

K43 Rheumatoid Arthritis

Intro: Pain, swelling and stiffness in your joints. All are symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. But because these symptoms come and go, the condition can sometimes be tricky to diagnose. And it's important to get the right diagnosis because starting treatment early can make a difference.

Video

Audio

Total running time 1:37	<p>“Give me your best shot”</p> <p>At first Virginia Wimmer blamed her painful joints on too much volleyball.</p>
	<p>“In my knees and in my wrists.”</p>
	<p>For a couple years she put up with the pain and swelling that would come and go. Then things got much worse.</p>
	<p>“I couldn't have a ball touch my arms.”</p>
	<p>She couldn't do much of anything, let alone play outside with her daughter.</p>
CG :20 to :29 Virginia Wimmer Has rheumatoid arthritis	<p>“That was really hard. She would beg me to play with her and teach her and help her and I just had to sit and watch.”</p>
	<p>Virginia was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis.</p>
CG :32 to :40 Nisha Manek, M.D. Mayo Clinic	<p>“Rheumatoid arthritis is an inflammatory condition. It's also associated with the immune system.”</p>

	<p>Dr. Nisha Manek says it happens when the immune system becomes de-regulated. You see the joint capsule has a lining of tissue called the synovium. The synovium makes fluid that keeps joints lubricated. When you have rheumatoid arthritis, your immune system sends anti bodies to the synovium and causes inflammation. This causes pain and joint damage, especially in small joints in the fingers and wrists. But it can affect any joint.</p>
<p>CG 1:08 to 1:13 Vivien Williams Reporting</p>	<p>The good news is that treatment for rheumatoid arthritis has improved dramatically over the last years. Medications such as methotrexate help bring the immune system back into balance and steroids can help calm flare ups. So what was once an often crippling disease, can now be controlled for many people. People like Virginia, whose disease is pretty severe.</p>
	<p>“You can get to the point where you are doing things you love. And that’s the goal.”</p>
	<p>For Medical Edge, I’m Vivien Williams.</p>

Anchor tag: Dr. Manek says if you have pain, swelling and stiffness in your joints that comes and goes, and is on both sides of your body, see your doctor to see if it is rheumatoid arthritis. Rheumatoid is different than osteo arthritis, which damages joints because of wear and tear.

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