

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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What is arthritis

Arthritis is painful joints. The joints are between bones that help you move and bend. Damage on any joints from disease or injury can make your movement very painful and stiff.

Many types lead to joints being painful, including; Osteoarthritis OA, Rheumatoid Arthritis RA, Gout, also a sprain and other injures. The common complaint in adults was shoulder and hip pain, but it can affect any part of your body, from your ankles and feet to your shoulder, fingers and hands even your wrists. As you get older, like me, your pains will become increasingly common.

The pain can be mild irritation to debilitating; it may last for a few weeks (acute) or lasts for weeks or months (chronic). Whichever you have, even swelling of the joints can affect your lifestyle. Whatever is the cause of your pain, you can generally manage it with medication, physical therapy or alternative treatment.

The first thing is to go to your doctor, where he/she will try and diagnose the condition. Then try and reduce the pain and inflammation; this will help to preserve the joints' function.

Stiff Joints.

Many older people have stiff joints. Years of usage can take their toll on joints, muscles and bone.

Stiffness of the joints mainly occurs just as they wake up. Laying down for hours to sleep reduces fluid amounts. Making moving more difficult at first, but this may be only mild and only stays for a brief period in the morning; this also can occur when sitting for an extended period.

Pain and inflammation, in some cases, go with joint stiffness. Therefore, make standing, walking or putting your weight on the joints painful.

Stiff joints not only occur in old age. Other conditions can cause this, for example, Arthritis, Lupus, and Bursitis. Also, lifestyle issues like diet and weight can impact joint mobility.



Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA).

Causes of RA

RA is one of the most common forms of arthritis and affects over 1.5 million Americans. Usually, RA appears between the ages of 30 and 60 and is different from OA osteoarthritis.

OA is wear-and-tear of the joints, whereas RA is an inflammatory and autoimmune disease which means that your immune system can't fight off invaders like bacteria or viruses and attacks your healthy parts of the body. Which is the lining of the joints, and then inflammation, pain and stiffness occur. As you get older, the joints can deform, and bone erosion is possible.

Unfortunately, RA has no cure; also, the symptoms can't be reversed entirely. Managing the symptoms can only be through medication and other treatment, and when the disease is advanced, there is little that can prevent disability.

Symptoms of RA Rheumatoid Arthritis

People that have Rheumatoid arthritis could experience emotional and physical feelings.

Physical symptoms

First of all, RA affects the joints in your hands and wrist and appears to be in your balls of the feet, ankles, or other joints can be affected like the following:

- ✚ Your neck's cervical spine.
- ✚ Both shoulders.
- ✚ Both elbows.
- ✚ You may hear cracking in your Jaw.
- ✚ And even joints between the very small bones in your inner ear.



Common Symptoms of RA

Apart from the above stiffness, pain and inflammation above you could also experience joints that are:

you may feel tenderness.

May become swollen

Stiff and can cause difficulty in bending the said joint.

Warm to the touch and red in appearance.

When you press the area, it is spongy to touch.

Lastly, equally both right and left wrists, etc., will be affected.

Fatigue of the whole body, which is not related to exertion or sleep.

Symptoms of fatigue could be as follows:

A low-grade fever – this fever could always or nearly always present.

A Sickness feeling – or symptoms like flu.

