



Learn how to control your symptoms
and get on with your life!

Arthritis

FOR DUMMIES®

Dr. Sarah Brewer

Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine

Barry Fox, PhD

Health writer

Nadine Taylor

Registered Dietitian

Jinoos Yazdany, MD

Rheumatology fellow, University of California



A Reference for the Rest of Us!®



UK Edition



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**by Barry Fox, PhD,
Nadine Taylor, MS, RD,
Jinoos Yazdany, MD,
and Sarah Brewer, MD**



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Although her first love is medicine, her major passion is writing. Sarah writes widely on all aspects of health and has written over 40 popular self-help books. She is a regular contributor to a number of newspapers and women's magazines, and appears regularly on TV and radio. She was voted Health Journalist of the Year 2002.

Barry Fox, PhD, is the author, coauthor, or ghostwriter of numerous books, including the *New York Times* number one best-seller, *The Arthritis Cure* (St. Martin's, 1997). He also wrote its sequel, *Maximizing The Arthritis Cure* (St. Martin's, 1998), as well as *The Side Effects Solution* (Broadway Books, 2005), *What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Hypertension* (Warner Books, 2003), *What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Migraines* (Warner Books, 2001), *Syndrome X* (Simon & Schuster, 2000), *The 20/30 Fat and Fiber Diet Plan* (HarperCollins, 1999), and *Cancer Talk* (Broadway Books, 1999). His books and over 160 articles covering various aspects of

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Nadine Taylor, MS, RD, is the author of *Natural Menopause Remedies* (Signet, 2004), *25 Natural Ways To Relieve PMS* (Contemporary Books, 2002), and *Green Tea* (Kensington Press, 1998), as well as co-author of *Runaway Eating* (to be published by Rodale in 2005), *What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Hypertension* (Warner Books, 2003), and *If You Think You Have An Eating Disorder* (Dell, 1998). After a brief stint as head dietitian at the Eating Disorders Unit at Glendale Adventist Medical Center, Ms. Taylor lectured on women's health issues to groups of health professionals throughout the country. She has also written numerous articles on health and nutrition for the popular press.

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Dedication

Dedicated to Nina Ostrom Taylor, world's greatest mom and mom-in-law.

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Introduction

Whether it appears as a bit of creaky stiffness in the hip or knee or as a major case of inflammation that settles in several joints, arthritis is an unwelcome visitor that knocks on just about everyone's door sooner or later. Although no out-and-out cure for arthritis exists, there are many techniques for *managing* this disease – that is, controlling its symptoms so you can get on with your life! Arthritis does *not* mean you must spend your days relegated to a rocking chair or shuffling from your bed to an armchair and back again. Most of the time, you can take charge of your disease instead of letting it take charge of you. By following the simple techniques outlined in this book, you can do much to control your pain, exercise away your stiffness, keep yourself on the move, and slow down or prevent progression of your disease. All you need to manage your disease is a little know-how – and you can find that in these chapters.

About This Book

The goal of this book is to provide you with the best and most up-to-date information on arthritis treatments in an easy-to-read format that you can simply thumb through. The best-of-the-best of many different healing systems are included – ranging from standard Western medicine

(including medications and surgery), to Eastern hands-on healing methods (including acupuncture, acupressure, and reiki), to alternative therapies (including homeopathy, herbs, methylsulphonylmethane (MSM), glucosamine, and even far-out approaches such as bee venom therapy). You can read this book straight through from cover to cover if you like, but it's not necessary. Reading the first chapter as an introduction is worth your while, then you can home in on the description of your particular kind of arthritis, found in Chapters 2, 3, 4, or 5. After that, feel free to flip through the book and read whatever catches your fancy.

Because arthritis impacts your life in so many different ways, different chapters address the many complex issues you may face, including the technical aspects of arthritis (tests, medicines, and operations), the practical aspects (diet, exercise, and day-to-day living), and the emotional aspects (depression and anger). You can also find tips on how to assemble your health-care treatment team, how to talk to your doctor, and what to do about chronic pain.

Foolish Assumptions

This book makes certain educated guesses about you. Rightly or wrongly, this book assumes that:

- ✓ You either have arthritis yourself or you're close to someone who has it.

