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For more info, contact:
Nathan Wei, MD
(301) 694-5800

NEW RELEASE

Soccer star's birthday points towards tips to prevent knee arthritis pain

On October 23rd, soccer superstar, Pelé will celebrate his 67th birthday. Regarded as the most talented player to ever don soccer “boots”, the immortal athlete may also be suffering from the scourge of almost all ex-elite athletes... knee arthritis.

The most common type of arthritis to affect people as a result of trauma and aging is osteoarthritis. It affects between 30-40 million Americans.

According to Dr. Nathan Wei, “Osteoarthritis is a disease of cartilage, the gristle that caps the ends of long bones and helps with both cushioning and gliding. As the process of aging occurs, chemical changes within the cartilage causes a premature wearing away leading to pain and eventual loss of function. And the knees are one of the most commonly affected areas.”

He goes on to say, “Ex-athletes are particularly prone to developing osteoarthritis of the knee because of trauma.” Some tips that help with osteoarthritis once you get it are:

- Get into the routine of regular stretching and strengthening of the muscles around the joints.
- Avoid high impact types of cardiovascular exercise and stick with low impact forms
- Maintain ideal weight
- If an activity causes pain, stop doing it
- Ice packs can help reduce swelling and pain. Use them twice a day for 20 minutes at a time. Avoid direct contact of ice with the skin.
- If you take prescription medicines for knee arthritis, make sure you understand how you are to take them and be aware of potential side-effects.
- Assistive devices such as canes and braces may be useful in some instances.

For a free copy of a brochure entitled “How to Knock Out Knee Pain”, or for more information about research on knee arthritis, call the Arthritis and Osteoporosis Center of Maryland at 301-694-5800.

Nathan Wei, MD is a board-certified rheumatologist. He is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and consultant to the National Institutes of Health.

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