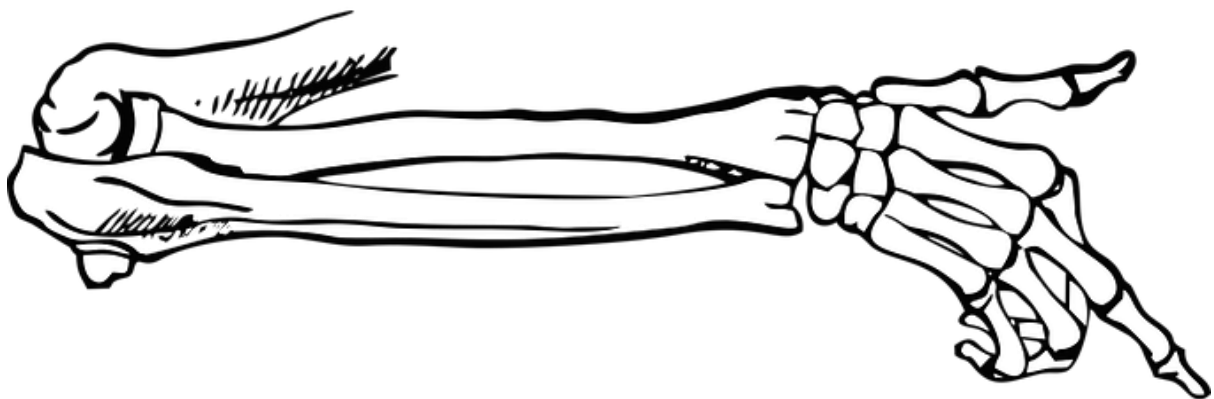
Weight loss – this could be unexpected, or you could have a loss of appetite.



Decrease joint function – this could be simple tasks like turning a key in the lock, opening a jar etc.

Joint grinding - can occur when the bones of the joints are rubbing together when there is soft tissue damage.

Nodules - Nodules are under the skin and are firm bumps that can be varied from a small pea to walnut size and found on the elbow or fingers.



Diagnosis of RA

Early diagnosis and treatment could be vital for the patient, as there is substantial damage to the joints in the first two years of rheumatoid arthritis disease activity.

There are no conclusive physical exam or lab test to diagnose RA. It is also hard to diagnose as RA imitates other diseases such as lupus, sclerosis, psoriatic arthritis and polymyalgia rheumatica.

Because of this, experts say that you should have a diagnostic evaluation. The evaluation should be done by a rheumatologist or physician that have experience in this type of disease.



Risk factor

Experts do not know much about why some people get RA, but lots of research has found that the high risks are caused by the following:

The first high-risk factor is having high IgM antibodies, known as (RF) rheumatoid factors. This RF can result in an immune response that will attack your healthy tissues.

There are also

Hereditary:

HLA-DR4 is the specific gene associated with RA and is found in 60% -70% of Caucasians with the disease.

Exposure to a harmful environmental factor, for example, smoking.

Day to day things you need to do is influence over people's risk of getting RA. Research has found the main areas are smoking, diet and your weight. Let's go into these a bit more.

Smoking:

Smoking is the most significant environmental health risk factor for people with RA, mainly exposed to nicotine. Prolonged nicotine (smoking) is thought to increase the concentration of RA factor, which is an antibody called protein. The existence of rheumatoid factor in the blood is a significant sign that your immune system may be malfunctioning.

Diet:

There was a study that followed 121,000 women for decades found that:

- + Regular drinking sugary soda's – increase of developing RA.
- + Eating a Mediterranean diet – does not affect the risk of developing RA.
- + Drinking coffee or tea – both caffeine or decaf, are not connected with developing RA.
- + Women drinking a moderate amount of alcohol doesn't increase the risk and may lower it.



Weight:

People that are obese or just overweight has a greater risk of developing RA.

A study has found that overweight women were at risk of RA but decreased the risk in men, but more research needs doing. This risk factor is especially significant to those diagnosed with RA and under the age of 55.



Lyme –

Is another risk factor for later developing RA and other types of arthritis. If you see a Lyme rash, you must treat it immediately with a course of antibiotics.

There is no direct link that people who smoke, have a diet or overweight influence the overall risk of getting RA; there are no direct links.

Conclusion

Rheumatoid Arthritis is an incurable autoimmune disease. Doctors or Healthcare providers should diagnose you as soon as possible; this will prevent the growth of the rheumatic disease.

My mum died of RA, they said they could not do anything for her, her condition just got worse, when she had to go to a care home, in the end, she could not do anything, she could not feed herself or anything.

I am suffering from OA since I fell right on my right knee when i was in my 20's. I am now in my 60s and all the doctors or the hospital say that they cannot do anything for me.

The above is why I have chosen 'Arthritis' so that I can give you information on any type of arthritis and understanding the disease, and much more...

Please click the button below for more information.