

Rheumatoid Arthritis - Fibromyalgia - Arthritis Medications

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Like Fibromyalgia, about 75% of those inflicted with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) are women. Rheumatoid arthritis affects about 1% of the population, about 2.1 million people in the US alone. There is no cure for rheumatoid arthritis, and it is difficult to find a natural treatment protocol and effective natural Arthritis Medications. Unlike fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis (RA) peaks between the ages of 20 - 45 with the overlapping conditions of chronic pain and fatigue to be among the most common symptoms of RA and FMS.

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What Causes Rheumatoid Arthritis?

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Symptoms of RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

What Causes Rheumatoid Arthritis?

Scientists do not know exactly why people develop rheumatoid arthritis (RA), however, researchers are learning more every day about its causes, treatment protocol and supportive arthritis medications. The latest scientific findings suggest that RA may be caused by a combination of genetic, environmental or hormonal factors.

Genetic Factors: One theory is that RA is genetic, which means that it runs in families, as referred to in the following research study, A Controlled Family Study in Patients with FMS. In one study of identical twins - when one twin had RA, there was a 30% chance that the other twin would develop this arthritic condition. Researchers have found that the tendency to develop RA is related to specific genes. However, not all people who have these genes will develop rheumatoid arthritis and people who do not have these genes can still develop the condition.

Environmental Factors: Another theory is that RA may be caused by environmental factors, such as exposure to bacteria or a particular diet that may occur naturally in certain locations. For example, some scientists have found that patients with RA are more likely to have been exposed to a bacterium called *Proteus Mirabilis*, or to other bacterial or viral infections. Researchers also have discovered that some autoimmune diseases, like Rheumatoid Arthritis, are more common in certain areas of the world. For example, scientists have noticed that environmental factors, such as not being able to get enough vitamin D, may be part of the reason that people living in Scandinavian countries are more likely to develop arthritis.

Hormonal Factors: A third theory is that this disease may be affected by hormones. Researchers have found that hormones, like estrogen and progesterone, increase during pregnancy but decrease afterward. This may explain why the onset of symptoms often occurs following child birth, or why women with RA who become pregnant often experience significant symptom improvement during pregnancy, but experience a flare up of R. Arthritis once they give birth.

Symptoms of RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

There are a few preventative tests to diagnose rheumatoid arthritis, however, it is important to see a rheumatologist, or a physician who specializes in the treatment of arthritis for a proper diagnosis. Sufferers of RA have joints that are tender, warm and swollen. This occurs in a "symmetrical" pattern, meaning that if the left knee is affected, the right knee is also affected. Rheumatoid arthritis often affects the wrist and finger joints closest to the hand, but the neck, shoulders, elbows, hips, knees, ankles, and feet may also be affected. Other symptoms include pain or stiffness lasting for more than 30 minutes in the morning, or after a long rest and lack of activity. Patients also may experience fatigue, an occasional fever, or a general sense of not feeling well.

Pain, stiffness and fatigue, common symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis can be caused by fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, or other syndromes. It is advisable to have your health care professional identify your sources of pain, as similar symptoms can result from other autoimmune diseases. A diagnosis of your condition is important before embarking on a treatment or self care program, or arthritis medication.