



### What is Osteoarthritis of the knee?

Osteoarthritis of the knee is a type of arthritis that causes the breakdown of cartilage (connective tissue) in the knee. A normal knee joint contains a small amount of a thick gel-like substance (synovial fluid) that cushions the joint and provides lubrication. In osteoarthritis, the synovial fluid loses the ability to lubricate the joint, causing stiffness and pain.

### How can I treat knee pain from osteoarthritis?

Treatment options include: exercise, physical therapy, use of hot and cold packs, use of cane or orthotics (products that help relieve pressure on the knee) and medications for pain relief like acetaminophen and NSAIDS (e.g. ibuprofen and naproxen). When these treatments are not effective, viscosupplementation may be an option.

### What is viscosupplementation?

Viscosupplementation is a procedure that involves injecting hyaluronate fluid (which is derived from one of the two natural lubricants in synovial fluid) into the knee. These injections are intended to improve the lubrication of the natural synovial fluid, reduce pain in the knee and improve mobility. These products do not cure osteoarthritis.

### How effective is viscosupplementation?

Some studies have reported that knee injections with hyaluronate fluid products improve pain and mobility in some people with osteoarthritis of the knee. However, the scientific studies were generally flawed or included too few patients to know if these injections really help.

### What are my knee injection options?

Preferred Brands:	# of injections needed	Non-Preferred Brands:	# of injections needed
Synvisc <sup>®</sup>	3	Hyalgan <sup>®</sup>	3 - 5
Synvisc-One <sup>®</sup>	1	Orthovisc <sup>®</sup>	3 - 4
Euflexxa <sup>®</sup>	3	Supartz <sup>®</sup>	3 - 5

### How are knee injections given?

These injections are usually given in the doctor's office for one to five weeks. The newest product on the market, Synvisc-One, is a larger dose and given only once.

### How much do these medications cost?

These medications cost from \$300 - \$700, depending on how many injections are needed. These injections are given at your doctor's office and you will have to pay for each visit. Products such as Synvisc-One have fewer injections and can save you money.

### What are the common side effects with viscosupplementation?

The most common side effects with these injections are temporary pain at the injection-site, heat and/or redness, swelling, rash and itching, bruising around the joint and/or fluid accumulation in the injected knee. These reactions are usually mild and go away within a few days.

### **How do these products compare to each other?**

We have limited data to compare the safety and effectiveness of these products, because the scientific studies were flawed. Generally, products seem to have similar safety and effectiveness.

### **Can viscosupplementation be used in joints other than the knee?**

These injections are currently only approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the knee. They are currently being studied for use the shoulder, hip and ankle joints.

### **THE BOTTOM LINE**

Some people may get modest relief of osteoarthritis symptoms with viscosupplementation. Synvisc, Synvisc-One and Euflexxa are similarly safe and effective as other options and they have the lowest out of pocket cost. None of these products have not been proven to reverse or cure osteoarthritis.

*Note: Since many medication options are available, our physicians and pharmacists developed this to provide you with information about the available alternatives, as well as potential advantages and lack of advantages of the various products. This medication summary was developed based upon an evaluation of information from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), scientific studies, and input from practicing doctors and specialists.*



[www.regencerox.com](http://www.regencerox.com)