

# Noisy knees may be an early sign of knee osteoarthritis

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A new study using data from the Osteoarthritis Initiative, a multi-center observational study of nearly 3500 participants, indicates that people who hear grating, cracking, or popping sounds in or around their knee joint may be at increased risk of developing knee osteoarthritis.

This was a study of people who were at [high risk](#) for developing [knee osteoarthritis](#). Among those who developed it within a year, more than 75% had signs of osteoarthritis on radiographic images but no frequent knee pain at the start of the study.

The findings may be helpful for identifying individuals at risk for knee osteoarthritis, potentially assisting with earlier diagnosis and intervention.

"Many people who have signs of osteoarthritis on x-rays do not necessarily complain of pain, and there are no known strategies for preventing the development of pain in this group of people," said Dr. Grace Lo, lead author of the *Arthritis Care & Research* study and an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. "This study suggests that if these people have noisy knees, they are at higher risk for developing pain within the next year compared with the people who do not have noisy knees. Future studies that target people who have x-ray signs of osteoarthritis, and who do not complain of pain but do report noisy knees, hold the promise of identifying interventions that can prevent knee pain."

**More information:** Grace H. Lo et al, Subjective Crepitus as a Risk Factor for Incident Symptomatic Knee Osteoarthritis: Data from the Osteoarthritis Initiative, *Arthritis Care & Research* (2017). [DOI: 10.1002/acr.23246](https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.23246)

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