

# 2007 Georgia Data Summary:

# ARTHRITIS



**Arthritis and chronic joint symptoms affect almost half of adult Georgians and are a leading cause of disability.**

## ARTHRITIS AND OTHER RHEUMATIC CONDITIONS

### WHAT IS ARTHRITIS?

**Arthritis** refers to over 100 related conditions that affect the joints, surrounding tissue, and connective tissue. Arthritis and other rheumatic conditions include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, gout, fibromyalgia, and others.

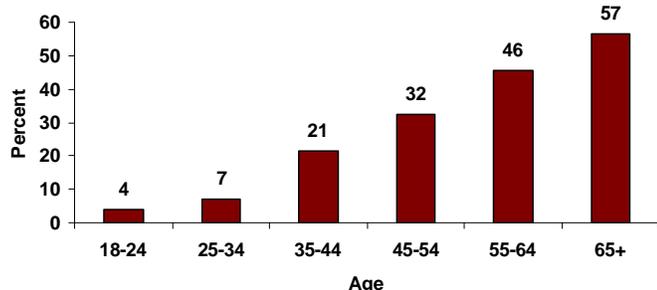
### SURVEILLANCE CASE DEFINITION

Doctor-diagnosed arthritis is defined as having been diagnosed with arthritis or other rheumatic conditions by a physician or health professional.

### PREVALENCE

- About **1 in 4** adult Georgians reported doctor-diagnosed arthritis in 2005.
- Doctor-diagnosed arthritis is more common in women (**29%**) than men (**22%**).
- Doctor-diagnosed arthritis is more common in whites (**27%**) and blacks (**25%**) than Hispanics (**11%**).
- Among race and sex groups, white females have the highest prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis (**32%**), and white males have the lowest (**23%**).
- The prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis increases with age, from about **4%** among 18-24 year olds to **57%** among those 65 years and older.

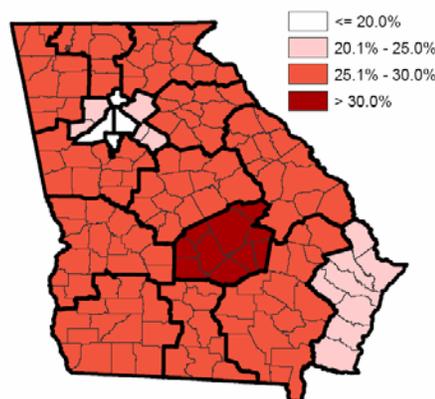
Percent of Adult Georgians with Doctor-diagnosed Arthritis by Age, 2005



### PREVALENCE BY HEALTH DISTRICT

The Atlanta area has the lowest prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis (less than **1 in 5**) while the south-central region of Georgia has the highest (almost **1 in 3**).

Percent of Adult Georgians with Doctor-diagnosed Arthritis by Health District, 2003 & 2005



### HOSPITALIZATIONS

- In 2005, there were **23,535** hospitalizations with a primary diagnosis of arthritis. Of these, osteoarthritis accounted for **65%**.
- Total hospital charges for arthritis exceeded **\$795 million** in 2005 with the average length of stay lasting about **4.2 days**.

### RISK FACTORS

- Obesity, injury, and family history are risk factors for arthritis. Appropriate physical activity can prevent arthritis and reduce arthritis-related disability.
- Over **66%** of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis are physically **inactive** or **insufficiently active**.
- **36%** of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis are **obese**.

## IMPACT OF ARTHRITIS

**Adults with arthritis are more likely to report poor health, limitations due to joint symptoms, and injuries.**

- 34% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported fair or poor general health (versus good, very good, or excellent general health).
- Almost half of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported days of poor physical health during the past 30 days; 37% reported days of poor mental health during the past 30 days.
- 48% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported days when poor health kept them from doing their usual activities during the past 30 days.
- 41% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported limitations in daily activities; 41% reported limitations in work-related activities.
- 17% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having a fall in the past 3 months; 44% of whom were injured due to the fall.

## ACCESS TO CARE

**Many adults who may have arthritis have not seen a doctor for their joint symptoms, and many adults with arthritis cannot see a doctor due to costs.**

- Almost half of those reporting chronic joint symptoms, but who have not been clinically diagnosed with arthritis, have not seen a doctor for their joint symptoms.
- Almost half of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis or chronic joint symptoms needed to see a doctor in the past 12 months but could not because of costs.

## ARTHRITIS MANAGEMENT

**Physicians and health care providers can recommend exercise and weight control for those who could benefit from them.**

- Among obese adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis, only 65% were recommended by a doctor to lose weight to manage their arthritis, and only 55% were recommended both to lose weight and to exercise.
- Among adults with normal weight and doctor-diagnosed arthritis, only 49% were recommended to exercise to manage their arthritis.

## COMORBIDITY

**Adults with arthritis are more likely to have other chronic diseases or modifiable risk factors.\***

- 3 in 4 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having other chronic diseases or modifiable risk factors.\*
- 1 in 3 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having high blood pressure; 1 in 3 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported ever having high cholesterol.
- 1 in 8 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having diabetes.
- 1 in 20 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having angina or coronary heart disease.

\*High cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, asthma, diabetes, heart attack, angina/coronary heart disease, and stroke

**Data sources:** Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Georgia Hospital Discharge Data

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Visit <http://www.health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/arthritis.asp> for more information about arthritis in Georgia.