

Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis

(rheumatoid factor negative)

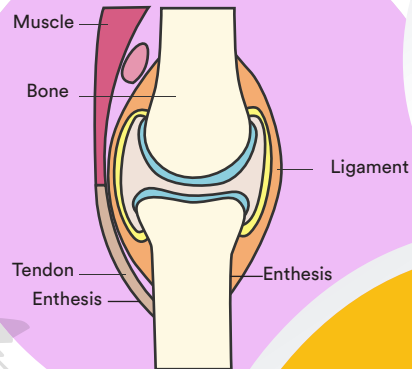
is a condition that causes 5 or more joints to become swollen and painful.

Joints are where your bones meet. Bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons all work together so that you can bend, twist, stretch and move.

Let's look inside and see what's going on...

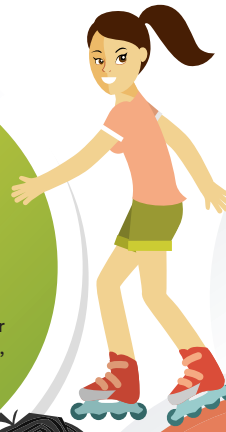


Your joints



Your immune system

For some reason, your immune system - instead of just fighting germs - got confused and started attacking the healthy tissues in your joints, causing them to become red, swollen and sore.



What's in a name?

Polyarticular means 5 or more of your joints are involved

Juvenile means your condition affects people under the age of 16

Idiopathic means we don't know what causes it to occur

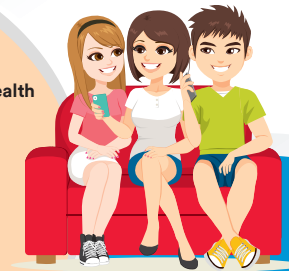
Arthritis means inflammation of the joint

Rheumatoid factor (RF) is a protein the body produces that attacks healthy tissue

Negative means your blood test didn't find RF present in your body

From time to time you'll see other **health professionals** including:

- physio
- occupational therapist
- eye specialist
- pharmacist
- podiatrist
- psychologist or psychiatrist



It all depends on your symptoms.

You'll need to see your doctor regularly, as well as **paediatric rheumatologist**. That's a doctor who specialises in conditions that affect your muscles, bones and joints.

Symptoms of polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis (rheumatoid factor negative) include:

- pain and swelling in your joints, especially hands and feet
- different joints affected on one side of the body to the other (asymmetrical)
- joint stiffness, especially in the morning
- inflammation of the tissue surrounding your tendons, especially in wrists, ankles and hands
- a low fever and feeling generally unwell from time to time.

You'll need to take some medications. They may include:

- pain relievers
- anti-inflammatory meds (NSAIDs)
- corticosteroids
- disease modifying meds (DMARDs)
- biologics (bDMARDs).



What can I do?

- follow your treatment plan, this is **really important**
- exercise and stay active
- manage your pain
- eat well
- know what to do when you have a flare
- talk with your teachers and friends
- know it's OK to feel sad from time to time.



Everyone's different and will have **different symptoms**.



Sometimes you may experience a **'flare'**. This is when your condition is more painful, you have inflammation and you're super tired.



Why did I get arthritis?

No one knows what causes some people to get PolyJIA (RF-). It may be the result of genetic factors (or things you've inherited) and something from your environment (e.g. an infection that hasn't been identified).



PolyJIA (RF-) is **not contagious**



Will I always have PolyJIA (RF-)?

It's impossible to know whether you'll always have arthritis. Some people go into remission and their arthritis goes away. Others will continue to have it into adulthood. However, there's no reason that it should get in the way of you doing all the fun and exciting things you want to do.

