

The Tokyo Declaration

Bone and joint disorders are prevalent worldwide, where together they are among the most frequent conditions afflicting people. The leading reason for physical disability, which is often chronic with permanent pain at rest, these disorders also limit mobility, with considerable economic and psychological impact on families. Bone and joint conditions now represent a major social burden, resulting in loss of manpower and enormous costs for treatment, care, and provision of social support. This burden will increase throughout the world due to lifestyle changes associated with urbanization/industrialization along with an aging population.

There is a wide spectrum of bone and joint disorders, comprising several hundred different conditions. Some inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, need early and intensive treatment because of their potentially severe outcome, unknown etiology, and current absence of curative treatment.

Arthritis and infections of bones and joints occur in all parts of the world. An aging population worldwide is causing a rapid increase in the number of people with age-related bone and joint conditions such as osteoarthritis, osteoporosis causing fragility fractures, and spinal disorders. In addition, changes in the working environment brought on by novel industrial development are resulting in the appearance of occupational musculoskeletal conditions in the upper arm, or neck, as well as back pain, whose longterm effects are still to be determined. The popularization of sporting activities is leading to an increase in bone and joint trauma. The global increase in motor transportation is in some parts of the world resulting in an epidemic increase of severe injuries with longterm disability. Now many of these conditions can be prevented or effectively treated, or the quality of life can be improved. For most conditions, however, research is needed to achieve progress.

Now is the time to challenge the burden of bone and joint conditions, to unite our effort worldwide and improve our current knowledge. Therefore, at the closing of this meeting, we declared our goals and a plan of action. We aim to reduce the burden on the individual of bone and joint conditions by:

- Preventing or effectively treating these conditions where possible

- Working towards pain control, restoring mobility, and maintaining independence for those with these conditions

Our plan of action:

1. Raise public awareness of the growing burden of bone and joint diseases.
Increase public recognition of the impact of bone and joint

conditions and the increasing number of people with these conditions. Bone and joint disorders will become the largest global burden caused by the aging of the population, the increase in motor transportation, and changes in lifestyle.

2. Educate people

Educate people to implement a lifestyle and organize daily activity to prevent or improve bone and joint conditions.

3. Educate physicians

Educate all physicians and other health professionals to ensure early diagnosis and cost-effective management of bone and joint conditions, particularly those in charge of primary care of bone and joint conditions, to ensure appropriate care through early diagnosis, adequate guidance, surveillance, and cost-effective management of patients.

4. Support people with bone and joint conditions

Help maintain independence, provide support for social activities, and improve systems and regulations for care of people with bone and joint conditions. Empower patients to participate in their own care by developing self-management. Improve ways of managing bone and joint conditions and assist developing countries through international support.

5. Advance research

Advance basic, clinical, and epidemiological research to improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of bone and joint conditions.

6. Monitor the burden of bone and joint conditions

Evaluate the outcome of preventive measures and other interventions on the global burden of bone and joint conditions through a longterm survey of populations. The collection of data by the application of standard assessment methods is obligatory. In addition to a national plan to promote international coordinated work of the Bone and Joint Monitor Project, create a permanent organization whose activities influence national policy and major international governmental organizations.

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