



Psoriatic Arthritis

Fast Facts

- Psoriatic arthritis is a chronic arthritis. In some people, it is mild, with just occasional flare ups. In other people, it is continuous and can cause joint damage if it is not treated. Early diagnosis is important to avoid damage to joints.
- Psoriatic arthritis typically occurs in people with skin psoriasis, but it can occur in people without skin psoriasis, particularly in those who have relatives with psoriasis.
- Psoriatic arthritis typically affects the large joints, especially those of the lower extremities, distal joints of the fingers and toes, and also can affect the back and sacroiliac joints of the pelvis.
- For most people, appropriate treatments will relieve pain, protect the joints, and maintain mobility. Physical activity helps maintain joint movement.

Psoriatic arthritis is a type of inflammatory arthritis that occurs in some patients with psoriasis. This particular arthritis can affect any joint in the body, and symptoms vary from person to person. Research has shown that psoriasis persists for most people. Fortunately, available treatments for are effective for most people.

Psoriatic arthritis usually appears in people between the ages of 30 to 50, but can begin as early as childhood. Men risk to develop uveitis (inflammation of the middle layer of the eye). Approximately 15% of people with psoriasis develop this disorder.

+ What is psoriatic arthritis?

Psoriasis is a disease in which scaly red and white patches develop on the skin. Psoriasis is caused by the immune system. People with psoriasis can also develop psoriatic arthritis, manifested by painful, stiff and swollen joints. Like psoriasis, psoriatic arthritis can even change locations in the same person over time.

Psoriatic arthritis can affect any joint in the body, and it may affect just one joint, several joints or multiple joint can resemble swollen sausages, a condition often referred to as dactylitis. Finger and toe nails also may be af

Psoriatic arthritis in the spine, called spondylitis, causes stiffness in the back or neck, and difficulty bending. F
join onto bones. This condition, called enthesitis, can result in pain at the back of the heel, the sole of the foot,
features of psoriatic arthritis.

Recent research suggests that persistent inflammation from psoriatic arthritis causes joint damage later, so ea
effective for most people.

+ What causes psoriatic arthritis?

What causes psoriatic arthritis is not known exactly. Of those with psoriatic arthritis, 40% have a family memb
arthritis can also result from an infection that activates the immune system. While psoriasis itself is not infectio
known as strep throat.

+ How is psoriatic arthritis diagnosed?

To diagnose psoriatic arthritis, rheumatologists look for swollen and painful joints, certain patterns of arthritis,
for joint damage. MRI, ultrasound or CT scans can be used to look at the joints in more detail.

Blood tests may be done to rule out other types of arthritis that have similar signs and symptoms, including gc
blood tests may reveal high levels of inflammation and mild anemia but labs may also be normal. Anemia is a
dysfunctional red blood cells. Occasionally skin biopsies (small samples of skin removed for analysis) are need

+ How is psoriatic arthritis treated?

Treating psoriatic arthritis varies depending on the level of pain, swelling and stiffness. Those with very mild ar
therapy when they feel better. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) or nap

If the arthritis does not respond, disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs may be prescribed. These include su
cyclosporine (Neoral, Sandimmune, Gengraf), and leflunomide. Sometimes combinations of these drugs may l
help, but it usually is avoided as it can cause a flare of psoriasis. Azathioprine (Imuran) may help those with se

There are several biologic type medications available to treat psoriatic arthritis via infusion or injection.

- The TNF Inhibitors such as adalimumab (Humira), etanercept (Enbrel), golimumab (Simponi), certolizumab (
- arthritis as well as the skin psoriasis.

- Secukinumab (Cosentyx), a new type of biologic injection, was recently approved to treat psoriatic arthritis
- Ustekinumab (Stelara) is a biologic injection given in your doctor's office that is effective in treating psoriatic
- Abatacept is given to patients who have not responded to one or more DMARDs or other biologic drugs. Al
- For swollen joints, corticosteroid injections can be useful. Surgery can be helpful to repair or replace badly

+ Broader health impact of psoriatic arthritis

The impact of psoriatic arthritis depends on the joints involved and the severity of symptoms. Fatigue and ane changes. Treating the arthritis and reducing the levels of inflammation helps with these problems. People with cholesterol, obesity or diabetes. Maintaining a healthy weight and treating high blood pressure and choleste

+ Living with psoriatic arthritis

Many people with arthritis develop stiff joints and muscle weakness due to lack of use. Proper exercise is very quite simple. Walking is an excellent way to get exercise. A walking aid or shoe inserts will help to avoid undue provides another good option, as well as yoga and stretching exercises to help with relaxation.

Some people with arthritis find it easier to move in water. If this is the case, swimming or walking laps in the p also benefit from physical and occupational therapy to strengthen muscles, protect joints from further damage

+ The rheumatologist's role in the treating psoriatic arthritis

Psoriatic arthritis is easy to confuse with other diseases. As specialists in musculoskeletal disorders, rheumat patients about the best treatment options.

Updated March 2017 by Kelly Weselman, MD and reviewed by the American College of Rheumatology Committee on Communications

This information is provided for general education only. Individuals should consult a qualified health care provider for professional medic

© 2017 American College of Rheumatology

© 2017 American College of Rheumatology. All rights reserved.