

## Glucosamine and Methylsulfonylmethane Synergistic in Arthritis Therapy

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) Jul 21 - Combined oral administration of glucosamine and methylsulfonylmethane is more effective against osteoarthritis than either agent alone, according to Indian researchers.

In the June issue of *Clinical Drug Investigations*, Drs. P.R. Usha and M.U.R. Naidu report that although the individual agents did improve patients' pain and swelling, the combined therapy was more effective than the single agents in reducing these symptoms and improving the functional ability of joints.

In a randomized, double-blind trial conducted at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad, 118 patients with mild to moderate osteoarthritis were treated three times daily with either 500 mg of glucosamine, 500 mg of methylsulfonylmethane, a combination of both agents, or placebo.

After 12 weeks of therapy, the mean pain index had fallen from 1.74 at baseline in glucosamine-alone patients to 0.65. In methylsulfonylmethane-alone patients, it fell from 1.53 to 0.74. However, in the combination group, it fell and from 1.7 at baseline to 0.36.

All of the treatments were well tolerated and the researchers found that the combination treatment had a faster onset of analgesic and anti-inflammatory action compared to glucosamine alone.

"It can be concluded," they observe, "that the combination of methylsulfonylmethane with glucosamine provides better and more rapid improvement in patients with osteoarthritis."

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