Rheumatoid Arthritis Flares Getting Worse? Here's Why and What to Do About It Transcript

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Introduction to RA flares

Most of you who have rheumatoid arthritis, you might be having these increased symptoms, we call that flares. Many of might think that flare is due to something you did wrong.

You might have eaten something unusual or you may have overdone with your joints. But the fact is, rheuma arthritis flare are unpredictable. They may not be under your control.

Today, will walk you through few important things about Dhrumotaratha's flares. The first one, what is a flare? Let's understand about what are those triggers?

How do we manage those flares? And then what we can do now so that you don't have any of those flares in the future? Stick around. Before I go deeper, don't forget to accept my gift on this holiday season.

We have this free rheumatoid arthritis guidebook just for you. As well as I have prepared a special smoothie recipe to fight against rheuomatoids arthritis and those flares.

Please accept those in the description below. And we also have an important mission for 2020 Sets. We want to reach at least 100,000 Rheumatoarphitis Warrior through our channel, so that we can help them feel better and empowered.

And you can support us in this mission by liking our videos, sharing with other people who are suffering from rheumator arphritis. Please help us reach that goal.

What a flare feels like

Let's go dive deeper into rheuptoarthritis flares. and the first question you might have is, what is rheuhmatoarthritis flare? Now, many of you, when you were diagnosed with rheumatoarphitis, you might have joint pain.

Because of the joint and other signs of inflammation, your doctor might've diagnosed you with Rheumator Arphritis. Now during a flare, what happens is your pain level goes significantly higher.

So, increased pain than usual is one of first clue of RHE flare. And here are the other symptoms. The next one being the stiffness. In particular, when you wake up in the morning, you feel much more stiff in your joints.

Typically in rheumatoid arthritis, You feel more than 30 minutes to an hour of stiffness. And reading those flares, it can be even longer. The reason we typically feel stiffness is those joint fluid.

It feels like you are not able to move those fluid in mornings. So the next common symptom is the swelling. Swelling is an hallmark of inflammation. So if you recall when your doctor made your initial diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis, they usually feel your joints to look for clues of Inflammation.

And swelling is one of the most important clue of joint inflammation and during a flare that swelling becomes significantly more than usual. The other symptom, is fatigue.

As we have recently discussed in our previous video, fatigue is a major problem in rheumatoid arthritis. And one of the main reasons for fatigue, is uncontrolled inflammation.

When you have a flare, there is significantly higher level of inflammation and that inflammation cause worsening

fatigue. That is not just your regular fatigue but much more worsing fatigue compared to your baseline.

Now the last symptoms I describe here is fever. So low grade fever could also be a clue of rheumatoid arthritis flare. now that is due to the inflammation happening in your body.

But typically RA flare typically cause low-grade fevers. If the fever is significantly higher, we need to worry about other things including infection.

Because sometimes infection can mimic like rheumatoid arthritis flare.

Common flare triggers

But it's very important to understand whether this is RA flare versus infection because the treatment is very different. So if you have very high grade fever, it is a red flag sign that it could be a sign of infection, not just the flare of RA.

Now as we talk about rheumatoid arthritis flair, the other important topic we really need to understand is what are the triggers of rheuatoide arthritis?

And I have listed here some of the most important triggers. The first one being stress. When you are stressed, your body makes extra cortisol and then that can lead to an increased level of inflammation.

Hence, you might feel that when you are stressed, if there is something going on in your life or your work, that can trigger a rheumatoid arthritis flare.

So the second flare is over-exertion. You need to listen to your body. When you overdo it, sometime that also can cause worsening pain and rheuomatoide arthritis flair.

Hence you need pace yourself not overdoing so that you can minimize the future flares. Now the other is infection. When you have an infection, your body is trying to fight against that bacteria or the viruses.

when your immune system is hyperactive, it can also lead to rheumatoid arthritis flare. Hence, if you any type of infection just stay alert if in case you might get rheumatoid arthritis flares.

Now let's go to the next thing that could cause your flare and that includes your medication changes. So if you have rheuma arthritis you may be on different type of medication.

It could be a demod like methotrexate, sulfasalazine or other biologics. If in case for any reason you are not able to take your medication, if you have missed your medications doses, that is another important clue or important trigger for rheumatoid arthritis flare.

Hence, it is very important to be regular with your medicines so that you can minimize these type of flares. Now sometimes you might have trauma due to different reasons like surgery or other unexpected trauma that can also be one of the trigger for rheumatoid arthritis flair.

Now the last is I mentioned about lack of sleep. Sleep is very important for our body. It's a time where your body gets rest. But if you are not able to get good sleep for different reason it can be also a trigger of rheuatoide arthritis flare.

Hence always prioritize your sleep to minimize such type of flares. Now we learned about what is a rheumatoid arthritis flare? What are the triggers? Now the next important topic is how to handle a flare or how do we manage those flares?

And I have used this pyramid to help you understand what you can do to Now I have divided those into three different buckets. The topmost part is I highlighted in red because this is very very important.

When to call your rheumatologist

Now when you have any of those symptoms like you had severe pain, you unexplained high-grade fevers, And if you suspect you have an infection due to any symptoms you are having or if your symptom is very uncontrolled, you're in such so severe pain that you cannot manage your pain, those are the signals that need to immediately call your rheumatologist.

Now, if in case you aren't able to keep in touch with your Rheumatolysis, You should even go to the urgent care or the ER. Let me explain you why this is important.