- ✔ You're interested in finding out more about arthritis and its treatments.
- ✔ You want to do something to ease arthritis pain and other symptoms.
- ✔ You want to play an active part in managing the disease, rather than just going along with whatever your doctor tells you.
- ✔ You're interested in finding out about some alternative ways to treat arthritis.
- ✔ You want to find out how to handle the emotional issues that go hand-in-hand with the disease.

How This Book Is Organised

The organisation of *Arthritis For Dummies* is meant to correspond with the way that you may experience arthritis in your daily life. When you first realise that you have arthritis, you probably want to know what it is, what the common symptoms are, and what you can expect as the disease progresses. The next step is to visit your doctor for tests. Then, medicines are prescribed, pain-management strategies discussed, and surgery (if applicable) is contemplated as a last resort.

After you make it through all that, you go back to living your life. Suddenly, the everyday things you used to take for granted become important parts of your arthritis management, such as diet, exercise, and the way you use your joints. Stress and depression are new and confounding problems, and getting through the day is often a tougher prospect, both physically and mentally, than it was before.

Eventually, you may start wondering about alternative healing methods and have an urge to explore them. And, you may become curious about certain superfoods that can help ease arthritis symptoms and what cutting-edge medical treatments are on the horizon. This book answers all your questions.

Part I: Getting a Grip on Types of Arthritis

These five chapters give an overview of arthritis in its many forms - the symptoms, disease processes, causes, and likeliest victims. Chapter 1 discusses arthritis in general, Chapter 2 tackles osteoarthritis (the type of arthritis that most people get), Chapter 3 explains rheumatoid arthritis (another fairly common kind of arthritis), Chapter 4 discusses the other forms the disease may take, and Chapter 5 is dedicated to other conditions that are linked to arthritis. This part also explains what doctors do for each type of arthritis and what you can do for yourself.

Part II: Tests and Treatments: What to Expect

Chapters 6 to 9 walk you through the maze of medical treatments, beginning with a trip to the doctor's office. This part explains how doctors diagnose the many forms of arthritis and discusses the high-tech and low-tech tests they may use. Equally important, this part shows you how to work with your doctor to make your treatment decisions. Chapter 8 outlines the medicines you may take, and Chapter 9 explains the operations that are applicable. Finally, Chapter 10 thoroughly explains the strategies you can use for managing pain.

Part III: Is Complementary Medicine for You?

Alternative medicine is now incredibly popular, and scientific studies are beginning to show that many of these methods have merit. This part discusses the most popular complementary therapies for arthritis including massage, herbs, homeopathy, acupuncture, reflexology, and others. Part III also provides tips on finding a reputable alternative practitioner and identifying false claims.

Part IV: The Arthritis Lifestyle Strategy

Many of the keys to arthritis management lie in the little things you do every day, such as what you eat, the kind and amount of exercise you get, and how you use your joints. This part tells you how to fight arthritis pain through diet and supplements; how to keep your joints in shape through exercise; how to protect your joints by walking, sitting, and moving correctly; and how to deal effectively with depression and anger. Part IV also provides loads of tips on how to make day-to-day living with arthritis easier.

Part V: The Part of Tens

This part divides some of the key information on managing your arthritis into lists, each containing ten 'information bites'. These information bites include ten tips for travelling with arthritis, ten drug-free ways to manage the pain and stiffness of arthritis, ten health professionals that can help you fight arthritis, and ten new treatments for arthritis that you may not have heard about yet.

Part VI: Appendixes

Appendix A contains a glossary of arthritis terms to help keep you straight as you wend your way through the information in this book. Appendix B lists lots of interesting organisations that may help you find the treatment you seek. This appendix gives detailed information on the foundations associated with most kinds of arthritis or arthritis-related conditions, as well as major medical and complementary associations so you can request practitioner referrals or more information. Information on support groups is also included in Appendix B. Appendix C discusses strategies for losing weight the safe and healthy way, because getting rid of extra pounds is one of the best things you can do for your weight-bearing joints.

Icons Used in This Book

The icons tell you what you must know, what you need to be aware of, and what you may find interesting but can live without.



The Medical Speak icon marks a more in-depth medical passage or gives you further information about confusing medical terms.



When you see this icon, it means that the information is essential, so pay attention to it.