



International Association for the Study of Pain

IASP

Working together for pain relief

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IASP Sponsors Global Year Against Pain in the Joints

Initiative promotes better pain management through increased awareness

The Global Year Against Pain in the Joints launches today, bringing attention to a wide variety of ailments and conditions affecting millions of people worldwide. Sponsored by the [International Association for the Study of Pain](#) (IASP), the yearlong public awareness campaign focuses on education for health-care professionals and government leaders. Simultaneously, the European Pain Federation–EFIC has inaugurated the European Year Against Pain on the same topic.

The initiative will mobilize IASP’s 7,000+ members and 90 national and regional chapters and forge partnerships with other organizations. The campaign’s goals:

- Broadly disseminate information on joint pain to patients and health-care providers
- Connect pain researchers to health-care professionals who witness the problems associated with joint pain first-hand in their daily interactions with patients
- Increase awareness of joint pain among government officials, the news media, the public, and patient organizations worldwide
- Encourage government leaders, research institutions, and other individuals and organizations to support research aimed at producing more effective and accessible treatment

There are many different types of joint pain—pain related to osteoarthritis, pain after traumatic injury, pain after joint surgery, pain related to inflammatory joint disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis, and pain related to crystal deposition in the joints such as gout or chondrocalcinosis.

IASP President Rolf-Detlef Treede, Prof., Dr.med., a German neuroscientist at the University of Heidelberg, says, “Pain relief is an important objective for improving the quality of life and daily functioning in patients with diseases involving the joints, in acute conditions such as gout, as well as in chronic conditions where pain often outlasts the normal healing process.”

Throughout the world, the prevalence of joint pain is extensive and the effects debilitating. For example:

- In the United States, an estimated 52.5 million adults have doctor-diagnosed joint disorders or diseases, and nearly 10 percent of all adults say these conditions, mostly osteoarthritis, limit

their activities.¹ Furthermore, a seven-fold increase in joint replacements is projected over the next 15 years due to the increased number of patients with painful osteoarthritis.²

- In a large-scale telephone survey conducted in 15 European countries and Israel to explore the prevalence, severity, treatment, and impact of chronic pain, 19 percent of 46,394 respondents said they had suffered pain for more than six months and had experienced pain in the last month and several times during the last week. Within this group, more than 40 percent reported joint pain, most frequently knee pain.³
- A study in Japan found an alarming prevalence of knee osteoarthritis (KOA) and lumbar spondylosis (LS) in the Japanese population. In men and women older than 40, the prevalence of KOA was 42.6% and 62.4%, respectively, and that of LS was 81.5% and 65.5%, respectively. That means 25.3 million people (8.6 million men and 16.7 million women) could be affected by KOA, and 37.9 million people (18.9 million men and 19 million women) by LS. The study confirmed that factors such as obesity and occupational activities were associated with both KOA and LS.⁴

According to Global Year campaign co-chair Lars Arendt-Nielsen, Prof., Dr.med., PhD., of Aalborg University in Denmark: “In addition to the suffering and discomfort associated with joint pain for patients, the problem can exact substantial socio-economical costs for societies. These include lost work days and diminished quality and productivity. Aging populations, sedentary lifestyles, and an increasing propensity toward obesity all mean that the problem of joint pain will continue unabated worldwide.”

Adds co-chair Serge Perrot, Prof., MD, PhD, a pain specialist at Université Paris Descartes: “Chronic joint pain can be manageable, but treatment is often inadequate, and patients may continue to suffer. Indeed, medications are sometimes unsafe, making rehabilitation and physical therapy essential.”

As part of the Global Year Against Pain in the Joints, IASP offers a series of 20 fact sheets especially for clinicians and health-care professionals that cover specific topics related to joint pain. The fact sheets are translated into multiple languages and available for free download. Patients also may benefit from reading these latest updates.

Throughout the coming year, IASP and its chapters will sponsor meetings, symposia, interviews, publications, and other efforts to promote education on issues surrounding joint pain. For more information, visit: www.iasp-pain.org/GlobalYear.

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About the International Association for the Study of Pain

IASP® is the leading professional forum for science, practice, and education in the field of pain. Membership is open to all professionals involved in research, diagnosis, or treatment of pain. IASP has more than 7,000 members in 133 countries, 90 national chapters, and 20 Special Interest Groups. IASP brings together scientists, clinicians, health-care providers, and policymakers to stimulate and support the study of pain and translate that knowledge into improved pain relief worldwide.

Notes

¹ Barbour KE, Helmick CG, Theis KA, Murphy LB, Hootman JM, Brady TJ, Cheng YJ. Prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis and arthritis-attributable activity limitation-United States, 2010-2012. *MMWR* 2013;62 (44):869-873.

² Kurtz S, Ong K, Lau E, Mowat F, Halpern M. Projections of primary and revision hip and knee arthroplasty in the United States from 2005 to 2030. *J Bone Joint Surg Am.* 2007;89(4):780-5.

³ Breivik et al *European Journal of Pain* 10 (2006) 287–333.

⁴ Yoshimura N. Epidemiology of osteoarthritis in Japan : the ROAD study. *Clin Calcium.* 2011 Jun;21(6):821-5. doi: CliCa1106821825.