If you have severe pain, you cannot manage those symptoms at home. You may not have all the tools that you need to manage this degree of pain. Now the next important, fever.

So as I mentioned earlier, Fever could be an early sign of rheumatoid arthritis flare if it is a low-grade fever But if you have high grade fever that means there might be an underlying infection.

For example, you might have pneumonia, urinary tract infection or sometimes rheumatoid arthritis patients are also at risk of joint infection, when that happens you typically have severe pain in one or two joints.

If that's the case, it becomes a medical emergency. Hence, if you have this unexplained high-grade fever, its very important to inform your rheumatologist sooner the better.

And if don't hear from them, please go to your ER so that they can re-evaluate if in case there is an infection and they adequately treat you. Now the next tool that you have in managing your flare if you a milder symptoms.

And you can manage your symptoms with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory. Now there are so many different varieties of nonstereoidal antiinflammatories. These are basically mild anti inflammatory medication which are typically used and helpful for mild flares.

But there is some precautions. If you are known to have kidney problem. If you are known to have high blood pressure or liver issues, you need to be careful.

You need consult with your doctors whether the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory are safe for you or not. Because these medications can affect your kidneys, they can effect your liver, They can increase your blood pressures.

So always consult your doctor whether it is safe to take those medications. Now when you go to your Doctor next time, when your go your Rheumatologist on your next visit, please ask them.

Can you take non-ceroidal if you have another flare? That can help you guide whether it's safe for you to take NSAID on your next flare.

Medicines for mild flares

Now the next medication that you can take to manage your mild fare is Tylenol. It is also called acetamin FM. Depending on which part of the hole you are in, there are different names or different versions of this medication.

This is basically a mild pain medication, it is not an anti-inflammatory, so it's not as effective as NSAID, but could be helpful if you have milder degree of pain.

Now in town hole, you can take it in different forms that help you manage your mild pains. Now there are other medication that you need to take based on the recommendation from your rheumatologist.

That includes rescue steroid or rescue corticosteroids which are more stronger medication compared to the other two. Now the rescue Corticosteroid typically help calm down the pain.

So when you go see your your Rheumatoid next time you can ask them if you get some rescue steroids in case of you have a flare. But be cautious. Overuse of steroids can cause significant side effects such as high blood pressure, diabetes and many other side-effects.

Hence, you need to always consult with your rheumatologist if you want to take steroids. And other one is you to adjust your DMARTS. What does that mean?

If you are having multiple flares in couple of months, that means that your rheumatoid arthritis is not adequately controlled and which deserve special attention from your Rheumatologist.

So if you have multiple Flares, go talk with your rheumeatologists, ask them, do you need to adjust your DMAR? It could be your regular DMR like methotrexate or it could biologics and adjusting those medication can help prevent your future flare attack.

Now I am going to the base of our pyramid and I put in a base because this is so important on your day to day life. If you follow these steps we can minimize these flares and that includes self-care strategies.

And most of the things are very important for your Day to Day rheumatoid arthritis management. Most of things you can do at home. That includes adequate rest.

and also bracing, like if you have an RA flare, it does deserve a resting time.

Self-care and flare prevention

If you are working, you might need to take a time off from your work. Hence, rest is so important to manage rheumatoid arthritis flares. Now, as I mentioned earlier, during a rheuma arthritis flare you may have a lot of stiffness in your joints.

And if we have lot stiff joints, heat could be helpful to mobilize your joint. But on the other side if your hands are very hot to touch then cold pack might be helpful to decrease the pain and inflammation.

So you can use either heat for stiffness and cool for inflamed joints. The other one is dental movement. When you are having a flare you might have a lot of pain so you may not be able to do lot exercise.

Hence, you do rest your body, but too much rest can cause stiffness. So to counter that stiffness, gentle movement could help you mobilize your joints.

It can also help to minimize the inflammation. Hence gentle moment is important part of managing rheumatoid arthritis flare. And the last is stress management.

If you could recall, when I talk in the beginning, what are those triggers? Stress is one of the major trigger for rheuma to arthritis flair. So we need to understand how do we manage those stressful situations.

Now, let me quickly recap our permit. So on the top is those red flag signs where you need immediately call your rheumatologist or even you did to go to the ER when you have high grade fever, when your symptoms are severe and in the middle of the permit, you had those basic medication that you can take to manage your pain if it is mild.

before you head to your rheumatologist's office and that includes some of the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory but the caution here is take with your doctor before your go on those medication to make sure your kidneys are healthy, your liver is healthy and you don't have a high blood pressure.

Now the towel is a reasonably safe option to do and comes the rescue steroid which you need to consult with you rheumeatologists whether it's safe for you to take those corticosteroids and other important Adjust your disease-mortifying anti-rheumatic drug so that you don't have those recurrent flares.

And the bottom of the pyramid, the base is very important. These are all the self-care strategy that we need to do to manage your RA effectively. Now all of you RA warriors, thank you so much for watching today and I hope it helped you make some plan for your next RA flare and hopefully you have some toolkit ready for you, so that you don't have to be scared for the next flare.

Now before I depart, please don´t forget to accept our gift, the rheumatoid arthritis book free for and the RA Smoothie that will help you fight against rheumatoid arthritis as well as those flares.

And support us in our mission, the mission of getting up to 100,000 RA warriors to help them fight rheuma. I'll see you in the next video. Bye-bye.