

# 2008 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.

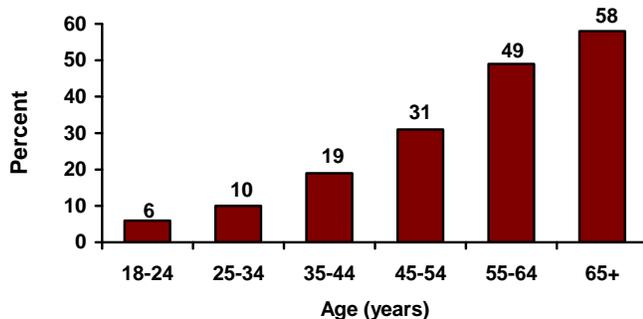
### SURVEILLANCE CASE DEFINITION

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 2007.
- Doctor-diagnosed arthritis is more common in women (**32%**) than men (**23%**).
- Doctor-diagnosed arthritis is more common in whites (**31%**) and blacks (**24%**) than Hispanics (**15%**).
- Among race and sex groups, white females have the highest prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis (**35%**), and black males have the lowest (**18%**).
- The prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis increases with age, from about **6%** among 18-24 year olds to **58%** among those 65 years and older.

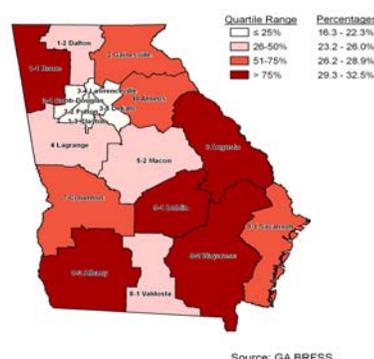
Percent of Adult Georgians with Doctor-diagnosed Arthritis by Age, 2007



### PREVALENCE BY HEALTH DISTRICT

The Metro Atlanta area has the lowest prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis (less than **1 in 4**) while the southeastern region of Georgia has the highest (almost **1 in 3**).

Percent of Adult Georgians with Doctor-diagnosed Arthritis by Health District, 2005 & 2007



### HOSPITALIZATIONS

- In 2006, there were **24,332** hospitalizations with a primary diagnosis of arthritis. Of these, osteoarthritis accounted for **62%**.
- Total hospital charges for arthritis exceeded **\$854 million** in 2006 with the average length of stay lasting about **4 days**.

### RISK FACTORS

- Obesity, injury, and family history are risk factors for arthritis. Appropriate physical activity can prevent arthritis and reduce arthritis-related disability.
- **61%** of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis report being either physically **inactive** or **insufficiently active**.
- **39%** 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.**

- 33% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported fair or poor general health (versus good, very good, or excellent general health).
- 54% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported days of poor physical health during the past 30 days; 41% reported days of poor mental health during the past 30 days.
- 53% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported days when poor health kept them from doing their usual activities during the past 30 days.
- 43% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported limitations in daily 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.**

- 43% of those reporting chronic joint symptoms, but who have not been clinically diagnosed with arthritis, have not seen a doctor for their joint symptoms.
- 43% 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 66% were recommended by a doctor to lose weight to manage their arthritis, and only 52% 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.\*
- 3 in 8 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having high blood pressure; 45% of those adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported ever having high cholesterol.
- 1 in 8 adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis reported having diabetes.

\*High cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, asthma, and diabetes

**Data sources:** Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (2007), Georgia Hospital Discharge Data (2006).

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