

Inflammation of joints in combination with psoriasis (psoriasis-arthritis)

Das Ziel dieser Broschüre ist ein kurzer Überblick über die Erkrankung, Diagnose und Behandlung von Psoriasis-Arthritis.

What is psoriasis-arthritis?

Psoriasis-arthritis is an inflammation of the joints and of the spine that is caused by malfunctioning of the immune system. This disease is known by the medical term "psoriasis-arthritis". The disease usually appears in patients between the ages of 30 and 50, but it can occur at any age. Around three quarters of persons affected have previously already suffered from psoriasis. Both diseases can occur at the same time. Sometimes patients suffer from PSO-arthritis before psoriasis develops.

The exact cause of the disease is not known. What is known, however, is that hereditary predisposition constitutes a potential risk. At present, the disease is incurable.

Symptoms

Stiff joints in the morning (finger and toe joints, knee joints, ankle joints and sacroiliac joints).

There can also be pain in other joints.

What is conspicuous are inflammations and pain in entire fingers or toes, known as pudgy fingers or toes.

Almost any joint can be affected, as well as tendons and muscles.

This incorrect reaction by the immune system can also affect other organs, such as the eyes and intestines, where it can lead to inflammations.

Diagnosis

Patient interview (medical history), manifestation, physical examination for restrictions in mobility, sensitivity to pain and pressure in joints, blood count, X-ray, ultrasound of joints, magnetic resonance tomography.

The degree of severity of the disease is determined according to the following criteria: Number of affected joints, radiological changes, functional limitations, impact on the quality of life (from the patient's point of view).

Which treatment options are available?

Medicines to treat symptoms:

- Analgesics (painkillers), e.g. ibuprofen
- Cortisone-based analgesic anti-inflammatory medicines (tablets, injections)

Medicines to treat the disease:

- Long-acting medicines (tablets, injections) which influence the immune cells, e.g. methotrexate, sulphasalazine and leflunomide
- Biologicals (infusion, injection) which influence the messenger substances that are activated by the immune cells, e.g. adalimumab, etanercept, infliximab
- PDE4 inhibitors (tablets) which specifically target the immune cells and thus regulate the inflammation, e.g. apremilast

Please note, however, that medicines can lead to undesirable side effects.

Speak about this with your doctor, and read the package leaflet.

What happens in the case of non-treatment?

If the disease is not treated completely or in time, it may lead to loss of function, deformation and disintegration of the affected joints – processes that can no longer be reversed.

Non-medicinal treatment to build up muscles and retain functioning of the joints

- Physiotherapy
- Local heat and cold treatments
- Ultrasound therapy, electrotherapy, hydrotherapy and ergotherapy

Self-help groups

SHG-Forum Psoriasis

E-mail: office@forumpsoriasis.at
www.forumpsoriasis.at
Friederike Schöner
Tel: +43 676/538 70 67

Rheumalis

Self-help group for youths, young adults and parents of children suffering from rheumatism
Karin Formanek
E-mail: shg_rheumalis@yahoo.com
<http://www.rheumalis.org>
Tel: +43 699/19 74 88 11

Rheumaliga

Österreichische Rheumaliga
(Austrian rheumatism association)
Gertraud Schaffer, chairwoman of ÖRL
Dorfstraße 4, 5761 Maria Alm
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For further information

Öffentliches Gesundheitsportal Österreichs
(Austrian public health portal)
<https://www.gesundheit.gv.at>

Package leaflets of medicines that are approved in Austria:
<https://aspreister.basg.gv.at>