

# Better understanding arthritis

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Better arthritis treatment could be one step closer with research showing muscle inflammation outside joints as much to blame for discomfort and poor mobility in sufferers as inflammation of the joint itself.

Knee [arthritis](#) treatment has focussed on relieving knee [joint inflammation](#) but researchers from Victoria University, La Trobe University, Warringal Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital found [muscle](#) inflammation outside the joint in those suffering knee osteoarthritis, meaning that treatment may need changing.

Lead researchers from Victoria University Dr Pazit Levinger and Dr Itamar Levinger explained [muscle inflammation](#) was a body's natural reaction to injury or infection but lead to muscle wastage when prolonged. For those with [knee arthritis](#) this muscle wastage can result in less capacity to perform daily activities.

“With the better understanding of changes in muscle function coming out of this study we will be able to target exercise and drug therapy more effectively to keep this population active and increase their quality of life for longer,” Dr Itamar Levinger said.

The Arthritis Australia sponsored project based on previous findings published in the Arthritis and Rheumatism journal will now test healthy 55- to 80-year-olds as a control group to see how the muscle function behaves in those without knee osteoarthritis.

For this next phase researchers are seeking participants to attend

Victoria University's Footscray Park campus twice: First to assess their fitness and strength and second for a resting muscle biopsy. Blood cholesterol and sugar levels will also be tested and made available to participants.

“Those who participate in this next stage of research will learn more about their fitness level and muscle strength as well as helping us develop better treatment for those suffering knee osteoarthritis,” he said.

Provided by Victoria University

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