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## MIRACLE CURE FOR ARTHRITIS

Pensioner discovers 'miracle cure' for arthritis after glueing 2p coins to the inside of his shoes

Johnny Franks, 85, read that copper could help him bend his knees so stuck some in his trainers He said he couldn't bend his knees but a month after wearing the shoes he is 'cured'

Experts are split on whether his new soles are actually working

The medical world has long debated whether copper can help ease the pain of arthritis. While some sufferers swear by a bracelet, others use expensive insoles. Johnny Franks, however, reckons he's found the cheapest aid of all – 2p pieces glued to the inside of his shoes.



Happy man: Johnny Franks, 85 , a retired performer, is celebrating being able to walk again after supergluing two pence coins to the inside of his shoes

The 85-year-old has been crippled by arthritis for 15 years and could barely bend his knees without feeling excruciating pain. But he had a flash of inspiration after reading about the apparent benefits of walking on copper.

Unable to afford the £30 cost of specially made insoles, he came up with his own version by glueing four 2p pieces to a cheap shoe protector.

Those 2p coins minted before 1992 are 97 per cent copper.

Only four weeks later, the father of two – who was an entertainer during World War Two – claims he has been ‘cured’.

He said: 'At first my arthritis came and went, but in the last couple of years it got really bad.

'I thought “I wonder whether the copper in 2p pieces could help me?” After a few weeks I thought “wow, this really works”.

'Now walking is a pleasure and I can move around unlike before.

'I am walking without any pain and I can lift my leg half way up my body and kick out.'



Cheap and cheerful: Mr Franks has put 8p in each shoe and is reaping the rewards

Mr Franks, of Stanmore, North London, was a teenager during the war and travelled around Army barracks in the UK and Italy performing the violin and singing as part of the Entertainments National Service Association.

After marrying his wife of 61 years Nanette, 81, he went on to run his own business selling jukebox records, before retiring and filling his time with charity work.

Mr Franks lost his mobility when he developed arthritis in 1997 and was left struggling to bend his knees without being in terrible pain. When he saw the advert for copper insoles he tried putting 2p pieces in his socks – but the coins uncomfortably moved around. He later came up with the idea of glueing them on to some £3 insoles. Copper is an essential nutrient for the body and critical for bone development and nerve function.

At least 20 per cent of the population suffers from copper deficiency, particularly older people. Some firms claim that putting copper next to the skin allows it to be absorbed and circulated through the body to relieve inflammation and pain.



**Better than the real thing? These copper soles inspired Johnny to try his own because he couldn't afford them**

Professor Alan Silman, medical director of Arthritis Research UK said: 'When copper comes into contact with sweat, copper salts seep from the insoles and some of these salts may be absorbed via the skin.

'However there's no evidence that arthritis is caused by a shortage of copper in your body and it is not known whether the absorption of copper salts genuinely impacts on arthritis pain.' Formal trials examining the benefits of copper are now under way at the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust.

Professor Albert Singer, of the Whittington Hospital in London, said: 'I feel that copper has helped my arthritis.

'I am convinced there is something in the copper or there is a tremendous placebo effect.'

Director of The Original Copper Heeler, Tony Andrews, who invented the specialist copper insoles seven years ago, said: 'the problem with coins is they are not 100 per cent copper so this man will not be getting the full benefit of the mineral.'

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