

## Topical Diclofenac, an Efficacious Treatment for Osteoarthritis: A Narrative Review

Revel FB, et al. *Rheumatol Ther.* 2020 Jun; 7(2):217-236.

- Multiple head-to-head trials have demonstrated that topical nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), including topical diclofenac, provide at least equivalent analgesia, improvement in physical function, and reduction of stiffness compared with oral NSAIDs in osteoarthritis and have fewer systemic adverse events.
- Diclofenac concentration in the joint tissue is more relevant than plasma concentration. Diclofenac penetrates and retains at the site of inflammation when applied topically.
- Pain relief with topical diclofenac begins within a few hours of its topical administration and is generally well sustained throughout the 12-h dosing intervals.
- Oral NSAIDs (particularly with long-term use and at higher doses) increases risk of various systemic adverse events such as gastrointestinal, hepatic, renal, or cardiovascular. Efficacy of topical diclofenac in osteoarthritis is well established.

**Topical diclofenac is generally well-tolerated, and effective first-line treatment option for knee and hand osteoarthritis, especially for older patients and those having comorbid conditions.**

