

Our research explained

BRCsnapshots

How does COVID-19 affect people with rheumatological conditions?



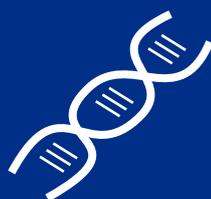
What we know

People living with rheumatic diseases suffer from inflammation of the connecting or supporting structures of the body - most commonly the joints, but also sometimes the tendons, ligaments, bones, and muscles. This includes conditions such as arthritis, osteoporosis and lupus.

It is not currently understood how COVID-19 affects people with these conditions or whether their usual medication may have an effect on their response to the virus.



More than 40,000 people in the UK have rheumatoid arthritis (RA)



Both genetics and environmental factors such as stress and illness are involved in RA



RA is managed using medications to control the immune system, and to relieve symptoms

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans). The most common symptoms are fever, dry cough and loss of or change to taste and smell. There are a range of other symptoms which are less well understood at this time.

What we are doing

Our researchers and clinicians are working with colleagues across the UK to launch a registry to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients with rheumatological conditions.

The CORE-UK study aims to gather evidence about the experience of patients with rheumatological conditions during the pandemic. This will help to develop evidence-based guidance on the risk COVID-19 poses to these patients.

How will this change care

“We don’t yet know how COVID-19 affects patients who also have rheumatological conditions. As we know that COVID-19 complications can involve inflammation, it’s vital that we understand how the disease affects people who are already prone to inflammation. Understanding the experiences of rheumatology patients will be vital to us ensuring that rheumatology patients that have COVID-19 are treated in the best possible way.

“It might be that certain treatments are more appropriate for these patients, or that there are other physical or psychological effects of the pandemic on these patients that we need to consider. We’re incredibly grateful to the patients contributing to this study for sharing their experiences.”

Professor Matthew Brown, Director of the ‘NIHR Guy’s and St Thomas’ Biomedical Research Centre.



Further information

People with rheumatological conditions, whether or not they have had COVID-19 can submit to the registry online at bit.ly/CORE-UKstudy.

About our NIHR Guy’s and St Thomas’ Biomedical Research Centre

Our NIHR Biomedical Research Centre is a partnership between Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust and King’s College London. We work to develop and deliver new medicines and diagnostics to patients. We drive research and innovation into the NHS to provide maximum impact to our patients.

www.guysandstthomasbrc.nihr.ac.uk

