

## How To Ease Arthritis Pain with Glucosamine & Chondroitin Supplements

If you are suffering from arthritis pain, you've probably heard of a relatively new over-the-counter remedy called Glucosamine. But what is Glucosamine, and how does it work to relieve arthritis? In this article, I'll introduce you to this new treatment and provide you with the pros and cons of its use. By the time you've finished reading this article, you'll be able to make an informed decision on whether or not Glucosamine is right for you.

### What is Glucosamine?

Glucosamine, together with a related ingredient called Chondroitin, are substances which exist naturally in your body. It is believed that glucosamine helps to build and repair cartilage (the soft, spongy material between your joints), while chondroitin lends to the elasticity and flexibility of joints. A deficiency of either one can lead to increased wear and tear on the joint, and cause redness, swelling and stiffness as a result. When used together, glucosamine and chondroitin act as a tag-team of arthritis fighters, improving flexibility, soothing inflammation and reducing swelling caused by achy joints.

### Where Can I Buy Glucosamine and Chondroitin Supplements?

You can find these products in virtually any pharmacy or health goods store. The downside to this is, like other herbal and alternative medicines, supplements are not regulated by any governing body. That's why you'll need to do a little bit of research to find the best, most potent brand for your needs. Here's what you need to know when comparison shopping for a glucosamine supplement:

? You should expect to pay anywhere from \$1-3 per pill when taking glucosamine daily. Since insurance companies rarely cover supplements of any kind, you'll most likely be paying for them out of pocket.

? Read the ingredients label on the bottle to determine the dosage. Approximately 1500mg of glucosamine and 1200mg of chondroitin have been safely used in clinical trials. Depending on your individual medication tolerances and the severity of your arthritis, you should consult your physician or rheumatologist to find the right dose for your individual needs.

? Select supplements manufactured by a well-known, reputable company. Recommended brands include: Osteo Bi-Flex, WholeHealth, Flex-A-Min, MoveFree and individual pharmacy brands.

### Are There Any Side Effects I Should Know About?

As with any medication or supplements, there are a few warnings you should know:

? If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, do not use glucosamine/chondroitin supplements, as no long-term studies have been done to gauge what materials (if any) are passed on to the baby either internally or through breast milk.

? If you are diabetic, chondroitin (a form of sugar) may cause your blood sugar to rise.

? Chondroitin also acts as a mild blood thinner. Therefore, if you are taking any heart medication or are taking an aspirin regimen, have your blood clotting time checked more frequently by your doctor.

? Glucosamine/Chondroitin supplements should not be taken by children since no studies have been done to determine their effect (if any) on the child's development.

(Please note: The information contained within this article is not intended to replace or substitute for that of an experienced physician. Remember to check with your doctor or rheumatologist before starting daily glucosamine/chondroitin supplements, and don't stop or cut down on any of your current medications (whether they're for arthritis or not) without talking with your doctor first).

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### About the Author

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