How to Know If You Have Rheumatoid Arthritis (Early Signs & Symptoms) Transcript

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Morning stiffness and early RA symptoms

When you wake up in the morning, how do you feel? I don't mean are you tired, I mean physically, can you just jump out of bed? For most people, they might be a little groggy, but they get up and go.

But for a patient developing rheumatoid arthritis, the story is very different. It's not an explosive onset where suddenly one day you cannot move, it's a gradual process.

You wake up, you try to get out of bed and you feel stuck. Now, many of my patients describe this feeling exactly like being the Tin Man from the Wizard of Oz.

you Feel like your joints are rusted and shut down, You feel like you are not well oiled machine. Today, we are going to break down the specific signs of rheumatoid arthritis, the ring test you can do at home, and the number one trigger for flares that almost no one talks about.

Please stick around. Hello, rheuma arthritis warrior. This is Dr. Nathasubhedi, your rheuimatoide arthritis coach at The Room Doc, as well as a practicing rheumeatologist here at Empower Arthritis and Rheumatology Center in Cary, North Carolina.

Today I'll go over some of the common and most important symptoms and signs Before I go further, don't forget to download our free copy of the Holistic Rheumatoid Arthritis book just for you, and also don t forget download a recipe that you can prepare every morning to fight against rheumataid arthritis.

And please also help us support in our mission of touching at least 100,000 lives of rheumaid arthitis warriors throughout the globe and our missions to help them understand all about rhemaid One of the most important symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis is stiffness, the stiffness in your joints.

And typically the stiffness in rheuomatoids arthritis lasts for a longer period of time, typically lasting for more than 30 minutes. First, when you wake up in the morning, you might feel that lot of stiffness so that you cannot even close your fingers and that typically lasts more then 30 mins.

Ring test for joint swelling

In RA the stifness actually gets better as you are more active the stiffness start getting better with hours. You might also drag yourself to the shower, take a hot shower move around a bit and suddenly you feel well.

you might then think oh i just slept funny it may not be any arthritis but then it happens day after day and you start asking yourself what is happening to me in the mornings And this is the typical presentation of rheumatoid arthritis, the symptoms of stiffness, particularly worse in the morning, lasting for more than 30 minutes and typically get better as you are active.

However, there is an atypical version you also need to know. For some people, it can be explosive arthritis. They are fine one week and then within a week, they are struggling with basic daily living and activities.

This affects the small joints, the hand, wrist and fingers. And it can sometimes also affect your feet and ankle joints. But in general, rheumatoid arthritis symptoms are more insidious.

They usually come slowly, causing slow onset of stiffness and pain, typically involving your small joint in the hands and feet. Now the next interesting finding that could indicate rheumatoid arthritis is I call ring test.

Now this ring tests will help you differentiate whether this is truly inflammation or just the mild stiffness. You can look at your hand and specifically look your fingers.

Fatigue, flu-like symptoms, and sleep issues

and pay attention to your ring finger where you are wearing your rings many women notice this first in the morning they cannot get off the ring off of your fingers it feels very tight and that's because of the joint swelling but by the evening it get better In the evening, the ring is loose again and they're able to take it off easily and put it back easily.

So this test might suggest that you might be having inflammation in your fingers. That is one of the important findings of rheumatoid arthritis and this fluctuating symptoms of tightness in the morning, loose the impending is a classic sign of inflammation in your joints and typically happens in rheumatoid arthritis.

So next time when you are taking your ring off, pay attention to that ring test. And this test can help you diagnose rheuma to arthritis early. Now the third part is the first section.

Many of the people get confused. Rheumator arthritis is not just a joint problem. It's a systemic problem, You can think of this as the arthritis of the joint, but it can be systemic problem.

And often before the major pain sets in, patient feels like they have the flu. So you can have a flu like symptoms such as fatigue. It can even affect your sleep.

Fatigue and sleep problem could be an early signs of rheumatoid arthritis and the fatigue is prominent part of the presentation of rheumatoid arthritis because of systemic inflammation.

And because inflammation typically goes up during the nighttime, it might affect your sleep, causing nighttime pain in your joints. Some of my patients, they also complain of low-grade fever, which is a sign of inflammation, so next time if you have this unexplained flu-like symptoms lasting for a long period of time, think of Rheumator Arthritis.

So if you feel that your joints are stiff, you are having joint pain and flu-like symptoms, always ask your primary care doctor if we need to worry about rheumatoid arthritis.

In particular, if your symptoms are lasting for several weeks.

RA flares and common triggers

Now, let me also tell you a little more about a flare, which is not uncommon condition in rheuma arthritis, Let's say you are diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis.

You are on medications, you're making lifestyle changes and you in a low disease activity or remission state. And you feel overall good. But then out of nowhere you have a crass and this we call a flare.

Now you might ask what is a flair? Flair typically means increased symptoms of your joint pain and joint stiffness. It can also come with increasing fatigue.

And if you remember the earlier example, I use up a Tin Man. So you might feel a tin man with a lot of stiffness that comes in the morning. Now, you may ask, why does this flare happen?

Sometimes it's a missing a dose of your medication. Sometimes is a physical trauma. But sometimes the most common symptom I hear from my patient is stress.

Stress is known trigger for flare of rheumatoid arthritis. If you have a flare with those increased symptoms, You need to have some action plan on what to do first.

Medically, your rheumatologist might give you a short course of prednisone or steroid or they might adjust some of your anti-inflammatory medications.

You can also handle some myelal flare with over-the-counter medications but always ask your Rheumatoidist on your next visit for your flare plan so that you have a clear idea of what to do on your next flare.

Flare action plan and closing advice

So don't forget to ask your rheumatologist on the next visit in case of flare what are the things you can do and what other thing you cannot do to manage your flare symptoms.

Always make an action plan to handle those flares in coordination with your Rheumathologist. Now all of you Rheumatoid Arthritis Warrior, I hope this video helped you learn about rheumator arthritis, what are those early signs of rheuma arthritis and we also touched on what is a flare and how you handle those flares.

If you like this, don't forget to like and subscribe to our channel. Please share this with other rheumerator arthitis warrior who are suffering in pain and confusion.

And at RoomDoc our goal is to give this scientific information to help you to learn more about RHE. And please share this video with other people who might benefit from this information.

And I'll see you in the next video. Bye bye.