

Osteopathy and ageing

Old age and pain are often put together like bread and cheese but really there is often no need to suffer pain, just because you have reached a milestone in your life.

Older people are often untreated or under treated for pain and think there is no option other than a 'pill', or putting up with the problem.

Osteopathy can make a big difference to your life and general physical comfort. Pain and stiffness is a common complaint of the elderly. As the number of people older than 65 years continues to rise, frailty and chronic diseases that are often associated with pain will likely increase. Osteopaths are trained to help with pain reduction and/or management in older adults and in improving a person's overall mobility.

Osteopaths are all primary health care practitioners.

What this means is they are able to examine a patient and formulate a diagnosis. Sometimes the Osteopath will want to have an area x-rayed, send a patient for blood tests, or refer on to a specialist. The Osteopath may also want to talk through the patient's case with their GP; consent for this would be sought.

Once the Osteopath has made a diagnosis this would be discussed with the patient and a treatment plan can then be developed. The Osteopath may suggest exercises that would be beneficial to helping manage the problem.

Common Problems

The elderly are more likely to have

- Arthritis (wear and tear)
- Bone and joint disorders
- And other chronic disorders associated with pain

These problems can often result in depression, anxiety, social isolation, painful movement, and poor sleep. Osteopaths are aware of the consequences of chronic pain and work with the patient in trying to manage the situation in a more productive manner. Many problems that occur as people get older can't be fixed, but they can often be managed well.

Osteopaths have a number of different techniques to treat older people that are gentle. Most treatments will be aimed at improving joint movement, normalizing muscle function and improving function of the nervous system.

Osteopathic treatment is an effective means of pain management and the type of treatment will be carefully tailored to suit the individual.