together.

With its early onset and progressively damaging effects on the joints, Ankylosing Spondylitis poses a significant burden on patients and their families.

"The inflammation associated with Ankylosing Spondylitis can cause such severe pain that people who suffer from this condition - often young men - cannot perform simple, everyday activities like walking and may have trouble attending school or work," said Prof. Yosri Al Hawari, Consultant Orthopaedic Spine Surgeon, Head of Spinal Surgery Department, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University.

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