

Medical Aspects of Rheumatoid Arthritis: An In-Depth Guide

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune disease that affects the joints, causing inflammation, pain, and swelling.

RA can affect people of all ages, but it is most common in women between the ages of 40 and 60.



What is Rheumatoid Arthritis? Ayurveda aspects of Rheumatoid Arthritis:: Medical aspects of Rheumatoid

Arthritis: by Paul McGeough

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The exact cause of RA is unknown, but it is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

RA is a systemic disease, which means that it can affect other organs in the body, including the heart, lungs, and eyes.

There is no cure for RA, but treatment can help to manage the symptoms and prevent joint damage.

Symptoms of Rheumatoid Arthritis

The symptoms of RA can vary from person to person.

The most common symptoms include:

- Joint pain, swelling, and stiffness
- Morning stiffness that lasts for more than 30 minutes
- Symmetrical involvement of multiple joints (meaning that the same joints are affected on both sides of the body)
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Chills

RA can also cause a variety of other symptoms, including:

- Skin rashes
- Eye problems
- Heart problems
- Lung problems
- Kidney problems

Diagnosis of Rheumatoid Arthritis

RA is diagnosed based on a combination of symptoms, physical examination, and blood tests.

There is no single test that can diagnose RA.

The doctor will ask about your symptoms, medical history, and family history.

The doctor will also perform a physical examination to look for signs of joint inflammation.

Blood tests can be used to check for the presence of rheumatoid factor (RF) and anti-citrullinated peptide antibodies (ACPAs), which are two antibodies that are often found in people with RA.

Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis

There is no cure for RA, but treatment can help to manage the symptoms and prevent joint damage.

Treatment options for RA include:

- Medications
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Surgery

Medications

There are a variety of medications that can be used to treat RA.

The type of medication that is prescribed will depend on the severity of your symptoms and your overall health.

Some of the most common medications used to treat RA include:

- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs): NSAIDs are over-the-counter medications that can help to reduce pain, swelling, and inflammation.
- Disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs): DMARDs are prescription medications that can help to slow the progression of RA and prevent joint damage.
- Biologic response modifiers (BRMs): BRMs are prescription medications that target specific parts of the immune system that are involved in RA.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy can help to improve range of motion, reduce pain, and increase strength in the joints.

A physical therapist can teach you exercises that you can do at home to help manage your RA.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy can help you to learn how to perform everyday activities in a way that minimizes pain and joint damage.

An occupational therapist can also recommend assistive devices, such as canes or wheelchairs, that can help you to remain independent.

Surgery

Surgery may be necessary to repair damaged joints or to relieve pain.

Surgery is usually only considered if other treatments have not been successful.

Outlook for Rheumatoid Arthritis

The outlook for RA varies from person to person.

With early diagnosis and treatment, most people with RA can live full and active lives.

However, RA can be a progressive disease, and some people may experience joint damage and other complications.

Prevention of Rheumatoid Arthritis

There is no way to prevent RA, but there are some things you can do to reduce your risk of developing the disease.

These things include:

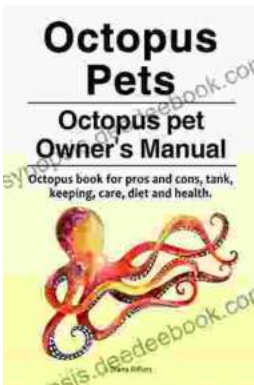
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Exercising regularly
- Not smoking
- Limiting alcohol intake



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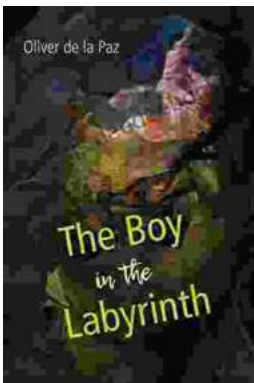
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